

Sterculia appendiculata

Sterculiaceae

Indigenous

- Common names: Eng: tall sterculia; **Lugu:** mgude; **Nguu:** mfune, mgude; **Pare:** mfune; **Samb:** mfune; **Swah:** mfune; **Zigua:** mfune, mgude.
- Ecology: A tree of coastal and riverine forests, coastal bushland and woodland at low altitudes from Kenya to South Africa. In Tanzania it is quite common, especially along the coast 0-600 m.
- Uses: Timber (plywood), food (seeds), shade, ornamental.
- Description: A **tall, straight** deciduous tree **up to 40 m high with a dense rounded crown**. Trees have a clear bole 15-20 m and often emerge above the surrounding woodland. BARK: pale yellow, smooth, conspicuous and powdery. Branchlets have dense rust-yellow hairs. LEAVES: at the end of branches, **large, 14-30 cm across, the leaf blade divided into 3-7 lobes. Young leaves usually densely woolly with rusty hairs**, lost at maturity. Leaf stalks **over 6 cm, hairy at first**. FLOWERS: **green-yellow-brown to 2.8 cm** across in hairy few-flowered **sprays to 12 cm**, before leaves. FRUIT: **made up of 2-3 sections each to 9 cm covered with soft brown hairs on the outside**. When opened **seeds line the edges, each 2 cm long, brown with a soft yellow aril at the base**.
- Propagation: Seedlings.
- Seed **info.:** No. of seeds per kg: 12,000-15,000. Germination is good, up to 60% completed within 20 days.
- treatment:** not necessary.
- storage: can retain viability only for a short period (2 months) **at room temperature**.
- Management:** A fast-growing tree; needs fire protection.
- Remarks: Timber is soft and perishable. It has potential for planting in lowland areas. Bark and leaves are used for **medicinal** purposes by the Digo in Kenya.

