



Brachylaena hutchinsii

Family: Compositae

Muhuhu

Other Common Names: Muhugwe, Mkarambaki, Ol Magogo (Tanzania).

Distribution: Common in the dry coastal forests of Tanzania and Kenya, also recorded in Uganda.

The Tree: Commonly 30 to 60 ft in height; bole twisted and fluted to 20 ft; trunk diameter 1 1/2 to 2 ft; stem often hollow.

The Wood:

General Characteristics: Heartwood bright yellow brown when freshly sawn, becoming yellowish or greenish brown on drying; sapwood grayish white, distinct. Texture fine and even; grain straight, closely interlocked, or wavy; with an aromatic spicy scent.

Weight: Basic specific gravity (ovendry weight/green volume) 0.75; air-dry density about 58 pcf.

Mechanical Properties: (2-cm standard)

| Moisture content (%) | Bending strength (Psi) | Modulus of elasticity (1,000 psi) | Maximum crushing strength (Psi) |
|-------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Green (40) | 13,300 | 1,250 | 7,770 |
| 12% | 16,200 | 1,460 | 10,200 |

Janka side hardness 1,880 lb for green material and 2,190 lb for dry.

Drying and Shrinkage: Seasons rapidly with a tendency to checking but no warping, thick stock dries slowly with severe checking. Kiln schedule T2-C2 is suggested for 4/4 stock and T2-C1 for 8/4. Shrinkage green to 12% moisture content: radial 2.0%; tangential 3.0%. Movement in service is rated as small.

Working Properties: Because of irregular grain and high density the timber is difficult to work, moderate blunting of cutters, tools tend to collect gum, shapes and turns well, difficult to glue, takes a high polish.

Durability: Heartwood is rated as very durable, and with good resistance to termites and marine borers.

Preservation: Extremely resistant to impregnation.

Uses: High quality flooring, carving, turnery.

Additional Reading: (3), (9), (40)

3. Bolza, E., and W. G. Keating. 1972. African timbers-the properties, uses, and characteristics of 700 species. CSIRO. Div. of Build. Res., Melbourne, Australia.
9. Farmer, R. H. 1972. Handbook of hardwoods. H. M. Stationery Office. London.
40. Lavers, G. M. 1967. The strength properties of timbers. For. Prod. Res. Bul. No. 50. H. M. Stationery Office. London.

From: Chudnoff, Martin. 1984. Tropical Timbers of the World. USDA Forest Service. Ag. Handbook No. 607.