

Scientific name: *Dialium guineense* Willd.

Family: Leguminosae.

Distribution/conservation status: widespread and common in dense savanna forests and gallery forests. Not assessed by the IUCN Red List.

Common names: Velvet-tamarind, Black tamarind (English), Chaleku, Icheku (Igbo), Awin (Yoruba), Uge (Edo)

Fruits/seeds: black, velvety, almost circular and flattened pod containing one (rarely two) smooth, stony, shiny-black seed embedded in dry, orange to brown, sweetly acidic and edible pulp.

Fruiting time: October – January.

Seed collection: ripe fruit fall off parent tree and can be collected from the ground. Break pod/shell; lick or wash off the pulp from seeds.

Type of seed: orthodox.

Sowing method: take protective measures to protect face and hands then scarify seeds in concentrated sulphuric acid, stirring continuously for 7 minutes before sowing at a depth of 2cm.

Sowing medium: forest soil.

Germination period: 7 – 14 days.

Germination percentage: 60%.

Growth/development: seedlings require partial shade; growth is quite slow. Plant out after about 4 months. Trees take c. 4 years to start fruiting.

Notes: seeds should be watered at least twice a day after sowing.