

Indigenous

Common names: **Luganda:** Kikokooma **Runyankore:** Ekinyekanyeme.

Ecology: An East African shrub widely distributed at forest edges; often abundant in areas of wet montane forest but also found in woodland and derived grassland, riverine and lacustrine vegetation. In Uganda it often grows in abandoned banana plantations, scrubland and gaps in forests.

Uses: Firewood, soil conservation and improvement, leaves used as substitute for toilet paper.

Description: A woody or multi-stemmed shrub or tree to 4 m. Several stems may grow up out of a woody rootstock. **LEAVES:** narrow oblong, **tip pointed, 10-15 cm, edge sharply toothed, grey woolly hairs below**, base rounded to the stalk, **extra leafy "ears" or auricles at the base of the leaf stalk which wraps around the stem.** Lower leaves always have auricles but sometimes missing on upper leaves. **FLOWERS:** tiny, in **very big, spreading terminal heads**, made up of numerous **single tubular pale mauve or white flowers.** Extra colour from purple-tipped leafy phyllaries around each flower head. **FRUIT:** typical of the family, tiny dry seeds with white hairs at one end.

Propagation: Direct sowing (broadcasting) on site, wildings.

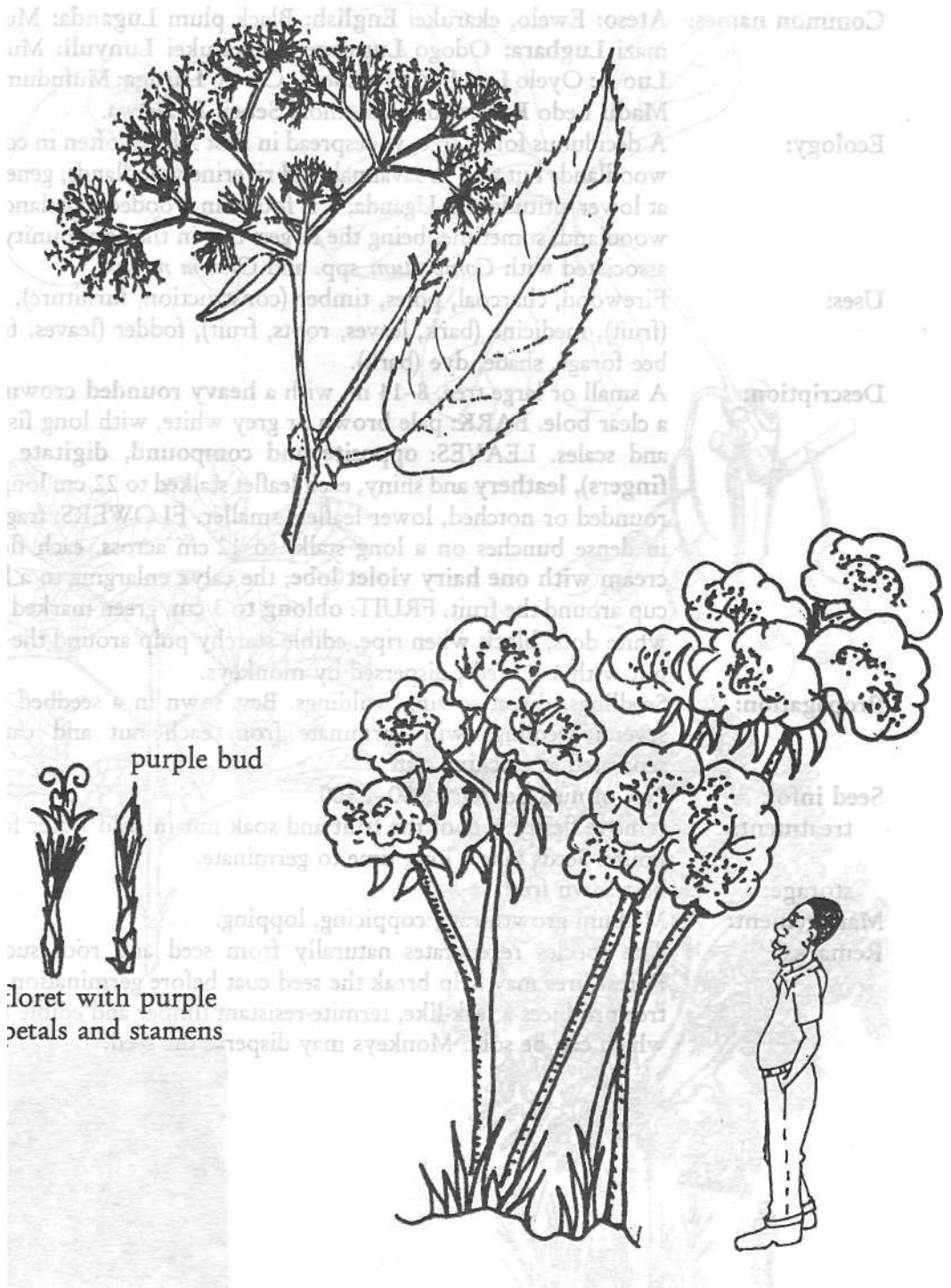
Seed: Seeds have parachute hairs and float in the air. Collect in the morning.

treatment: Not necessary.

storage: better sow as soon as possible.

Management: Once sown let the shrub grow into a bush and harvest when ready. Fast growing; will provide woodfuel in 3-5 years.

Remarks: Useful in reclaiming degraded soils. The bush can also act as a nurse tree for others that require shade in the initial stages.



flower head with purple petals and stamens

purple bud