

Terminalia brownii

Combretaceae

Indigenous

COMMON NAMES: **Boran:** Baresa; **Embu:** Mururuku; **Kamba:** Muuku; **Kipsigis:** Moissot; **Luhya:** Shirha; **Luo:** Ong'ang', Manera; **Marakwet:** Goloswa; **Orma:** Haririgo; **Pokot:** Kalas (plant), Koloswo; **Samburu:** Ibukoi; **Somali:** Hareri biins, Harar; **Swahili:** Mbarao; **Tharaka:** Mururuku; **Tugen:** Koloswo, Koloswet; **Turkana:** Epiy.

DESCRIPTION: A semi-deciduous tree, 7–13 m, densely shady, somewhat layered, foliage drooping. **BARK:** Grey, fissured, young shoots hairy. **LEAVES:** Oval, 7–10 cm, wider at the tip, pointed or notched, edge wavy, side veins clear, leaf stalk and underleaf hairy, leaves turn red before falling. **FLOWERS:** Whitish, unpleasant smell, in spikes to 12 cm. **FRUIT:** A winged oval seed, red to purple, 5 cm, tip rounded or notched, narrowed to base.

ECOLOGY: This is one of the very useful trees of semi-arid areas in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Kenya, Nigeria, Sudan, Ethiopia and Somalia. Probably the commonest and most widespread *Terminalia* in Kenya, found in deciduous woodland, bushland, wooded grassland and riverine vegetation. Often associated with *Combretum* and other *Terminalia* spp., 700–2,000 m. It has been planted in Kisumu and Nairobi. Prefers well-drained soils. Agroclimatic Zones IV–V.

USES: Firewood, charcoal, timber (construction), poles, posts, beehives, tool handles, utensils (pestles and mortars), watering troughs, medicine (leaves and bark), fodder (leaves), shade, ornamental, mulch, soil conservation, soil improvement, dye, veterinary medicine.

PROPAGATION: Seedlings, wildings.

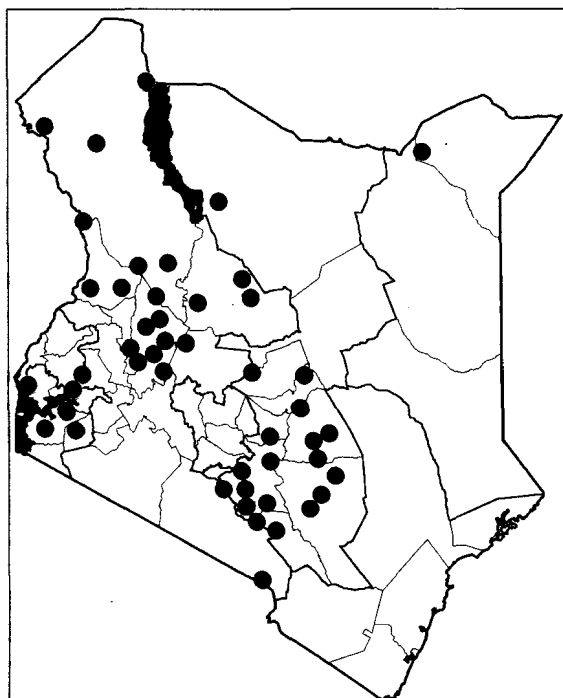
SEED: A prolific seeder, but a rather low germination rate. The tree seeds more or less continuously; about 3,000 seeds per kg.

treatment: Remove wings and soak in cold water overnight, or nip a V-shape on the distal end so that the tip of the seed is just visible. The procedure has to be done carefully so that the seed itself is not damaged.

Light burning of the de-winged seed may also hasten germination.

storage: Seed can be stored for long periods if insect free.

MANAGEMENT: Fairly fast growing on good sites; coppicing, lopping, pollarding; needs protection from livestock when young.



Terminalia brownii (cont)

REMARKS: The wood is yellow-brown, medium hard, light and termite resistant, and thus highly valued for house construction, poles, utensils and for building grain stores. In spite of its dense canopy, crops do well underneath and the tree is widely recommended for agroforestry. A very useful tree in semi-arid areas with resistance to both termites and drought once established. It has been planted in urban areas as an ornamental.

A very closely related species is *T. kilimandscharica* (**Boni:** Leh heli; **Boran:** Biress; **Kamba:** Muuuku,

Kiuuku; **Swahili:** Mbambaro). Fruits of this species are relatively larger than those of *T. brownii*, measuring up to 11 cm long. It is common in relatively dry lowlands of Eastern and Coast Provinces. Uses are similar to those of *T. brownii*.

FURTHER READING: <http://www.worldagroforestrycentre.org/Sites/TreeDBS/AFT/AFT.htm>; Albrecht, 1993; Beentje, 1994; Bein et al., 1996; Bekele-Tesemma et al., 1993; Blundell, 1987; Dharani, 2002; ITDG and IIRR, 1996; Katende et al., 1995; Kokwaro, 1993; Maundu et al., 1999; Mbuya et al., 1994; Noad and Birnie, 1989; Sommerlatte and Sommerlatte, 1990.

