

Sclerocarya birrea subsp. *caffra* (*S. caffra*) *Anacardiaceae*

Indigenous

- Common names:** Arusha: olmang'oi; **Gogo:** mbwejele; **Goro:** gulgurchandi; **Iraqw:** gulgurchandi; **Kuria:** omongwe; **Mate:** mbwegele, mtondoko; **Mbug:** monyangu; **Nguu:** mng'ong'o; Nyam mng'ongo; **Nyat:** muhuri; **Pare:** mng'ong'o; **Suku:** ng'ongo; **Swah:** mng'ongo, mng'ong'o; **Zara:** mng'ongo.
- Ecology:** An African fruit tree occurring from Ethiopia south to Natal at medium to low altitudes scattered in mixed deciduous woodland, wooded grassland, 100-1,600 m. In Tanzania it is widely distributed all over the country.
- Uses:** Firewood, timber (general purpose), utensils (stools, grain mortars, beehives), carving, food (fruit), drink (fruit), bee forage, fodder (leaves, fruit), medicine (bark, roots, leaves), oil (seeds).
- Description:** A deciduous tree 10-18 m with a thick bole and large branches to a light, rounded crown. **BARK:** grey then **black and thick with irregular cracks and raised scales; inner bark pink-red.** **LEAVES:** compound, crowded at tips of branches, **3-18 pairs leaflets plus a central leaflet, each stalked, oval to 10 cm, tip pointed.** **FLOWERS:** male and female flowers on the same or different trees: pale green male flowers in spikes, hang down and attract insects **female flowers solitary, green-pink.** **FRUIT:** **rounded and fleshy to 3.5 cm across, skin cream, spotted,** peeling away from the **sweet flesh** which tastes a bit like mango; 2-3 large seeds inside, oily and edible.
- Propagation:** Seedlings, cuttings, truncheons (large woody cuttings, 2 x 10 cm).
- Seed info.:** No. of seeds per kg: 400-450. Germination is 40% after 6 weeks.
- treatment:** soak in cold water for 24 hours.
- storage:** can retain viability for up to 3 months at room temperature.
- Management:** Coppicing. Young trees coppice easily.
- Remarks:** There are three subspecies in Tanzania which differ in leaflet number and shape, length of flower spike and distribution: subsp. *birrea*, subsp. *multifoliolata*, and subsp. *caffra*. Young trees are susceptible to fire damage. The fruit are rich in vitamin C and are well liked by children. The fruit are also eaten by a variety of game.

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