

## Tree Seed Information Leaflet



*Calodendrum capense*

**Species:** *Calodendrum capense* ( L.f) Thunb.

**Family:** Rutaceae

**Common name:** Cape chestnut

**Local name:** Muraracii, Muroroa (Kikuyu)

Ol-larashi (Maasai)

Muchai, Mutimueru (Meru)

Kipkarkuriat (Nandi)

Larachi (Samburu)

Mogorusi (Taita)

Murei (Taveta)

**Description:** *Calodendrum capense* is a semi-deciduous tree up to 15m high. Bark is grey and smooth, young branchlets hairy. Leaves are opposite, simple often bunched together. Flowers are large and showy, pinkish white, crimson dots and purple-brown anthers on the long stamens. Mature fruit round, covered in warty prickles, opening into 5 segments exposing 8-10 black seeds, which are 3-angled.

**Distribution:** The species occurs in dry upland forest (remnants), also in riverine forest between 1500-2300. It is common around Nairobi, Meru, Samburu and Nyahururu.

**Flowering and fruiting:** Flowering occurs in April to June with fruit maturity taking 6-8 months. Seeds can be collected between January and April.

**Seed collection method:** Mature fruits are collected from the crown by climbing the tree to hand pick the fruits or shaking the branches to release the ripe fruits.

**Seed extraction and drying and cleaning:** Fruits are dried in direct sun until they split open to release the seeds. Seeds are then cleaned by hand sorting. Seed can be dried in direct sun to the required moisture content of < 10%.

**Seed weight:** There are 650-1000 seeds per kilogram.

**Seed storage:** Seeds can be stored in airtight containers in cool dry place for up to 2 years with no significant loss of viability.

**Seed germination:** Seeds germinate within 10-40 days. The expected germination rate is between 50-80%. Pre-sowing treatment is not necessary.

To sow, seeds are spread thinly and evenly on a well-prepared seedbed (containing sand or a mixture of sand and soil) and then covered with a thin layer of soil/sand. Watering is done regularly (morning and evening) until they germinate. The young seedlings are transplanted when they are large enough to handle (4-5 leaves). They are transplanted to pots containing soil mixed with NPK fertilizer at the rate of 30-40 grams per 20liters of soil. Seedlings are planted out when they are 30cm tall (4-6months).

**End Uses:** The species is used for timber, firewood, charcoal, poles, tool handles, bee forage, shade and ornamental.

For more information contact

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