

# Tectona grandis

*Verbenaceae*

S.E. Asia

**Trade names:** Teak.

**Common names:** **English:** Teak.

**Ecology:** The natural range is wet tropical lowland forests of Burma, India, Thailand, and on the Indonesian islands. It grows in a variety of soils but deep soils with good drainage are necessary for satisfactory growth. In Uganda, it has been grown in trials in Jinja, Hoima and Gulu Districts, and it has also been planted in Arua and Moyo Districts. It now produces viable seed.

**Uses:** Firewood, timber (boat building, heavy construction, furniture), poles.

**Description:** A large deciduous tree over 30 m in height in favourable growing conditions. The bole is often buttressed and may be fluted to a considerable height, up to **15 m long below** the first branches, and up to 1 m in diameter at breast height. Crown open with many small branches. **BARK:** brown on the bole, distinctly fibrous and with shallow longitudinal fissures. **LEAVES:** 4-sided, branchlets bear the **very large leaves** which are shed for 3-4 months during the later half of the dry season. Leaves shiny above, **hairy below**, vein network clear, about 30 x 20 cm but young leaves up to 1 m long. **FLOWERS:** small, about 8 mm across, **mauve-white** and arranged in large **flowering heads**, about 45 cm long, found on the topmost branches in the unshaded part of the crown. **FRUIT:** round, hard and woody, enclosed in an **inflated, bladder-like** covering, pale green at first, then brown after maturity.

**Propagation:** Stumps (12-18 months).

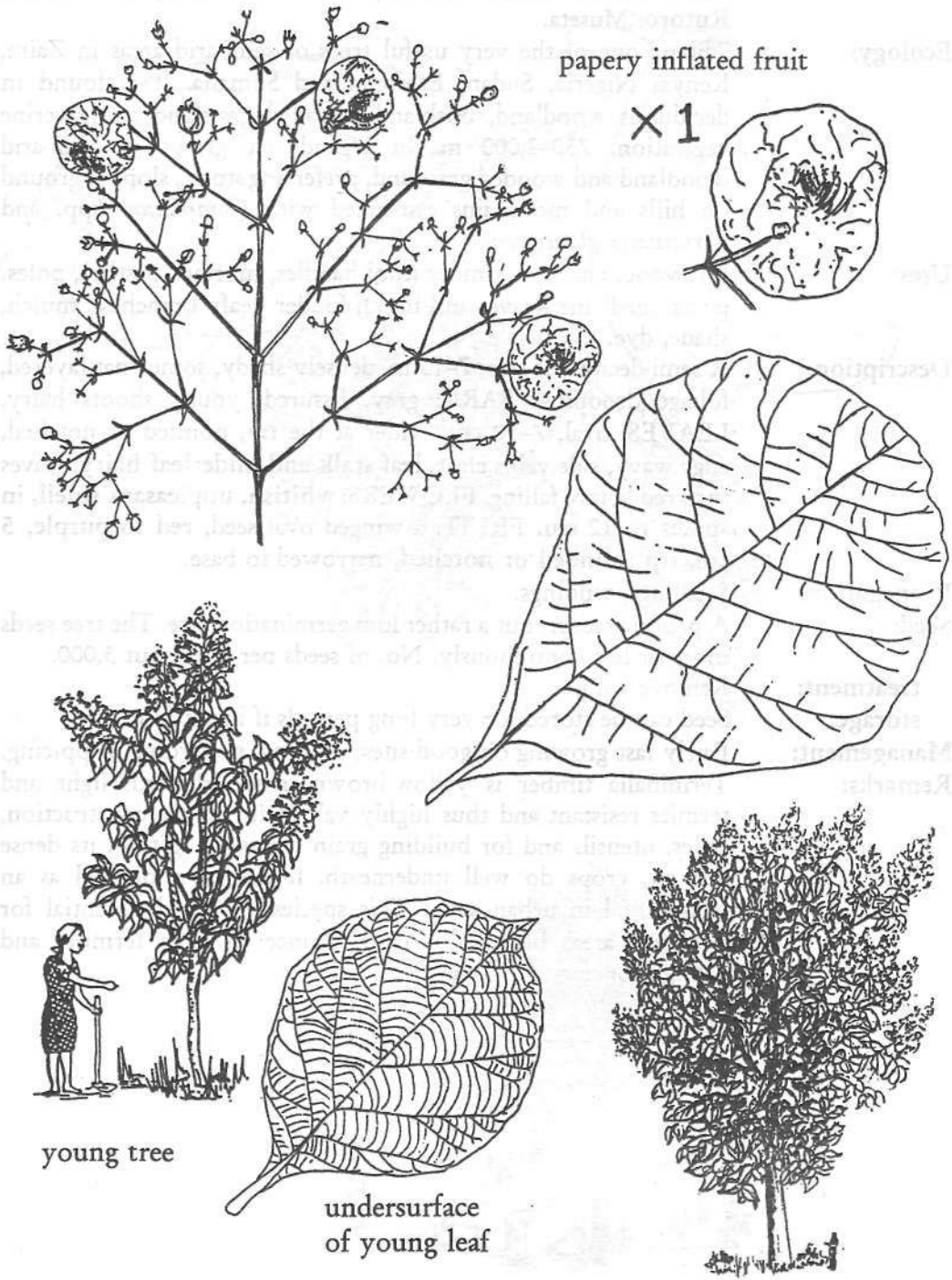
**Seed:** Germination is good and uniform after 5-6 weeks. No. of seeds per kg: 1,000-1,700.

**treatment:** alternate soaking in cold water and drying in the sun for 2-3 days over a period of 2-3 weeks. A second method is to char (or half burn) the fruits by covering them with a thin layer of grass and setting this alight.

**storage:** seed can be stored for up to 3-4 years.

**Management:** Coppicing, thinning, weeding. Shoots can reach 3 m in 2 years.

**Remarks:** One of the most useful timbers in the world. In Uganda, plantation trials have not been very promising, but it seems to do well in low-altitude areas along the Nile in North Western Region. The tree does well in most parts of Uganda when planted as individual shade trees.



papery inflated fruit

×1

young tree

undersurface of young leaf