

# Vernonia amygdalina

*Compositae*

(Asteraceae)

Indigenous

**Common names:** **Luganda:** Mululuza **Lugbara:** Omululisi **Lugishu:** Muuluza, chichilusa, luluza **Luo A:** Labori **Luo L:** Okelo-okelo **Madi:** Kayakaya **Runyankore:** Mubirizi **Runyarwanda:** Mubirizi **Runyoro:** Kibirizi.

**Ecology:** A woody shrub of both East and West Africa growing in sub-humid wooded savannah or wetter highlands. In Uganda it grows in secondary scrub, forest edges, thickets and invades cultivated areas.

**Uses:** Firewood, food (leaves as vegetable), medicine (roots, bark, leaves), ornamental, mulch, soil conservation and improvement, live fence, toothbrushes (stems), stakes.

**Description:** A single-stemmed shrub to 3 m, sometimes a tree to 10 m with a wide bole. **BARK:** pale grey, rather rough, flaking later, branches brittle. **LEAVES:** ovate, up to 20 x 5 cm, usually 10 cm long, **tapering at both ends**, dark green above, **soft pale hairs below**, edge may be widely toothed. **FLOWERS:** white-green, each only 6 mm across, in dense branching **flattened heads to 30 cm across**, sweet scented in the evening. **FRUIT:** tiny seeds with stiff white hairs.

**Propagation:** Wildings, direct sowing on site. Thin after germination.

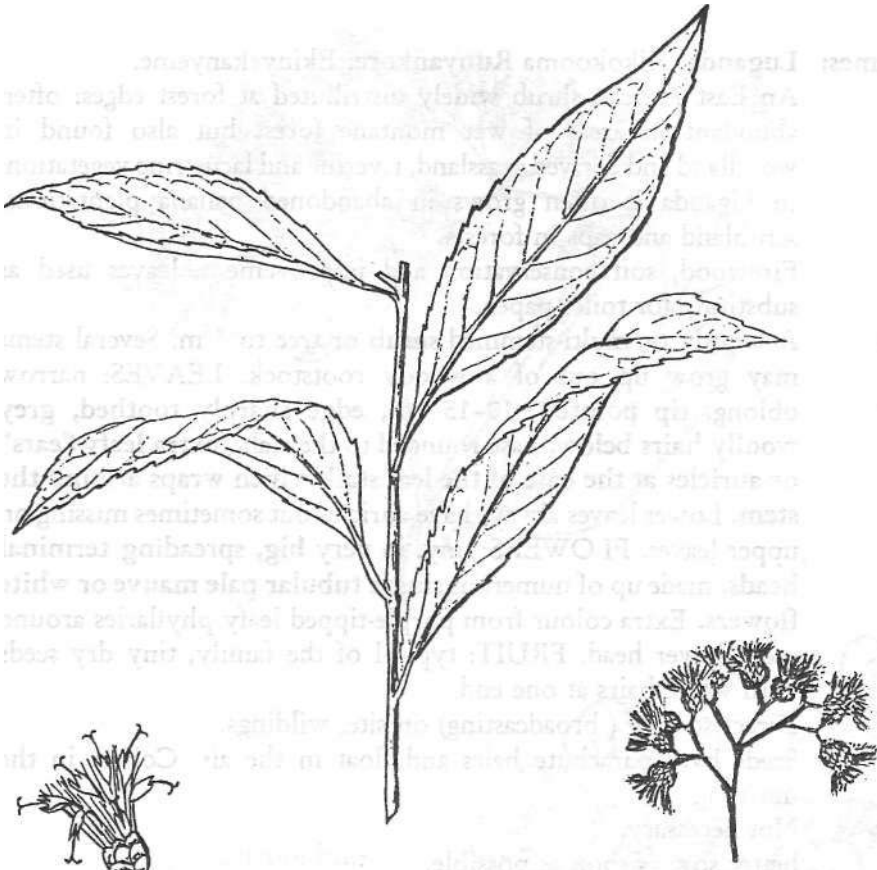
**Seed:** Seeds have parachute hairs and float in the air. Collect in the morning.

**treatment:** Not necessary.

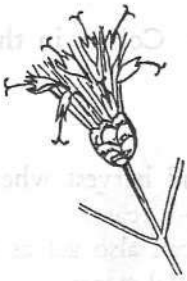
**storage:** better sow as soon as possible.

**Management:** Medium to fast growing; coppicing.

**Remarks:** The wood resists termite attack making the branches useful for fences, support for earthworks and stakes. The dried stems are light but strong. A useful tree for reclaiming degraded soils.



flower heads



seed

