

Tree catalogue

Wildlife friendly trees suitable for planting in the Diani beach forest area.
Colobus Conservation recommended.



A selection of locally indigenous tree species to provide colour, shade, a wind break, and a space to attract and enjoy wildlife. Details of flowers, canopy size, height, wildlife interest and recommendations on planting location will help you choose the right tree for the right place.



Further information on these trees and where seedlings can be purchased is available from Colobus Conservation.

Black Heartwood

Combretum schumannii
Swahili name: Mugurure



A slow growing shrub or tree from 3m to 20m, with an often crooked trunk, small fragrant pale yellow flowers and winged fruits. Grows well in wet or dry coastal forest, wooded grassland or bushland. Historically this *Combretum* was the dominant tree in Diani, and can be expected to grow readily in a coral rag forest environment. The leaves are enjoyed by colobus monkeys while the seed pods are eaten by hornbills.

Recommendation: Best planted away from swimming pools as it produces abundant leaf litter.

River Litchi

Lecaniodiscus fraxinifolius

Swahili name: Mkunguma

A fast growing tree that reaches a height of 18m and can live up to 600 yrs.

Young leaves provide a splash of orange against the grey bark, with tiny yellow-green flowers appearing in January, followed by yellow, orange or pinkish fruits.

Several butterflies breed on the tree.

Recommendation: Occasionally inhabited by insects with irritator hair, best planted away from swimming pools and homes



African Teak

Milicia excelsa

Swahili name: Mvuli



The African teak matures with a high full canopy and is an effective shade tree. Male and female flowers are found on separate trees, male flowers are white, closely crowded on long pendulous, slender catkins, while female flowers are erect, greenish and in shorter and much fatter spikes. In the south coast flowering is from January to March.

Fruits are wrinkled, fleshy and resemble a fat green caterpillar much enjoyed by birds, bats and squirrels. The large oval leaves are a favourite of the colobus monkeys.

This species has been excessively exploited and is now endangered.

Recommendation: Avoid planting in water logged soil.



Bean Bell Tree

Markhamia zanzibarica

Swahili name: Mtawanda

A fast growing small slender shrub or tree up to 15m with attractive yellow and maroon flowers that begins to bloom when only 1-2m tall. The Bean Bell tree makes an effective and eye-catching living fence, growing well even in poor soils and providing fruits and young leaves which will be enjoyed by the colobus monkeys.

Recommendation: Avoid planting in water logged soil.

White Milkwood

Sideroxylon inerme

Swahili name:

Mkokobara, Mtunda-wa-Ngombe

Ideal garden tree with its dense foliage, black berries and small, dainty white flowers.

This is an evergreen tree that grows to 12m, and can live for up to 600 years. Because of its thick full canopy it is an especially useful shade tree, with fruits that are enjoyed by hornbills and flowers and young leaves that are eaten by colobus monkeys.



Recommendation: White milkwood is especially appropriate for planting in swimming pool areas as it does not drop its leaves.

Senegal Cherry

Lepisanthes senegalensis

With leaves crimson when young, small yellow-green flowers and pink-red fruits, this small colourful tree is a benefit to add to any garden collection.

With its dense foliage the Senegal cherry is a useful shade-providing tree.

Colobus monkeys enjoy the leaves.

Recommendation: The leaves and seeds are poisonous to goats and the flowers are toxic to fish. Care should be taken when selecting planting location.





Sycamore Fig or Fig-Mulberry

Ficus sycomorus

Swahili name: Mukuyu

The sycamore-fig grows to 20m tall with a dense round crown of spreading branches, it makes an excellent shade tree. As well as being edible for humans the fruits are enjoyed by a variety of local wildlife including monkeys and a large number of birds. The smooth yellow-cream-orange bark peels off in papery strips and is very distinctive. Flowering and fruiting occurs year round. This is an important tree in the area, a cornerstone to the local environment.

African Dog Rose

Oncoba spinosa

Also known as the snuff box tree the fragrant white flowers and shiny red hard-shelled fruits make this a perfect ornamental plant and an attractive and effective living fence. Growing to a maximum of 10m, but usually no more than 5m high it is ideal for small spaces and as a living fence. The tree is in bloom with its showy white and yellow flowers for up to 3 months. Colobus monkeys enjoy the leaves.





White Bush Berry

Flueggea virosa

Swahili name: Mkwamba

A fast growing bushy shrub which can be used as an excellent living fence. The pretty sweet scented creamy green flowers appear between October and January. As well as being edible for people, the bunches of small white fruits which ripen in June and July are enjoyed by monkeys and birds. Colobus monkeys eat the leaves.



Black Pearl Tree

Majidea zanguebarica

Swahili name: Mlanyuni

A small attractive garden tree with large striking seed pods which when open can appear as stunning flowers. The large seed pods break open to show vivid red and velvety black inside. These are widely used in flower arrangements. The actual flowers are small, green and hang in dense clusters. The Black pearl tree is grown elsewhere in the tropics as an ornamental tree.

Knob Wood or Prickly Ash

Zanthoxylum chalybeum

Swahili name: Mjafari

The tree gets its common names from the characteristic large, conical, prickly woody knobs on its trunk. Flowers are sweet scented, inconspicuous, and yellowish-green. The leaves produce a pleasant aromatic lemon scent when crushed.

The leaves are eaten by colobus monkeys, while squirrels and birds enjoy the small reddish fruit.



Recommendation: Suitable for planting by swimming pools as it holds its leaves.

Cape Mahogany

Trichilia emetica

Swahili name: Mnwamaji



Also known as the Natal Mahogany, this is an evergreen tree, with a wide spreading crown and large glossy leaves. An excellent shade tree which holds its leaves year round, and is often planted as a windbreak. It can survive extended periods of drought.

Cape mahogany has fragrant creamy yellow flowers and small furry red fruits which split when ripe to show shiny black and red seeds.

Colobus monkeys enjoy the dark green leaves while birds and squirrels eat the fruits and seeds.

Baobab

Adansonia digitata

Swahili name: Mbuyu

A well known tree that grows through out the region, and is one of the longest lived trees in the world with records of individuals over 1000 years old.

The baobab blooms at the end of the dry season, its large, heavy, sweetly scented white flowers open at night and are pollinated by bats which visit for the nectar. The flowers fall within 24 hours of opening. The large egg shaped hairy seedpods grow up to 30 cm long. Without leaves for up to 9 months of the year the tree is equally as recognizable and attractive in its distinctive leafless form.

Within 10 years the baobab is a good-sized tree but with a trunk growing to over 10m in diameter, the tree will eventually occupy a large area so consideration should be given to its planting location. The baobab is very drought tolerant.

The flowers and leaves are visited by various insects, birds, bats and colobus monkeys.



Torchwood

Balanites maughamii

Swahili name: Mkonga



A relatively tall tree of up to 30m with distinctly zig-zagging branches, short forked spines, hairy greenish yellow small scented flowers and date-like fruits which are yellowish and edible when ripe. The fruit is eaten by people and a variety of other animals.

Older trees can have very characteristic deeply buttressed trunks.



Cabbage Tree

Cussonia zimmermannii

Swahili name: Mbomba Maji, Mpapayi-Mwitu

A tree of up to 15m in height, with small greenish yellow or white flowers in long terminal spikes of 25cm. Small white fruits grow along the spikes. colobus monkeys enjoy the young leaves.



Recommendation: The cabbage tree suffers heavy leaf fall during the dry season, so not recommended for planting near swimming pools.

Kumbi

Lannea welwitschii

Swahili name: Mchumbu maji

This fast growing, medium sized tree produces delicate yellow flowers in February and March providing the colobus monkeys with an excellent food source during the dry season. Produces small, black, edible fruits annually

Kumbi makes an ideal shade tree and can also be used as a living fence



Recommendation: Not suitable for planting by swimming pool due to heavy leaf and flower fall

Main interest points:

Tree	Summary
Black heartwood <i>Combretum schumannii</i> Swahili name: Mugurure	Was the dominant tree in Diani, and can be expected to grow readily in a coral rag forest. Eaten by colobus monkeys and hornbills. Best planted away from swimming pools.
River litchi <i>Lecaniodiscus fraxinifolius</i> Swahili name: Mkunguma	A fast growing tree that can live up to 600 yrs. Several butterflies breed on the tree. Plant away from swimming pools and homes.
African teak <i>Milicia excelsa</i> Swahili name: Mvuli	An effective shade tree. Fruits are eaten by birds, bats and squirrels. Has been excessively exploited and is now endangered. Enjoyed by colobus monkeys. Avoid planting in water logged soil.
Bean bell tree <i>Markhamia zanzibarica</i> Swahili name: Mtawanda	A small slender shrub or tree with yellow and maroon flowers. An effective living fence. Grows well even in poor soils. Enjoyed by the colobus monkeys. Avoid planting in water logged soil.
White milkwood <i>Sideroxylon inerme</i> Swahili name: Mkokobara, Mtunda-wa-Ngombe	Dense foliage, black berries and small white flowers. An evergreen tree that can live for up to 600 years. A good shade tree. Enjoyed by hornbills and colobus monkeys. Especially appropriate for planting in swimming pool areas.
Senegal cherry <i>Lepisanthes senegalensis</i>	A small colourful tree. A good shade tree. Enjoyed by colobus monkeys. Poisonous to goats and fish.
Sycamore fig or fig-mulberry <i>Ficus sycomorus</i> Swahili name: Mukuyu	An excellent shade tree. Edible for humans and enjoyed by a variety of wildlife including monkeys and birds. Flowering and fruiting occurs year round.
African dog rose <i>Oncoba spinosa</i>	An attractive ornamental plant. Ideal for small spaces or as a living fence. Enjoyed by colobus monkeys.
White bush berry <i>Flueggea virosa</i> Swahili name: Mkwamba	A fast growing bushy shrub. An excellent living fence. Sweet scented. Fruits are edible for people. Enjoyed by monkeys and birds.

Tree	Summary
Black pearl tree <i>Majidea zanguebarica</i> Swahili name: Mlanyuni	A small attractive tree. The large seed pods break open to show vivid red and velvety black inside widely used in flower arrangements.
Knob wood <i>Zanthoxylum chalybeum</i> Swahili name: Mjafari	Characteristic large, conical, woody knobs on its trunk. Flowers and leaves are fragrant. Enjoyed by colobus monkeys, squirrels and birds. Especially suitable for planting by swimming pools as it holds its leaves.
Cape mahogany <i>Trichilia emetica</i> Swahili name: Mnwamaji	A excellent shade and windbreak tree that can survive extended periods of drought. An evergreen tree. Eaten by colobus monkeys, birds and squirrels.
Baobab <i>Adansonia digitata</i> Swahili name: Mbuyu	One of the longest lived trees in the world. Produces large, sweetly scented white flowers and seedpods which grow up to 30 cm long. The tree will eventually occupy a large area so consideration should be given to its planting location. Visited by various insects, birds, bats and colobus monkeys.
Torchwood <i>Balanites maughamii</i> Swahili name: Mkonga	Distinctly zig-zagging branches, scented flowers and edible date-like fruits eaten by people and a variety of other animals.
Cabbage tree <i>Cussonia zimmermannii</i> Swahili name: Mbomba Maji, Mpapayi-Mwitu	Up to only 15m in height. Not recommended for planting near swimming pools because of heavy leaf fall. Colobus monkeys enjoy the young leaves.
Kumbi <i>Lannea welwitschii</i> Swahili name: Mchumbu maji	Fast growing, medium tree. Excellent for producing shade and for use as a living fence. Produces yellow flowers in the dry season providing the colobus monkey with food when there is little growing

Local suppliers

Seedlings of trees listed in this catalogue can be purchased from local suppliers in Diani, Ukunda and Shimoni.

Look out for the Colobus Conservation sign or contact us at enquiries@colobusconservation.org +245 (0) 711 479 453



Planting guide:

Care in planting is more important than speed - the attention given to saplings during planting and aftercare will have a bearing on their survival and early growth.

- For individual trees with space around them dig a square hole 1m x 1m x 1m. Only plant during the two planting seasons, just prior to and during the short and long rains.
- Take a sapling out of planting bag carefully so as not to damage the roots, making sure the roots are never allowed to become dry during the planting process. If exposed, the fine roots can dry out and the tree die in as little as 30 seconds.
- Place the sapling straight and fill the hole around it tapping down the soil with hands or with your heel at regular intervals as the hole is refilled.
- The hole should be slightly overfilled with soil, leaving a depression at the top around the sapling to catch the water. If the soil quality is poor add some good soil and compost. Note that fresh manure will burn the roots.
- Immediately after planting, thoroughly soak the soil of the new sapling, or plant on a moderately rainy day.
- A good soaking once a week should be carried out using fresh or slightly brackish water. Salt water should not be used. Watering is required for the first year outside of the rainy seasons.
- Planting distance should be between 5m for small tree and 10m for large trees.
- Protect the trees against goats and other grazing animals with wire mesh guards.
- Weed regularly as part of ongoing maintenance.

Further guidance is available from Colobus Conservation
enquiries@colobusconservation.org +254 (0) 711 479 453

