

Solanecio mannii (Crassocephalum mannii)

Compositae

(Asteraceae)

Indigenous

Common names: **Luganda:** Kiralankuba **Lusoga:** Mugaba **Runyankore:** Mugango **Rukiga:** Mukono, mugango **Runyoro:** Kinyangango.

Ecology: A shrub or tree common in East Africa and also into South Africa. Widespread in higher wet areas of Kenya. It is a low-altitude species in Uganda not extending above 1,500 m. It grows in secondary scrub, forest gaps and plantations preferring high-rainfall areas.

Uses: Firewood, medicine (roots and leaves), ornamental, boundary marking.

Description: A much-branched woody shrub or tree to 12 m. **The branching is in threes.** BARK: Usually **grey-green**, but grey-brown on old specimens. Branches marked clearly with old leaf scars. LEAVES: crowded at the end of branches, long oval and narrow, pale green **rather fleshy**, about 15 cm (up to 40 cm), the tip pointed, the edge deeply and irregularly toothed, tapering to the base which clasps the stem. FLOWERS: small yellow-orange flowers in **large branched terminal** or axillary heads 15-80 cm long with 6 florets together (**florets only tubular—no** ray florets). Flowers open at dusk and have a very unpleasant smell. FRUIT: typical of the family, **small nutlets/seeds** which have **hairy tufts** like parachutes to seed is blown and dispersed by wind.

Propagation: Direct sowing at site.

Seed: Collect seeds before they are ripe. Put them in a polythene bag to ripen so the seeds are released there and can be easily collected, not necessary,

treatment:

.storage: sow as soon as collected.

Management: Fast growing. No tending is required.

Remarks: The species is distributed throughout all moist districts of Uganda. The wood is extremely soft and burns quickly.

