

Azelia quanzensis

Caesalpinioideae

Indigenous

English: Mahogany bean, lucky bean

Kunda: Mpapa

Nyanja: Mpapa, mupapa

Senga: Mpapa

Tumbuka: Mpapa

Ecology: Found in lowland thicket from northern South Africa to Kenya, 0–1,200 m and all over Zambia except the nyika plateau. It is deep rooted and prefers well-drained soils.

Uses: **Timber** (furniture, carving), medicine (roots, bark), fodder (leaves), shade, ornamental.

Description: A large semi-deciduous tree up to 24 m with short main trunk and thick spreading branches (providing timber). The flat-to-rounded crown is spreading and shady. **BARK:** grey-brown, flaking in large pieces leaving pale patches underneath. **LEAVES:** compound, leaf stalk to 30 cm, few leaflets, each one to 9 cm, **oblong, tip rounded**. **FLOWERS:** a distinctive **single petal**, green outside, pink-red inside, 2–3 cm wide, sweet scented in small groups on erect heads. **FRUIT:** dark brown, **flat, woody pods**, 20 × 10 cm with 6–10 shiny brown to black seeds in a soft orange-red “cup”.

Propagation: Seedlings, wildings, direct seeding.

Seed: Produces abundant seed. Good germination reaching up to 90% after 4 weeks. No. of seeds per kg: ±480.

treatment: Not necessary for fresh seed, but soak stored seed in cold water for 24 hours to enhance germination.

storage: Can be stored for up to a year.

Management: Grows fast in the early stages. Lopping, pollarding, prune to clear bole.

Remarks: Termite- and fire-resistant. Slow growing. A tree with potential for plantation in miombo woodlands and a good avenue/shade tree. The bark is used as a hunting charm. It is reported that in Tanzania people have been killed by eating the roots for medicinal purposes.

