

## Kenya Shade Tree

pink cedar, shingle tree, acrocarpo, arbol guijarra, cedro rojo, decro rosado, fresno  
hindu, lazcar, mundani

*Acrocarpus fraxinifolius*

Leguminosae family

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### ECHO PLANT INFORMATION SHEET

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**DESCRIPTION, ORIGIN** – *Acrocarpus* is native to the tropical regions of Asia. It is a fast-growing, deciduous tree, which annually can grow 1.3-3 m (4.25 – 10'), attaining heights of 30-60 m (100' – 200'). The species grows in acid and calcareous soils, at elevations between sea level and 2000 m (6,600') with annual precipitation between 500-3000 mm (20" – 120") and temperatures between 15° -26°C (59° - 80°F). It is very sensitive to frost.

**USES** – *Acrocarpus* is recommended for erosion because of its deep root system, up to 4.5m (15'), which holds soil in place on hillsides and along rivers. It functions as a shade tree on tea and coffee plantations in countries such as Kenya and Uganda. The wood of *Acrocarpus* is hard and strong resembling ash and walnut so that it often substitutes for these two species in construction and fuel needs. The leaves can be used as fodder for animals and the flowers produce nectar and pollen for bees.

**CULTIVATION** – *A. fraxinifolius* is a pioneer tree, one of the first to regrow in a cleared area so it prefers full sun though it can tolerate some shade when young. Although a legume, it apparently does not have nitrogen-fixing nodules. The leaves are suitable for use as mulch. The seeds are planted 2cm (.75") deep in seedbeds and should emerge in 15-30 days.

**HARVESTING AND SEED PRODUCTION**– Fruits are collected from the ground or from trees. When the fruits are dry they are macerated to release the seed. Cleaned seeds can be stored at room temperature for up to a year. The seeds have a hard coat and require pretreatment to germinate. The seeds can be soaked in concentrated sulfuric acid for 10 minutes or soaked in 90°C (194°F) water for 1 minute. Then let soak in cool water for 6 hours.

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