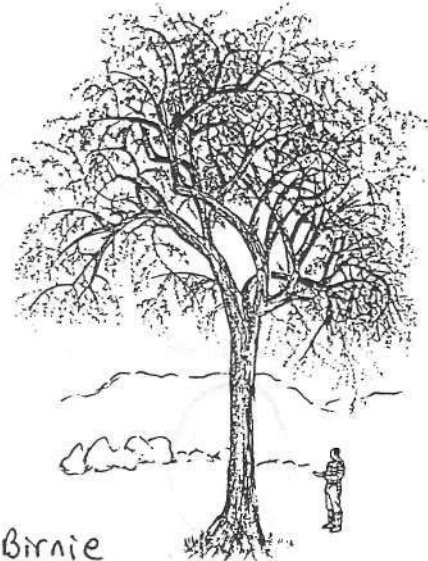
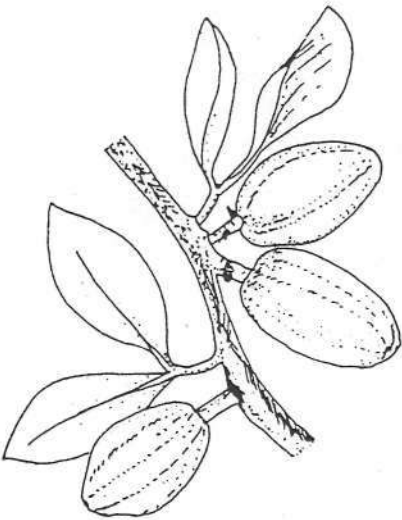
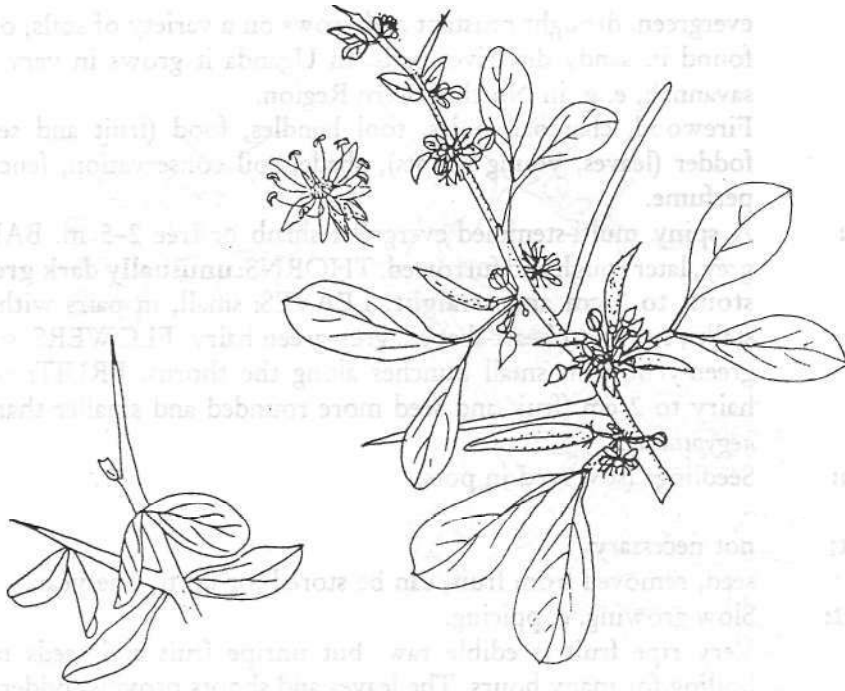


Indigenous

- Trade names:** Desert date (dried fruit), Egyptian myrobalan (unripe fruit), Heglig berries (in the Sudan).
- Common names:** **Ateso:** Echoma **Ateso K:** Ekorete **English:** Desert date **Luganda, dialect Buruli:** Musongole **Lugbara:** Loba, logba **Lugishu:** Zomai **Lugwere:** Kinachoma **Luo A: To Madi:** Loba, logba **Runyoro:** Mutete **Sebei:** Chomiandet.
- Ecology:** An important tree found all over Africa from arid and semi-arid regions to sub-humid savannah, 0-2,000 m. Prefers valley soils but will grow in sand, clay, black cotton, alluvial, and stony soils. Rainfall: 200-800 mm. In Uganda common in North Eastern Region, low areas of Arua District, on Butiaba flats and near Kasese town.
- Uses:** Firewood, charcoal, poles, timber (furniture), utensils, tool handles, food (fruit, leaves), medicine (roots, bark, fruit), mulch, shade, windbreak, gum, fencing (branches), oil (fruit), fish poison.
- Description:** Small evergreen tree about 6 m, **crown rounded in tangled mass of thorny branches.** BARK: dark, cracked and corky with age. THORNS: **to 8 cm**, soft at first, then **woody.** LEAVES: **distinctive pairs of grey-green leaflets**, ovate. FLOWERS: fragrant, **yellow-green** clusters. FRUIT: date-like about **5 cm long**, both ends rounded, **yellow when ripe**, a hard pointed seed 4 x 2 cm within surrounded by **yellow-brown, bitter-sweet flesh**, seed easily separated.
- Propagation:** Seedlings (sow seed in pots), direct sowing on site, root suckers.
- Seed:** No. of seeds per kg: 600-1,000. Seed should be sown vertically with stem end down for best results. Germinates in 1-4 weeks. Seeds very susceptible to attack by insects.
- treatment:** pretreatment is not necessary but soaking improves germination rates. Soak the seeds in cold water for two days and change it after 24 hours.
- storage:** store dry and insect free; seed removed from fruit can be stored for up to a year. Add ash to reduce insect damage.
- Management:** Seedlings are slow growing, root suckers faster. Protect young seedlings from browsing and fire. Coppicing, pollarding.
- Remarks:** An important species for dry areas as it produces fruit in very dry seasons. Improved varieties exist in India. The wood is termite resistant. Extracts of fruit and bark can be used to kill the snail hosts of bilharzia, and the water-flea Cyclops, the carrier of Guinea worm disease. As the fruits are non-toxic to man and domestic animals, wells and other watering points can be treated with safety.



A. Birnie