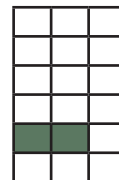


# *Trichilia emetica*

Meliaceae



## Indigenous

**Am:** *Mahogani*

**Br:** *Anona*

**Eng:** *Cape mahogany*

## Ecology

An important tree throughout tropical Africa. It is found in savannah and prefers well-drained rich soil. In Ethiopia it is most frequently found in Dry and Moist Kolla agroclimatic zones of Gojam, Shewa, Hararge, Ilubabor, Gamo Gofa and Sidamo, 450–1,350 m.

## Uses

Firewood, timber, furniture, tool handles, boats, poles, medicine (leaves, bark, roots, oil), shade, ornamental, windbreak, oil/soap (seed).

## Description

An evergreen tree, 15–30 m, with dark hanging foliage, pyramid-shaped when young, later the crown is rounded and heavy, the trunk rather smooth. **BARK:** Grey-red-brown, finely grooved, later rough, scaling to show green under-bark. **LEAVES:** Compound, stalks and shoots softly hairy, 4-5 pairs of leaflets, thick and shiny, leaflets increasing in size up to the largest central leaflet which may be up to 16 cm long, the midrib below continues into an unusual hairy tip. Leaves dry green to pale brown, 11–18 pairs of veins below are close together. **FLOWERS:** Inconspicuous, fragrant clusters, cream-green, 5 thick petals around a hairy centre of stamens. **FRUIT:** Round, red-brown hairy capsules to 3 cm

across dry and split into 3–4 parts. A clear neck to 1 cm long (unlike *T. dregeana*) connects the capsule to the fruit stalk. Up to 6 shiny black seeds hang out of the open capsules, each one almost covered by a soft orange-red aril.

## Propagation

Seedlings, direct sowing at site, wildings.

## Seed

Collect capsules when they start opening, dry in the shade, shake out the seed. About 300 seed per kg.

**Treatment:** Remove the soft orange-red aril by soaking in cold water, use fresh seed for best results.

**Storage:** Seeds lose viability quickly and should not be dried or stored.

## Management

Fairly fast growing, pollarding, coppicing.

## Remarks

Seeds are extremely poisonous and should not be eaten but they contain useful oil. Leaves are said to have soapy properties. The pink-grey-brown timber is susceptible to insect attack.

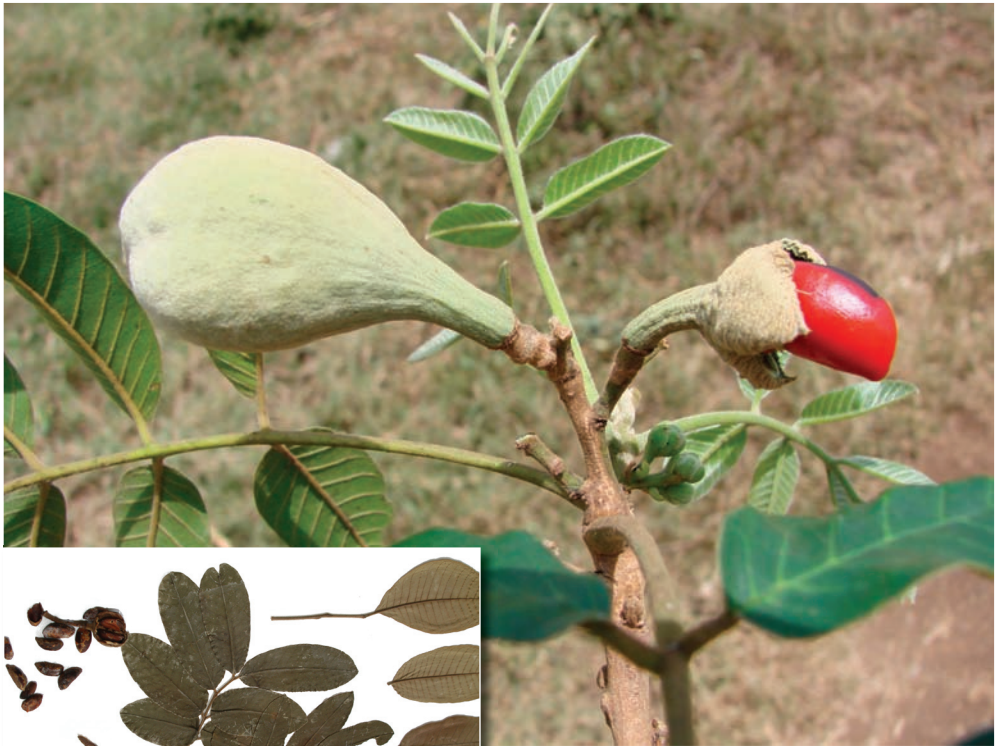


Photo: Patrick Maundu

