

Terminalia prunioides

Combretaceae

Indigenous

COMMON NAMES: **Boran:** Korobo; **English:** Purple-pod terminalia; **Giriama:** Mwangi; **Kamba:** Mutoo; **Malakote:** Mwangata; **Orma:** Bires; **Pokot:** Apetaa, Tikit; **Sanya:** Korubo; **Somali:** Hareri; **Taita:** Msangano; **Swahili:** Mwangati, Mwangati punda; **Tharaka:** Mutooro; **Tugen:** Tikitua.

DESCRIPTION: A shrubby tree 3–10 m. Conspicuous in **young green leaf**, the rounded crown quite dense and sometimes **well layered, branches** long and drooping. **BARK:** Grey, grooved. **LEAVES:** Small, spirally arranged on **spiky side twigs**, shape **variable, 4–7 cm, the tip rounded or notched, 3–5 side veins** clear below. **FLOWERS:** Buds bright red, flowers cream, in **spikes to 8 cm, the smell unpleasant; much nectar.** **FRUIT:** **Purple-red to brown, 3.5 cm x 2 cm, or even larger, clearly notched, persisting on the tree.**

ECOLOGY: Widespread in Africa. A tree of dry forest and dry bushland. In Kenya, found in *Acacia-Commiphora* bushland or woodland, often near rivers or luggas; on the coast also on saline soils. Mainly found in Mwingi, Kitui, Makueni and coastal districts; 0–1,200 m. Agroclimatic Zones V–VI. Flowers in November–December (Mwingi, Tana River).

USES: Firewood, charcoal, timber, furniture (cabinets, etc.), poles, posts, tool handles, boat building, medicine, fodder (fruit), mulch, green manure.

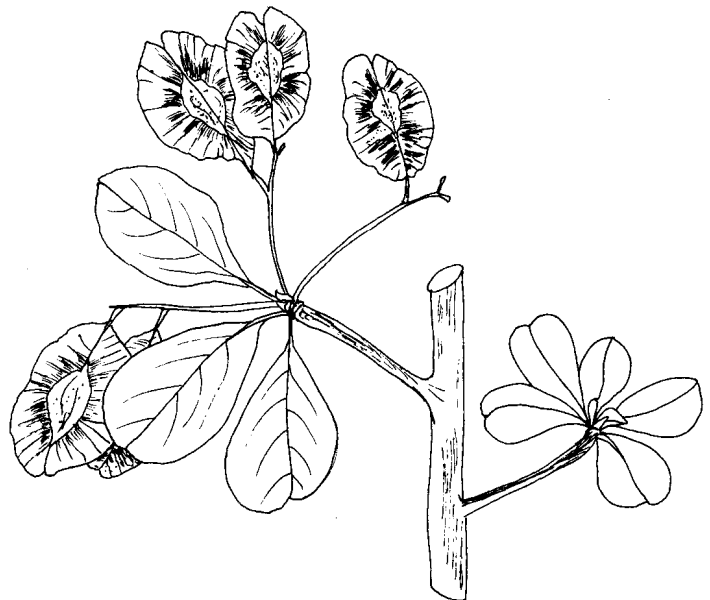
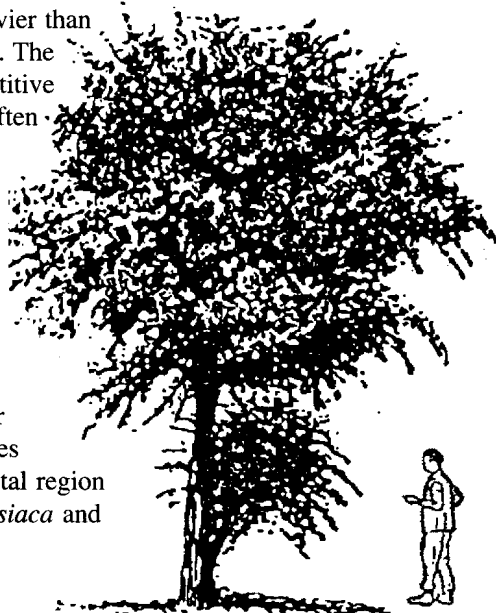
PROPAGATION: Seedlings.

SEED: 8,000–9,000 seeds per kg. Germination is often poor and may be slow, with a germination rate of about 20%. **treatment:** Remove wings and soak in cold water, or make a V-shaped nip at 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. **storage:** Seed can be stored for long periods in airtight containers.

MANAGEMENT: Pruning, pollarding, lopping.

REMARKS: The wood is hard, tough and termite resistant; used in house construction and for dhow keels (resistant to salt water and borers). It is harder and heavier than that of *T. brownii*. The tree is not competitive with crops. It is often seen heavily pollarded and with beehives suspended from the upper branches.

Besides this species and *T. spinosa*, the other indigenous species found in the coastal region include *T. sambesiaca* and *T. brevipes*.



T. sambesiaca (**Boni:** Mbabare; **Swahili:** Mbombaro) is a tall tree to 25 m high with large leaves to 13 cm long and long flower spikes to 15 cm. This is a strictly coastal species found in woodland and forest margins. It is a good timber tree used by the Digo for dhow masts, firewood and construction. *T. brevipes* (**Duruma:** Manga, Msuri; **Malakote:** Mkokola; **Pokomo:** Mualango; **Somali:** Allan), on the other hand, is a shrub or small tree to 9 m, occasionally climbing. The bark is thorny, while shoots end in a spine. This is a riverine species also seen around waterholes, especially in lower parts of the Tana River. The species is used for poles by the Pokomo and Wardei.

FURTHER READING: <http://www.worldagroforestrycentre.org/Sites/TreeDBS/AFT/AFT.htm>; Albrecht, 1993; Beentje, 1994; Blundell, 1987; National Academy of Sciences, 1980; Noad and Birnie, 1989; Palgrave and Palgrave, 2002.

