

## Toona ciliata

*Meliaceae*

Tropical Asia, Southern China, Himalayas

**Common names:** **English:** Toon tree.

**Ecology:** Toon originates from tropical Asia. In Uganda it grows on a variety of sites but prefers well-drained soils. If the roots are cut they produce a lot of suckers. It is capable of competing with local trees and sets seed easily.

**Uses:** Firewood, charcoal, timber (furniture, joinery, light construction), windbreak, shade.

**Description:** A semi-evergreen tree usually 10 m but may reach 21 m with **large branches** to a spreading crown. **BARK:** grey-brown, rough and cracking into squares. **LEAVES:** compound, very long up to 90 cm with 10-14 pairs of leaflets, narrow leaflets up to 15 cm long, **often unequal-sided**, tapering to a fine tip, smell of onions when crushed. **FLOWERS:** very small, white, **bell-shaped, in inconspicuous sprays**. **FRUIT:** **brown capsules, split open into dark brown star shapes** releasing small winged seeds.

**Propagation:** Directing sowing on site, root suckers, wildings.

**Seed:** Toon is a prolific seeder. In season, the seed lie on the ground like termite wings and are easy to collect. No. of seeds per kg: 300,000- 380,000. Germination rate 40-60%.

**treatment:** not necessary, but must sow seed with wing up.

**storage:** can store up to two months.

**Management:** Fast growing; coppicing, pollarding.

**Remarks:** The plant is very aggressive and invasive and is unsuitable for planting in gardens or near food crops because of its shallow and aggressive root system. The red wood is soft, light and moderately durable. It can withstand drought conditions if well established.

