

Indigenous

Trade name: East African camphor wood.

Common names; Rukiga: Mwiha.

Ecology: A majestic evergreen timber tree widely distributed throughout East Africa and common in wetter forests. For optimum growth it requires deep fertile soils with good drainage. In Uganda, it occurs in upland and mountain forests, commonly in the Impenetrable (Bwindi), Kalinzu and Kasyoha-Kitomi Forests.

Uses: Firewood, charcoal, timber (joinery, furniture), veneer/ plywood, paneling, building poles, medicine (roots, inner bark).

Description: Mature trees may reach 40 m with a massive trunk up to 3 m across. Young trees are green-grey shapely cones. Leaves and wood are camphor scented but not the bark. **BARK:** grey, granular, then **red-brown, scaling in large flakes.** **LEAVES:** dark green, oval to rounded, **grey-white below, the veins wavy and brown, the edge thickened.** **FLOWERS:** separate male and female flowers, 8-10 yellow-white-green flowers, hairy and stalked. **FRUIT:** a smooth green drupe, very small, seeds surrounded by pulp.

Propagation Root suckers, seedlings.

Seed: Fruit may be attacked by insects but the tree produces plenty of seed. No. of seeds per kg: 6,600. In best conditions 45% germination in 30-45 days, but it is often sporadic, within 2-3 months, not necessary.

treatment:

storage:

sow seed immediately after extraction from the fruit as they do not store.

Management: Fast growing; coppicing.

Remarks: The tree coppices well at any age. It produces one of the most valuable East African timbers. The dark brown wood is strong, highly resistant to acids and fungi, though less resistant to termites.

