Acrocarpus fraxinifolius

India, South-East Asia

Common names: Eng: Indian ash, pink cedar, shingle tree.

Ecology: Introduced to Tanzania as a plantation tree originally in trials in Lushoto and Tabora, later throughout Tanzania. It is most suitable for moderate altitudes with red soil (1,000-1,500 m) and a moist climate, but can also stand some drought.

Uses: Firewood, timber (furniture, tea boxes), roof shingle beehives, bee forage, shade, ornamental, mulch, windbreak.

Description: A large tree reaching 60 m. The bole is often buttressed but then a long straight trunk. It is an evergreen tree except in areas with a marked dry season. BARK: pale grey and smooth, trunk and branches bear leaf scars. LEAVES: large compound in distinctive fan shapes to 1 m, young red leaves look like blossoms, leaflets oval, wavy and pointed to 14 cm. FLOWERS: appear on the tree when it is leafless, up to 20 dense heads hang down from branch ends, each 12 cm long, dripping nectar from the red-green flowers, short lived. FRUIT: big bunches of dark brown pods persist on the tree. They split easily to release seed.

Propagation: Seedlings, direct sowing.

Seed info.: No. of seeds per kg: 24,000-29,000. Germination is sporadic, 10-30 days after good pre-treatment.

treatment: nick or soak seed in hot water and allow to cool for hours.

storage: seed loses viability rapidly.

Management: Very fast growing; pollarding, coppicing. Rotation for fuel 8-10 years, timber 30-40 years.

Remarks: The tree should not be planted near houses as dry branches drop off. Competes with crops if grown in fields.
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Caesa Ipinioidae

flower head

one leaflet