Morus mesozygia (M. lactea) Moraceae

Indigenous

Trade name: East African mulberry. **English:** Mecodze, Uganda mulberry **Luganda:** mukoge **Lusamia:** Lufullo **Runyoro:** Nyakatoma.


Ecology: An East African tree extending to Senegal, Ethiopia and south to South Africa in both rain forest and drier evergreen forest. Sometimes occurs with Milicia and Antiaris. In Uganda, it occurs at forest edges and in thickets and also in coffee and banana plantations. Though represented in most districts of the country, it is not common.

Uses: Firewood, charcoal, timber (cabinet work, interior joinery, flooring and fancy articles), shade, ornamental (avenue tree).

Description: A large shrub or deciduous tree to 30 m, with a straight trunk to a spreading crown, sometimes buttressed at the base. BARK: grey-brown, smooth, later thick, dark and cracked, **much milky latex if cut.** LEAVES: **alternate,** oval, dark green 2.5-10.0 cm, longer in saplings, **3 main veins for most of the length, to a long pointed tip,** the base rounded to a short stalk, **edge toothed,** a few hairs above and in vein axils below. FLOWERS: sexes on different trees. Male flower heads to 3 cm long. Female trees have **stalked heads of 3-8 tiny flowers.** FRUIT: **rounded to 1.5 cm across,** several fruit joined together, greenish and fleshy at first, dry, brown later.

Propagation: Seedlings, wildings, cuttings.

Seed: Contained in a compound, green, dry fruit which has to be crushed to release the seeds. These fruits usually fall on the forest floor from where they can be collected,

treatment: not necessary,

storage: sow as soon as collected.

Management: Lopping, pollarding. Individual trees planted along roads form magnificent avenues similar to those of *Milicia excelsa* (*Chlorophora excelsa*).

Remarks: Provides good shade for crops as well as production of timber and wood-fuel. The species deserves more attention in Uganda.
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