

S.E. Asia

Common names: **English:** Candle-nut tree **Luganda:** Kabakanjagala.

Ecology: A tree growing on hillside forests of S.E. Asia and the Pacific islands where its pale foliage stands out from the darker green vegetation. ("Aleuron" is a Greek word meaning floury.) Well known and used in those areas and imported into Hawaii where it is the national tree emblem, it is now planted throughout the tropics. It grows well in the wetter parts of Uganda and is a garden favourite in Central Region.

Uses: Firewood, food (seed), shade, ornamental, oil (seed).

Description: An evergreen tree 10-20 m with a leafy rounded crown. **BARK:** grey-brown, fairly smooth with fine vertical lines. **LEAVES:** in **clusters** at the ends of branches, hand sized, **10-30 cm long, oval or 3-5 lobed**, tips pointed, **on long stalks**. Young leaves pink-green, young shoots and leaves covered with grey-white hairs, **white floury above**, more rust coloured below. Mature leaves shiny above. **FLOWERS:** in large loose heads, male and female, each cream-white, less than 1 cm, with 5 oblong petals. Flowering may be several times each year. **FRUIT:** clusters of nuts, **green and round, fleshy to 6 cm long**, with **1-2 hard-shelled black seeds** containing oil.

Propagation: Seedlings (sow seeds in pots), wildings, direct sowing at site. Grows easily from seed and has become invasive in wetter parts of the country. Can also be grown from cuttings.

Seed: Seed profuse and easily collected,

treatment: crack seed for faster germination,

storage: it can be stored for a year or so.

Management: Coppices when young and responds to pollarding when old. Fast growing.

Remarks: Plant as a back-yard tree for firewood. Investigation is required on the extraction and use of oil from the seeds. After removing the hard outer coat, the seed is pounded and eaten as a sauce. The oil is semi-drying and can be used for soap, paint and varnish but is much inferior to tung oil. (Tung oil, which is used mainly for varnishing wood, is extracted from a related Chinese species, *A. fordii*.)

