



Diospyros spp.

Family: Ebenaceae

African Ebony

Other Common Names: Mgiriti, Msindi (Tanzania), Omenowa (Ghana), Kanran, Nyareti (Nigeria), Kukuo (Gambia).

Distribution: Commercial supplies are mostly from Equatorial West Africa. Forms almost pure groups near riverbanks.

The Tree: May attain a height of 50 to 60 ft with a trunk diameter of about 2 ft.

The Wood:

General Characteristics: Heartwood uniform jet black or black brown or streaked; sapwood pink colored when freshly cut, darkening to a pale red brown, very variable in width. Texture very fine; grain straight to slightly interlocked or somewhat curly. **Sawdust may cause dermatitis.**

Weight: Basic specific gravity (ovendry weight/green volume) about 0.82; air-dry density 63 pcf.

Mechanical Properties: (2-cm standard)

Moisture content (%)	Bending strength (Psi)	Modulus of elasticity (1,000 psi)	Maximum crushing strength (Psi)
12% (9)	27,400	2,560	13,350
12% (44)	21,200	NA	9,350

Janka side hardness 3,220 lb for dry material. Amsler toughness 280 in.-lb for dry material (2-cm specimen).

Drying and Shrinkage: in small dimensions dries fairly rapidly with little tendency to check or warp, may split in log form. Kiln schedule T6-D2 is suggested for 4/4 stock and T3-D1 for 8/4. Shrinkage green to 12% moisture content: radial about 5.5%; tangential about 6.5%.

Working Properties: Heartwood difficult to work with hand and machine tools, has a pronounced dulling effect on tool edges, may pick up in planing if grain is irregular, takes an excellent polish. Good steam-bending properties.

Durability: Heartwood rated as very durable, moderately to highly resistant to termite attack.

Preservation: Heartwood extremely resistant; sapwood moderately resistant to permeable.

Uses: Parts of musical instruments, handles for cutlery and tools, brush backs, carvings, turnery, inlaid work.

Additional Reading: (3), (9), (44), (48)

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.
- 44.Sallenave, P. 1955. Proprietes et mecaniques des bois tropicaux de l'union Francaise. Pub. Centre Tech. For. Trop. No. 8.
- 48.Sallenave, P., and P. L. Rothe. 1960. Les eb_ nes dans le monde. Bois For. Trop. 72:1522.

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