

Indigenous

Trade name: Erimado.

Common names: **English:** Cork wood tree **Kwamba:** Kisongo **Runyoro:** Musodo.

Ecology: A tree of tropical rain forests, common from West to East Africa. In Uganda it grows scattered throughout the lower altitude rain forests in gaps, at forest edges and in secondary scrub and thickets and is common in Budongo Forest. It is a light-demanding tree.

Uses: Utensils (spoons, plates, bowls etc.), food (cooked seeds), oil (seeds), soap (seeds).

Description: A deciduous tree 25-40 m, with a very straight trunk, over 1 m across in large specimens. The spreading rounded crown is fairly open, sometimes with short buttresses at the base. **Young trees have whorled branches arching upwards. Branchlets to 1 cm thick, densely brown hairy when young.** BARK: grey-brown, thin and smooth at first becoming scaly and dark with age. LEAVES: compound digitate with 3-6 leaflets like fingers, the largest central leaflets 10-30 cm long, **the tip long and pointed**, narrowed to the base and hardly stalked, **the edge with small black glandular teeth**, often silvery hairs below. At the base of the leaf stalk are fan-shaped leafy stipules with deeply toothed edges. FLOWERS: green-white-yellow and small. Male heads 15-30 cm and female heads shorter and denser, 6-10 cm. FRUIT: capsules 4-5 cm across, **2-3 lobed, green-yellow**, slightly fleshy and smelling of rotten apples, containing 2-3 red-brown-black seeds, rounded and flat, over 1 cm across.

Propagation: Seedlings (sow seeds in pots), wildings.

Seed: A capsule similar to *Ricinus communis* which breaks open scattering seeds in all directions. Collection is by searching on the forest ground. No. of seed per kg: about 5,200.

treatment: soaking seeds in cold water for 24 hours will hasten germination, liable to insect attack. Add ash to reduce insect damage and store in a dry cool place.

storage:

Management: Fast growing.

Remarks: Plant in pure stands, intercropped with coffee, cocoa or banana or as individual shade and avenue trees. The seed yield an oil which can be used in making varnish and soft soap of low value. The seeds are cooked and eaten by the Baamba. This is a species with much potential. The soft light wood is easily carved.

