

Indigenous

- Common names:** **English:** Peacock flower **Lugishu:** Chiruku, kironko, kisubi
Rukiga: Mushebeya **Rukonjo:** Mushebera, musebere **Runyankore:** Mulera, mushebeya **Rutoro:** Mulongo **Sebei:** Swessu.
- Ecology:** Mainly found in East Africa, but also in Ethiopia, Zaire, Madagascar, and West Africa. In Uganda, it is mainly a mixed-forest species, occasionally found as a pioneer species and in thickets, 1,000-2,300 m.
- Uses:** Firewood, charcoal, timber (general purposes), utensils (mortars, water troughs), beehives, medicine (pods, roots, bark), fodder (leaves), bee forage, soil conservation, nitrogen fixation, shade, ornamental.
- Description:** A large deciduous tree, **branches ascending to a flat top**, about 15 m high, trunk up to 75 cm in diameter. **BARK: grey and smooth.** **LEAVES:** bipinnate with 5-7 pairs pinnae, the leaflets **roughly the same size**, 1.0-2.5 cm long, shiny, dark green, **almost rectangular, midrib diagonal, one outer corner rounded, the inner corner with a tiny extra growth** (auriculate). **FLOWERS:** **white-pink clusters**, long stamens hang out. **FRUIT:** very many pods in bundles, shiny brown, **flat with raised edges, 20 cm long, 3 cm wide.**
- Propagation:** Seedlings, direct sowing at site, wildings.
- Seed:** No. of seeds per kg: 10,000-15,000. Good seed "germinates within 3-10 days at optimum rates of 70-80%.
- treatment:** fresh seed requires no pretreatment. Soak stored seeds in warm water and leave to cool to room temperature. The seed coat can also be nicked at the cotyledon end to hasten germination,
- storage:** seed can be stored for at least a year if kept dry and insect free. Add ash to reduce insect damage.
- Management:** Lopping, coppicing while young.
- Remarks:** Seed should be collected while still on the tree to minimize insect damage. The leaves quicken the ripening process in bananas. Despite its name, the tree gives only a small amount of gum if the bark is cut. The pale brown heartwood is a medium strong timber that is easy to work.

