

Indigenous

**Common names:** **Ateso:** Elilyoi, elilie **English:** Violet tree **Luganda:** Lilo **Lugbara:** Oiyofe **Lugishu:** Wadambasima **Lugwe:** Mwiabala **Lugwere:** Loloyi **Luo A:** Aliya, lalia, lalon **Luo J:** Lilyo **Luo L:** Elila **Lusoga:** Mukondwa **Madi:** Lio **Runyankore:** Mweya **Runyoro:** Nkondwe.

**Ecology:** Widespread in tropical Africa from Kenya and Uganda to South Africa. It occurs in wooded grassland and woodland preferring dry areas and is associated with *Hymenocardia acida* and *Cbmbretum* spp.

**Uses:** Firewood, charcoal, poles, medicine (bark, leaves), bee forage, ornamental, fibre (inner bark), oil (flowers, seed), soap (roots), brooms (from saplings).

**Description:** A semi-deciduous shrub or small tree 2-6 m, with slender branches to an open crown, sometimes with drooping branchlets. **BARK:** young twigs yellow-green, becoming stringy and pale; rough grey mature bark flakes to show yellow below. Deep fissures when old. **LEAVES:** alternate, thin and narrow, tip rounded, to 5 cm long, hairy when young, becoming smooth, blue-green, sometimes clustered on spine-tipped branchlets. **FLOWERS:** small, about 1 cm long, pink or purple, sweet scented in showy-sprays with new leaves. **FRUIT:** rounded and winged, to 4 cm long, purple-green when young, pale yellow-brown when mature, hanging in bunches.

**Propagation:** Seedlings, direct sowing at site.

**Seed:** No. of seeds per kg: about 36,000. Seeds germinate with difficulty if not pre-treated. Germination of treated seed good and fairly fast, soak in cold water for 24 hours.

**treatment:**

**storage:** can retain viability for a long period at room temperature if kept dry.

**Management:** Fairly fast growing. Grows from root suckers.

**Remarks:** A beautiful flowering tree with potential as an ornamental in parks and gardens. The wood is pale yellow and has been used for bows. The fibres have been used for fish nets, bead strings and thread to sew barkcloth. The roots contain methyl salicylate and a saponin making them highly poisonous. An antidote for snakebite and a cough mixture are prepared from leaves, an abortifacient from powdered bark and a root infusion relieves toothache. But great care must be taken when using these medicinal substances.

