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RC AKRIGHT CITY BUDDY GROUP TREE NAMES' NOMENCLATURE

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1. MUGAVU TREE:

English Name: Albizia Coriaria Tree

Scientific Name: *Albizia coriaria*

Local Runyakitara dialect: Mugavu

Distribution: East Africa and Tropical Africa

Description and Biology:

It is a deciduous tree with a height between 15-30m. The trunk is often twisted and up to 100cm in diameter. The crown is flat and spreading and the new leaves are growing pale bright green, narrowly oval-oblong, rounded and often wider at the base. The bark is grey-black, rough and scaling raggedly. The fruit is flat purple-brown pods, usually shiny, 14-20cm long, about 3cm wide. The flowers are lovely-smelling, white flowers in half-spherical heads. It is found at forest edges, in wooded grassland, woodland and thicket 850 – 1700m above sea level. It will not grow in a tropical forest with a closed canopy.

Uses and services

The sapwood is soft, but the heavy heartwood is hard and durable. The brown timber makes good furniture. Density is around 600 kg/m³ for a moisture content of 12%. The wood is hard and is durable, termite resistant and the timber works easily. Roots and bark are used for medicine and the leaves can be used to hasten the ripening of bananas. Ideal for shading thanks to the crown. Application: firewood, charcoal, timber, poles, furniture, boat building, fodder, bee forage, ornamental.

In Uganda, the tree is used as a prop for food climbers like yams and passion fruit. The Bahima community makes beautiful milk jars from the wood.



Plate 1: Mugavu Tree (Source: Internet)

2. MAHOGANY TREE

English Name: Mahogany tree

Scientific Name: *Swietenia mahagoni* (spp)

Local Runyakitara dialect: Mukusu in Luganda

Distribution: Caribbean, East Africa, Central and South America

There are different types of Mahogany e.g. *Swietenia macrophylla* (Honduran mahogany). Budongo Mahogany (*Entandrophragma Angolense*). Senegal Mahogany (*Ekebergia senegalensis*) etc.

Description and uses

Mahogany tree: Mahogany trees are large, deciduous trees that are native to the Caribbean and Central and South America. They are known for their attractive and durable wood, which is often used for furniture, flooring, cabinetry, and other decorative or structural purposes.

Mahogany tree: Leaves: Mahogany trees have a wide, spreading canopy of glossy, dark green leaves, which are typically long and oval-shaped, with smooth edges. The leaves are attached to the branches with long, slender petioles and they grow in a spiral pattern along the branches.

Mahogany tree: Trunk- These trees have a straight, upright trunk with smooth, reddish-brown bark that is mottled with pale, vertical lines. The bark is thick and rough and it becomes more deeply grooved and furrowed as the tree matures.

Mahogany tree: Flowers -Mahogany trees produce small, fragrant flowers that are greenish-white or pale yellow. The flowers are grouped into clusters at the tips of the branches and they are followed by small, oblong fruits that contain several seeds.

Mahogany trees are valued for their attractive and durable wood and they are widely cultivated in tropical regions around the world. Also, they are valued for their ornamental value and are often used as shade trees or landscape plants.

Mahogany tree: Growth rate - Mahogany trees are very slow growing. Mahogany takes between 20 and 30 years to mature fully and get ready to harvest. This makes Mahogany farming a long-term investment. In 20-30 years, these trees can grow up to a height of

60-65 ft and around 3-4 ft in diameter. They are usually harvested for their wood when they are 40-60 years old. The growth rate of Mahogany trees can be influenced by factors such as location, weather conditions, care provided and growing conditions.



Plate 2: Budongo Mahogany, Source: Alamy 2024

3. MUSIZI TREE

English Name: Umbrella Tree

Scientific Name: *Maesopsis Eminii*

Local Runyakitara dialect: Musizi

Distribution: West, Central and East Africa

Description

Maesopsis Eminii which is known as “**Musizi**” in **Luganda** and **Umbrella Tree** in English. Indigenous to Uganda, this large tree grows in low moist tropical forests. It is a leafy semi-deciduous tree between 10-30 meters. It often has a clear bole (*the trunk of the tree*) to 10 m, and horizontal branches, with the crown flattened when young but becoming more rounded with age, creating the umbrella shape. Usually used as a shade tree in coffee, tea, cocoa and cardamom plantations, its leaves are used as fodder for animals. The bark makes good roofing material. The wood is used in light constructions for items such as boxes and crates, millwork, plywood or core stock. The tree also provides fuelwood and charcoal.

Uses and services

The sapwood is light colored and the heartwood is soft and light. The timber is not resistant to fungi or termites so it rots quickly. Density is around 500-550 kg/m³ with a 12% moisture content. It is also one of the quickest-growing timber trees, maturing in 20 years. Hornbills and chimpanzees eat the fruit and disperse the seed.

Application: firewood, charcoal, timber (furniture, light construction), poles, veneer/plywood. NTFPs -Fodder (fruit); Shade (tea and coffee); ornamental (avenue tree)

Services

It is grown in pure stands, as an avenue tree and also intercropped with banana, coffee and cocoa



Plate 3: Musizi Tree (Source: Internet)

4. MUVULE TREE

English Name: African Teak Tree

Scientific Name: *Milicia excelsa*

Local Runyakitara dialect: Muvule

Distribution: Tropical Central Africa

Description:

Milicia excelsa is a tree species from the genus *Milicia* of the family Moraceae. Distributed across tropical Central Africa, it is one of two species (the other being *Milicia regia*) yielding timber commonly known as mvule.

Biology And Ecology: Biologically, the tree can grow up to a height of 30-50m and it is a large deciduous species. The trunk is bare lower down with the first branch usually at least 20m above the ground. It has a thick bark, pale ash grey to nearly black and brown, usually fairly rough and flaking off in small scales.

Ecologically, it is a medium-growing wood species. The flowering often occurs in January and February, but it takes place at a range of different times soon after the time when most of the leaves fall or shortly before the new leaves appear. Male and female flowers are found on separate trees.

Uses

The species is one of the most popular timber species in East Africa. The wood is an attractive brown colour, which gets darker on exposure and with oiling. It has a hard, dark heartwood which is durable on the ground, works easily, and is heavy, strong, open-grained and resistant to termites. It is mainly used for outdoor construction work, furniture, boats, cabinet work, panelling, frames and floors.

Services:

It has an umbrella shape with a few thick branches in the crown all fairly horizontal. The fruits are eaten by squirrels, bats and birds, which then disperse the seeds in their droppings. *Recent research identifies Mvule as an oxalogenic species – excellent for carbon capture as a long-term carbon sink. Mvule is known to be an important tree for improving the fertility of tropical soils and in its use in agroforestry.*



Plate 4: Muvule trees planted by the roadside (World Conservation Monitoring Centre, 1998).

Bibliography

<https://lightwood.org/east-africa/wood-species/mugavu-albizia-coriaria/>

<https://greeninstitute.ng/plants/tag/African+Mahogany>