

Indigenous

Trade names: Podo, East African yellow-wood.

Common names: **English:** Podo, East African yellow-wood **Luganda:** Musenene.

Ecology: An East African species with two varieties, one common in Tanzania and in isolated forest remnants in Kenya (Taita, Ngulia). *P. usambarensis* var. *dawei* is a tree of highland rain forests, 950-2,700 m. It is rare on Mt. Elgon but abundant in Sango Bay Forest, a seasonal swamp forest on the western side of Lake Victoria.

Uses: Firewood, charcoal, timber, poles, tool handles, utensils (spoons, combs, mortars), ornamental (avenue tree).

Description: A large, evergreen, much-branched tree up to 60 m high with compact crown. **BARK:** pale grey to pale brown, smooth when young, becoming **rough and flaking with age**. **LEAVES:** small, narrow, shiny green, to 5 cm long. Adult **leaves parallel sided, but narrowed abruptly to the tip**. **CONES:** **spherical, up to 3 cm across**, green at first, turning **purple-green after ripening**, with thin pulp surrounding one seed. Seed shell 2-8 mm thick.

Propagation Seedlings, wildings.

Seed: No. of seeds per kg: 200-210. Germination is fair but slow even after complete removal of the seed coat, reaching 60% after 9 weeks.

treatment: not necessary, but cracking the woody shell-like covering may hasten germination.

storage: can retain viability for 2 years at room temperature.

Management: A slow-growing species. It needs nurse trees for the first 15 years. Rotation period 50-75 years.

Remarks: It is not known whether the Podocarpus occurring in moist montane forests should be regarded as var. *dawei* which has a larger fruit.

