

Terminalia sericea

Combretaceae

Indigenous

Common names: **Eng:** silver terminalia; Gogo: mpululu; **Goro:** bukuumo, sarakwi; Hehe: mpululu; **Iraqw:** bukuumo, sarakwi; **Mate:** mulamwili; Nyam: mpululu, mzima; **Nyat:** mufuruu; **Nyir:** mupuluu; Rangi: mwanya; **Sand:** sengh'aa.

Ecology: A tree widespread in Tanzania and occurring in many other parts of Africa from Zaire to South Africa. It occurs in Brachystegia woodland and wooded grasslands, especially on sandy soils, 450-1,300 m.

Uses: Firewood, charcoal, timber (general, bedsteads), poles (building), posts, tool handles, medicine (leaves, roots), bee forage, rope (bark), red dye (bark).

Description: A small, well-formed deciduous tree, 3-16 m with spreading branches to a light rather flat crown. **BARK:** dark grey or grey-brown, rather rough with longitudinal fissures. Branchlets with **characteristic purplish bark** peeling off in strips, pale below. **LEAVES:** simple, **clustered** towards the tips of branchlets, 5-12 cm long, narrowed to the base, pale green, leathery, with **silvery silky hairs below**. Young leaves pink and dying leaves deep pink before they fall. **FLOWERS:** cream to pale yellow, in **short spikes to 5 cm**, buds silky hairy, opening with new leaves. **FRUIT:** pink-purple-brown, to 4 cm long, oval and flat, **winged around the central seed, tip notched**.

Propagation: Seedlings, root suckers.

Seed **info.:** No. of seeds per kg: about 1,200. Germination is good with fresh seeds,

treatment: remove wings.

storage: seed can be stored if kept dry. They can remain viable for up to 3 years.

Management: Pollarding, coppicing.

Remarks: This species can grow in very poor soils which are not suitable for farming. The hard yellow wood is generally useful, and posts both for fences and houses last well and resist insect attack. Leaves have been used to treat stomach ache, diarrhoea, snake bite, and wounds.

