

Strychnos innocua

Loganiaceae

Indigenous

Common names: **Bende:** bunkundu; **Bond:** mkwakwa; **Eng:** dull-leaved strychnos; **Gogo:** munhulwa; **Goro:** furudou; **Mwera:** mgulungulu; **Nyam:** mkulwa, mpundu, mumundu; **Nyat:** mkulungundu; **Rangi:** mukomu; **Samb:** mtanga; **Swah:** mkwakwa; **Zigua:** mtonga.

Ecology: A tree growing in lowlands from Kenya to Malawi and South Africa. Found in coastal woodland, *Brachystegia* woodland, and bushlands up to 1,400 m. In Tanzania it occurs in Tabora, Dodoma, Singida, Kondoia and on Zanzibar.

Uses: Firewood, tools, poles, food (fruit).

Description: A shrub or small tree, usually 3-6 m, **without** spines, branches often twisted, branchlets hanging down. **BARK:** pale grey, smooth, branchlets powdery grey-green to yellow-brown. **LEAVES:** in opposite pairs, widely spaced, tough, **dull blue-green** with 3-5 main veins and **clear net veining, both sides similar, wider at rounded tip, 4-10 cm.** **FLOWERS:** small, green-cream, **2-4 in stalked clusters beside leaves, calyx shorter than petals.** **FRUIT:** round with a **thick woody shell, 5-7 cm** across, blue-green, turning **yellow-orange**, containing many seeds in pulp.

Propagation: Seedlings, root suckers.

Seed info.: No. of seeds per kg: about 1,800. Germination is poor.

treatment: soaking in cold water for 12 hours may improve germination.

storage: can retain viability for only a short period (2 months).

Management: Pruning, coppicing.

Remarks: The tree is often left in farmlands because of its edible fruit. Even the fresh wood burns so it is useful as firewood.

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