

Uapaca nitida

Euphorbiaceae

Indigenous

English: Narrow-leaved mahobohobo
Nyanja: Kasokolowe
Senga: Kasokolowe, mnengo, msechela

Ecology: A well-known fruit tree of southern Central Africa from Zaire to Mozambique. Found throughout Zambia. It is frequent in miombo and chipya woodland and occasionally in Kalahari woodland, an obvious indicator of poor soils. Occurs in miombo woodland in Eastern Province.

Uses: Firewood, **timber**, poles (building and joinery), **food** (fruit), medicine (leaves, twigs and roots), fodder (fruit), shade.

Description: A small evergreen tree to 12 m with a light rounded crown. The young shoots are hairless. **BARK:** grey-black, fissured and scaling in varying shapes. **LEAVES:** **alternate, simple, glossy, narrow** and thinly leathery, **5–16 cm long, the tip broadly rounded**, the base narrowed to a **yellow-green stalk to 5 cm long**; veins clear above, the edge sometimes wavy. Leaves usually crowded at the ends of branches. **FLOWERS:** **creamy yellow, on stalks below the leaves. Male and female flowers on different trees**, March–May. No true petals but coloured bracts at base of flowers. Female flowers have a **single ovary with thick branched styles**. Male flowers smaller in dense heads. **FRUIT:** abundant, small, **rounded, to 2 cm across** ripening to orange in six months, September–November. It has edible tasty flesh (but not as good as *U. kirkii*).

Propagation: Seedlings, rootsuckers, wildings.

Seed: –

treatment: Not necessary.

storage: Not recommended.

Management: Coppicing, protect wildings.

Remarks: The fruit makes a very nourishing pig feed. Charms made from the wood are often carried by hunters. The smoke from burning twigs of *Uapaca nitida*, *Ziziphus abyssinica* and grass from a dead person's house is alleged by some people to drive away evil spirits.

