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Page 186

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Notes on Indigenous Trees and Shrubs of S. Rhodesia

Vitex payos
(Lour.) Merr.
(Syn. **V. hildebrandtii** Vatke)
(Verbenaceae)

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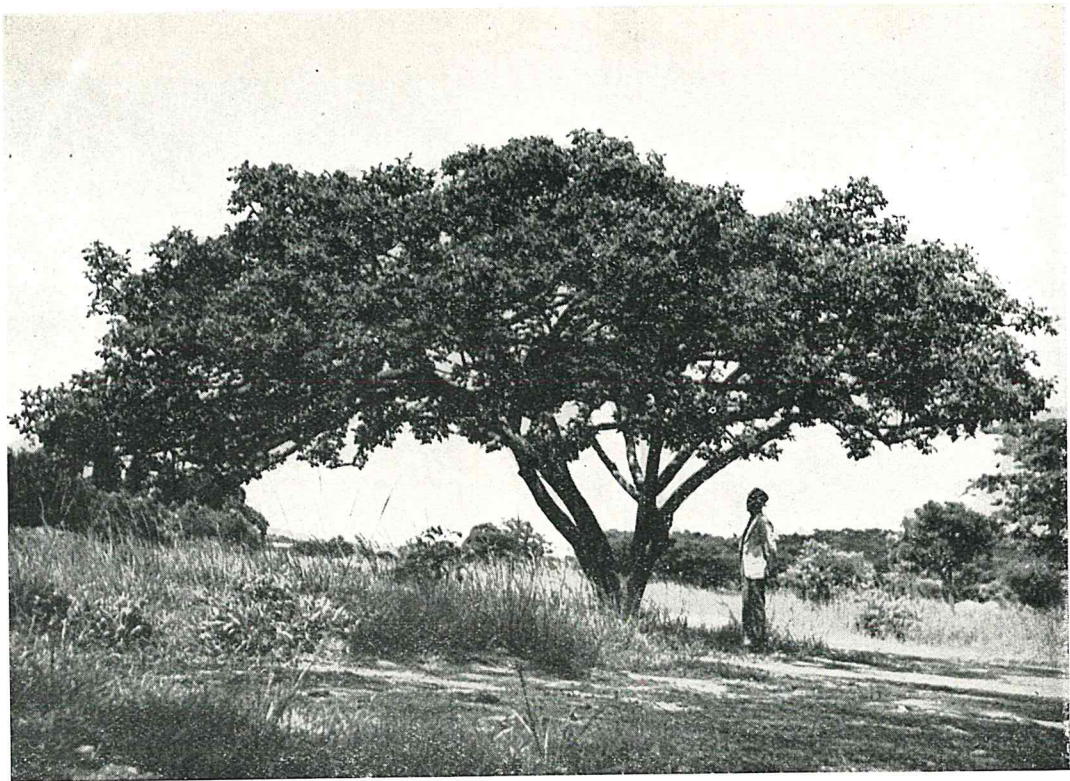
Vitex payos (Lour.) Merr.
(Syn. *V. hildebrandtii* Vatke) (Verbenaceae)

Common Name.— **Native Names.**—Mubalebale, mubindoyo, muhubva, mukuvbu, mutentera, mutsubvu (Chis.); umtshwankela (Sind.).

General Description.—This is a small spreading tree usually about 15-20 feet in height. Twigs are softly hairy. The long-stalked leaves are palmately compound, each leaf consisting of five sessile leaflets, the central leaflet being largest. The leaves are opposite and decussate (i.e., pairs of leaves are at right-angles to each other). The leaflets are thinly hairy above and densely matted with short white hairs below. Midribs and veins of leaflets are very prominent on the lower surfaces. The flowers, which are to be seen mainly during December, are in small axillary bunches on hairy stalks. The petals are of a mauve to bluish colour. The fruits are black, edible drupes. Hornbills and other birds eat the fruits, and jackals are also said to eat them.

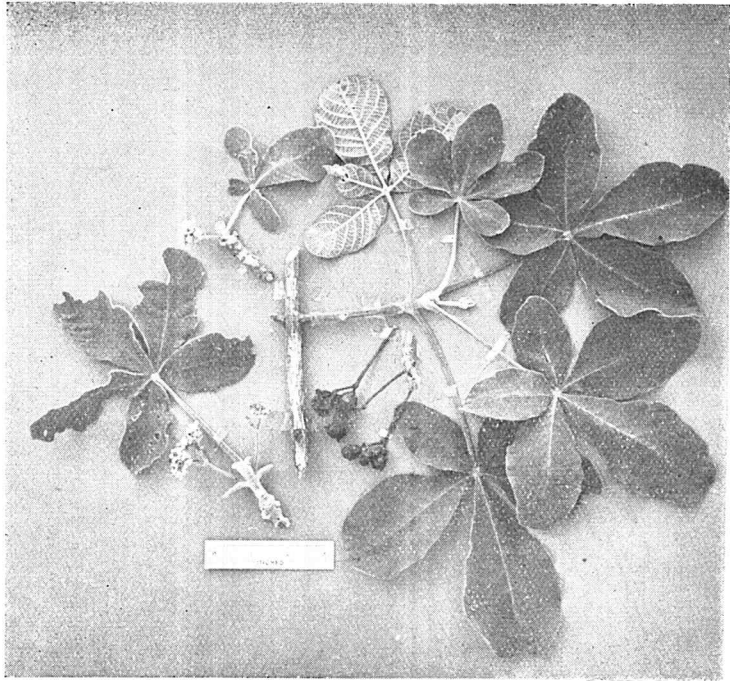
Distribution.—It occurs as a scattered tree at medium and lower elevations, and is found elsewhere in Central Africa.

Uses.—No special uses are known. The wood is said to be used for producing fire by friction, and is favoured by natives for stirring sticks. It is an attractive ornamental tree but rather slow-growing.



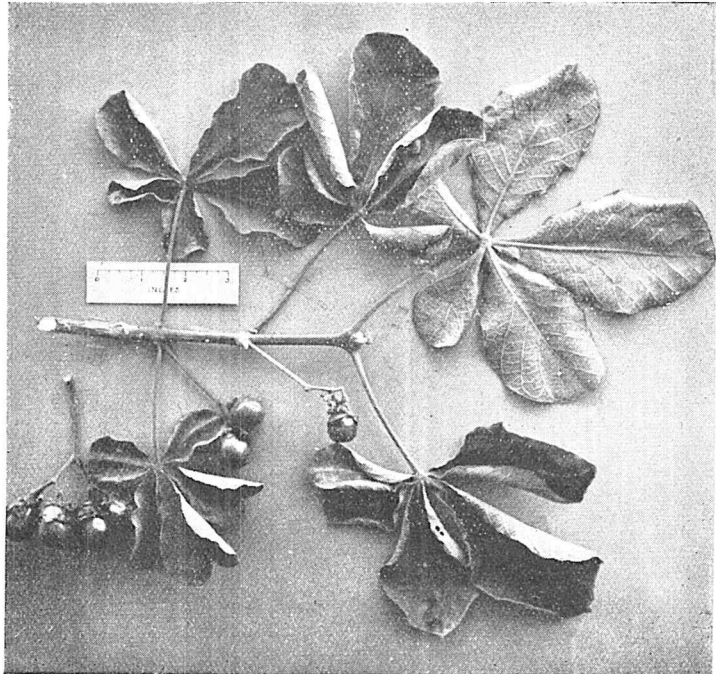
Vitex paysonii.
Habit photo.

[Photo. by A. A. Pardy.]



Vitex pygos.
Leaves, flowers and fruit.

[Photo. by A. A. Pardy.]



Vitex pygos.
Leaves and fruits.

[Photo. by A. A. Pardy.]