Ekebergia capensis

Meliaceae

Indigenous


Ecology: A medium to large African tree, very variable with a wide distribution from Senegal to Ethiopia to South Africa; first described in the Cape Province. It is very localized in wetter areas. Two forms occur in Uganda: the montane type is found in lower montane forests, often associated with Entandrophragma excelsum, Neobotonia macrocalyx and Cassipourea spp., 1,600-3,000 m. The lowland type is unusual as it grows in woodland and wooded grassland down to 600 m.

Uses: Firewood, charcoal, timber (furniture, light construction), poles, tool handles, medicine, bee forage, soil conservation, ornamental, shade, windbreak.

Description: A handsome semi-deciduous tree, 8-30 m with a large spreading crown. Old trees may have buttresses and large branches. BARK: grey-brown and rough with age cracking into pieces about 5 cm square; the slash is red with white streaks, branchlets dotted with whitish pores. LEAVES: compound, mostly crowded at the ends of branches on stalks to 30 cm long, leaflets 3-6 pairs plus one, shiny green but some hairs below, up to 15 cm long, tip pointed, leaflet blades unequal-sided. FLOWERS: in loose sprays, up to 8 cm, each flower small and white and sweetly scented, male or female. FRUIT: rounded, 1-2 cm long, thin-skinned and orange on long stalks, drying and splitting to set free 2-4 seeds.

Propagation: Seedlings, wildings.

Seed: Good germination. No. of seeds per kg: 2,900-8,600. Not necessary.

Management: This plant is a threatened species in Uganda. The lowland type is inferior in growth and will not yield timber. May be planted as a stand or intercropped with coffee or banana or as an avenue tree.
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