

China

**Common names:** **English:** Mulberry **Luganda:** Nkenene.

**Ecology:** A tree native to warm temperate Asia, probably of mountainous China where it can reach more than 20 m. Now widely cultivated in Africa where it is much smaller, sometimes naturalized. It tolerates drought and heat once established. It has been grown in Uganda as a back-yard bush for jam and jellies. Now abundantly grown for silkworms in Central and Western Regions.

**Uses:** Firewood, food (fruit, leaves), fodder (leaves), bee forage, soil conservation, ornamental, shade, windbreak, live fence, silk worm feed (leaves).

**Description:** Usually small but can reach 25 m; loosely rounded in shape. LEAVES: very variable in shape, even on one branch; oval to 3-lobed or heart shaped, 5-15 cm long, 3 veins from the base, edge roughly toothed, tip pointed, on stalks to 5 cm, **upper leaf smooth**, but some hairs on veins below at least. FLOWERS: sexes separate, small and **greenish, in drooping spikes**. FRUIT: compound, about **2 cm long, white-pink** or red, sweet and juicy but rather tasteless.

**Propagation:** Seedlings, cuttings (for large-scale planting).

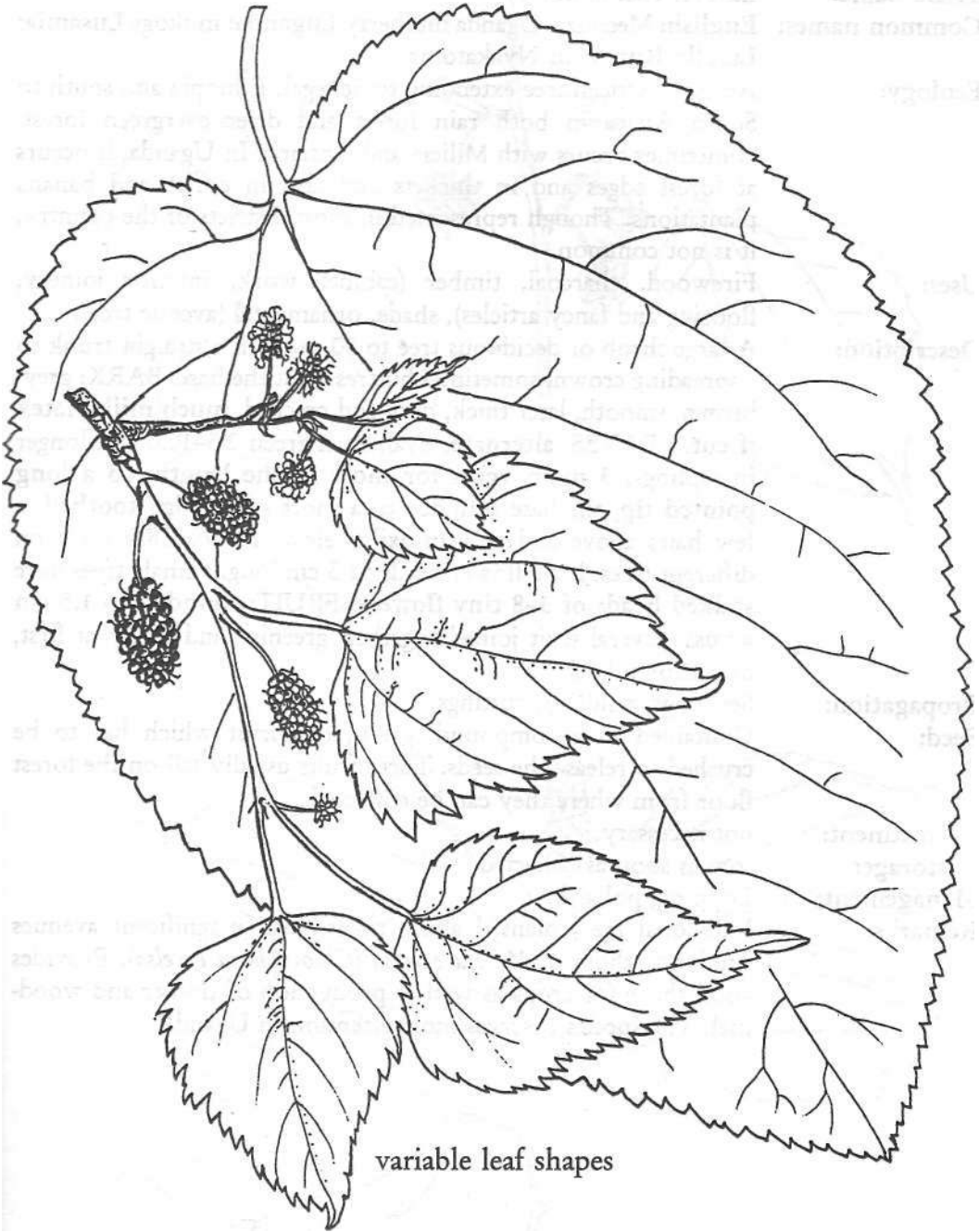
**Seed:** Poor germination. No. of seeds per kg: 325,000-700,000.

**treatment:** soak in cold water for 48 hours,

**storage:** can be stored a long time.

**Management:** Fast growing, especially when grown from cuttings. Lopping to encourage branching and keeping the height as required.

**Remarks:** Many people in Uganda have engaged themselves in the cultivation of this species. Saplings grown from seed produce fruit in 5-8 years, but from cuttings they do so in 3 years. The tree can be used as a hedge or to stabilize slopes.



variable leaf shapes