Blighia unijugata *Sapindaceae*

Indigenous

**Common names: Luganda:** Mukuzanyana, **Lugwe:** Muhehete **Lusoga:** Mukuza- dhyana, musandikira **Rutoro:** Mwatibale.

**Ecology:** A tree extending to southern Africa. It is found in evergreen lowland and upland forest in dry and moist areas of Eastern, Central and Western Uganda. Often a colonizer in secondary vegetation. Abundant in forests between Kyegegwa and Kyenjojo along the Kampala-Fort Portal road.

**Uses:** Firewood, charcoal, timber, poles, flooring, shade (for coffee).

**Description:** An understorey or canopy tree 7-12 m, but to 25 m in forest. It has a **dense, shady, rounded crown** (like mango). BARK: thin, **grey to dark green,** rather smooth but with **horizontal ridges** and little rounded bumps. LEAVES: compound, only 1-3 pairs leaflets on a short stalk, dramatic **pink-red at first,** later **shiny dark green,** dull below. Each leaflet about 12 cm and quite wide, **smaller leaflets at the base,** the edge wavy and **tip long and pointed.** FLOWERS: small, fragrant and white on a drooping head 7-8 cm. Male trees and female trees. FRUIT: **bright yellow- orange-red capsules** decorate the tree, each soft, hairy, **rather triangular to 4 cm** long with 3 winged lobes. The fruit become woody and split into 3 sections each of which **twists back to set free 1 cm shiny brown-black seeds.** Each has a small **yellow cup-like aril.**

**Propagation:** Seedlings (sow seed in pots) and wildlings.

**Seed:** Seeds are contained in a 3-sided capsule and germinate easily,

**treatment:** not necessary.

**storage:** in sealed containers in a cool place.

**Management:** Coppicing, pollarding.

**Remarks:** Leaves and fruit have been reported to be poisonous—not even eaten by baboons. The red heartwood has been used for building and furniture. Common as a shade tree in coffee plantations and suitable for commercial plantations.