

Dovyalis macrocalyx

Indigenous

COMMON NAMES: **Giriama:** Munyhee, Munyee; **Luhya (Bukusu):** Kumusongolamunwa, Busongolomunwa (fruit); **Luo:** Akudho, Nyamtotia; **Maasai:** Enkoshopini, Olaimurunyai; **Nandi:** Kaptowinet; **Pokot:** Chuchwenion, Chuchween (plural); **Sanya:** Mkidonyathi.

DESCRIPTION: A forest shrub or small tree, 3–8 m, much branched, the slender young branches arching over.

BARK: Smooth grey. Branches grey-brown, often dotted with breathing pores (lenticels), **bearing straight spines, single, usually needle-like, 1–6 cm, beside leaves,**

sometimes absent. **LEAVES:** Simple, oval, 4–9 cm, pale green, thin, tip pointed, base broadly rounded to a short stalk (only 3 mm). **FLOWERS:** Yellow-green, no petals.

Male flowers hairy, in clusters, 1–4, beside leaves, with about 20 central stamens. Female flowers shortly stalked, solitary, beside leaves, 6–10 thin lobes of the calyx sticky, densely covered with hairs. FRUIT:

Distinguished from other *Dovyalis* when in fruit by the **enlarged hairy calyx lobes above the plum-like fruit.**

Fruits orange-red, fleshy, to 2 cm long, hanging on a stalk to 8 mm.

ECOLOGY: A forest undershrub widespread in Africa from central Africa and Sudan south to southern Africa and common in eastern Africa. In Kenya, found from the coast to western Kenya. Common around Nairobi, along the Maasai River, in Uasin Gishu, Bungoma, West Pokot and Kisumu in forests, forest edges or riverine, 0–2,600 m. Found mainly in well-drained deep red soils.

Agroclimatic Zones II–III. Flowers in January–March and fruit in March–June in Bungoma. Fruit ripen in November–December in Nairobi.

USES: Edible fruit, medicine (bark, root), ornamental, live fence, a salty substance is prepared from the leaves.

PROPAGATION: Seedlings (sow seed in pots), wildings.

SEED: After collection, the fruit are soaked in water for 2–3 days. The water is then drained off and the fruit squeezed by hand to separate the seeds from the pulp. After washing with water the seeds can be dried and stored, but not for long. This species may not produce fruit every year.

treatment: Not necessary.

storage: Use fresh seed for best germination.

MANAGEMENT: Trim if grown as a fence; fairly fast growing.

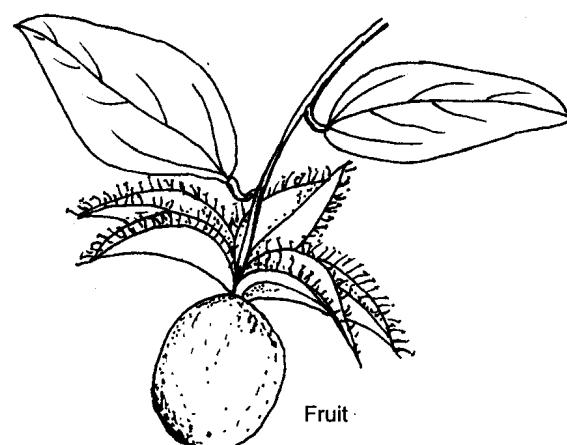
REMARKS: A fruit tree with

considerable potential that so far has received little attention.

It could be planted round homesteads for its fruit and as an ornamental. The fruit and enlarged calyxes are attractive. The fruit is acid with a slight sweet taste.

Flacourtiaceae

FURTHER READING: Backes and Ahenda, 1998; Beentje, 1994; Dharami, 2002; Katende et al., 1995, 1999; Maundu et al., 1999; Noad and Birnie, 1989; Palgrave and Palgrave, 2002; Ruffo et al., 2002.



Fruit

