

Colubrina decipiens (Baill.) Capuron

Tratramborondreo - *Macrorhamnus decipiens* Baill.

Medium-sized deciduous tree found along the western coast of Madagascar. The wood of this important timber species has many uses.



Description

Stature: light canopy with limited branching.

Size: 12-20 m high; stem 40-65 cm in diameter.

Bark: smooth, light grey to blackish. The large plates are grey. After branch abscission younger individuals have large protruding knob.

Leaves: opposite, entire, simple (7-12 cm x 2.5-6 cm).

Flower:

Fruit: dehiscent capsule with three seeds (1 x 1.5 cm). Yellow when mature in March.

Seed: bears small aril at base (0.5 x 0.3 cm).

Rhamnaceae

Striking features

- Smooth light greyish bark.
- Large protruding knobs on young trees.



Ecology

Status and distribution: Western Madagascar in Antsiranana, Mahajanga and Toliara provinces. Recently recorded from the Comoros. Fairly frequent in moist habitats.

Habitat requirements: tolerates flooding and occurs on both calcareous and basalt rock formations.

Phenology: Deciduous species. Flowers Nov-Dec and fruits Dec-May. Tree between dormatory and toilets was in full leaf and fruiting in Nov 2013.

Kirindy: a relatively fast growing species. Common around camp including four individuals at the entrance of primate centre.

Reproduction: bird-dispersed in view of its seed characteristics.



Uses

The heavy and hard wood has many indoor and outdoor uses including railway sleepers, flooring and furniture making. Locally the bark is used to make soap.

Sources and further information

General:

Botanical description: Abraham & Schroff (1991) p 101. Johnston (1971), Flore de Madagascar 123, p. 23.

Forestry: Grisa (1987) p 19.

Kirindy: Anon. (1993) no. 404.

Herbarium specimen: www.efloras.org