

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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