

Indigenous

- Common names:** **English:** Bitter apple **Luganda:** Etengoeddene, ettengolyabalalo.
- Ecology:** A common African species of upland forest clearings and disturbed ground. It can form dense colonies in wooded grassland. In Uganda it grows in secondary scrub, abandoned settlements and cultivated areas.
- Uses:** Live fence, glue (liquid of the fruit), ceremonial, medicine (fruit, leaves, roots).
- Description:** A large vigorous woody shrub or small tree 1-6 m, the branches with scattered thorns which are **flattened at the base and straight or hooked to 14 mm long**. **BARK:** grey-brown with a few prickles. **Branchlets covered with white woolly hairs** and very many sharply curved thorns. **LEAVES:** usually alternate, 5-14 cm, quite wide but **deeply divided into 5-7 lobes**, lobes pointed, becoming shiny above but **under surface white with hairs** and prickles along the midrib. **FLOWERS:** white-pale mauve, about 2 cm across, shortly tubular with conspicuous yellow anthers in the throat, 5 petal lobes oblong, several flowers together beside leaves on thin stalks. Calyx and stalks white hairy and spiny. **FRUIT: rounded to lemon shaped with a pointed tip**, often warty, 3-5 cm long, smooth and fleshy, **orange-yellow, drying brown-black**, containing many seeds in sticky pulp.
- Propagation:** It is much easier to transplant wildings than to raise seedlings in nurseries.
- Seed:** The ripe berry should be crushed, dried and the seeds separated.
- treatment:** not necessary.
- storage:** store in sealed containers in a cool place.
- Management:** Fast growing; trimming.
- Remarks:** In some areas of the highlands in the south-west of Uganda this plant has become a serious invader. The liquid of the fruit is used as glue to fix tool handles and joints in musical instruments. The fruit is poisonous and is used against tapeworm, the roots and leaves for excessive menstrual flow and the roots alone to treat epilepsy. The root bark is used to treat inflammation. The plant is also used in initiation ceremonies for young girls.

