

Rothmannia urcelliformis (Randia urcelliformis) *Rubiaceae*

Indigenous

Common names: **English:** Forest rothmania **Rutoro:** Munyaburo.

Ecology: A common shrubby tree in moist or dry forest, often near rivers, extending to South Africa. In Uganda it is part of the forest understorey and quite widely distributed, especially in Kibale Forest. It is said to be common on Mt. Kadam.

Uses: Firewood, charcoal, poles, ornamental.

Description: A shapely evergreen tree or shrub 2-10 m with a thin trunk, often leaning, and with low sweeping branches. Branches tend to be at right angles to the trunk. **BARK:** smooth, grey-brown, rough and slightly scaly with age, branchlets covered with hairs. **LEAVES:** opposite or **in threes**, broadly oval to 7-12 cm long, lime green when young, later dark and shiny, **tip long pointed**, base horizontal, 5-8 main veins each side, surface wavy. Long thin stipules fall early. **FLOWERS:** solitary, **upright, fragrant and trumpet shaped** with 5 petals and overlapping to the right in the bud, the flower **6-8 cm high, the pointed petals 12-45 mm, yellow-white with purple-red markings in the throat**, calyx tube hairy outside and split into thread-like lobes. **FRUIT:** an **erect berry, egg shaped to 6 cm**, slightly ridged, green at first and then brown-black and hard, persistent on the tree.

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

Seed: As the fruit ripens it becomes soft and changes from green-yellow to black. It falls to the ground, where mammals spread the seeds. At the black stage the fruit should be crushed and the seeds separated from the pulp,

treatment: not necessary.

storage: do not store for more than two months.

Management: Fast growing. Coppicing and pollarding.

Remarks: A good tree for firewood and charcoal. Intercrop with coffee or cocoa or as an ornamental. This species, when in full bloom, is a wonderful sight.

