

Terminalia spinosa

Combretaceae

Indigenous

Common names: **Eng:** spiny terminalia; **Lugu:** mtagala; **Nguu:** mtagalo; **Swah:** mwangati, mwarambe; **Zara:** mtakalla, muhangula, mwangare, tagala.

Ecology: A spiny tree of dry bush country, dry coastal forests and wooded grassland in the north of Tanzania into Kenya, Somalia, northern Uganda and the Sudan, 0-1,770 m. It grows with *Terminalia -prunioides*.

Uses: Firewood, charcoal, timber (construction, furniture), poles, carving, live fence.

Description: A tree to 15 m, the branches horizontal, long shoots zigzag. **BARK:** rough, grey, longitudinally fissured, **stout spines, 2-3** together are found on one side, shoots up to 2 cm long. **LEAVES: in clusters from side shoots, up to 5 cm, usually 2-3 cm, wider at the tip, clearly notched,** narrowed to a short stalk, often red. **FLOWERS:** 4-5 pink-white spikes in clusters beside leaves. **FRUIT: 2-3 cm long on stalks.** orange-brown to dark brown, thin winged.

Propagation: Seedlings, wildings.

Seed info.: No. of seeds per kg: 8,000-20,000. The tree seeds prolifically. Germination is slow but the rate is good.

treatment: remove wings.

storage: seed can be stored if kept cool and dry.

Management: Trim as a hedge.

Remarks: The tree is believed to have magical properties. It is not browsed by goats so makes a useful live fence. Wood is resistant to termites and fungal attack. The timber is **dark** brown, hard and durable and therefore valued for building.

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