

Scientific name: *Nauclea diderrichii* (De Wild.) Merr.

Family: Rubiaceae.

Distribution/conservation status: widespread in evergreen and semi-deciduous forests, often as a pioneer in gaps and clearings but in low density overall and uncommon in some areas. Vulnerable (VU) due to heavy exploitation for timber.

Common names: African peach (English), Opepe (Yoruba), Obliakhe (Edo), Uburu (Igbo), Tafaashiiya (Hausa), Ekobi (Efik).

Fruits/Seeds: spherical with pitted, rough, pinkish-grey to red-brown shell, containing numerous tiny pale brown seeds.

Fruiting time: May – June, November – January.

Seed collection: collect fallen fruits from under parent tree and soak in a large container of water for a few hours. Squeeze to crush and expel the seeds. Allow seeds to settle before removing floating debris and draining.

Type of seed: orthodox.

Sowing method: sow seeds in pots or trays, covering thinly in a layer of sand.

Sowing medium: river sand.

Germination period: 14 – 28 days.

Germination percentage: 50 – 75%.

Growth/development: seedlings are slow initially then quite fast. They should be large enough to plant out in about 6 weeks.

Note: seeds remain viable for up to a year if stored in an airtight, light-proof container. Take care when watering seedlings as excess moisture may cause damping-off, especially if seedling density is high. Infestation by the shoot-boring moth, *Orygmophora mediofoveata* destroys principal shoot, resulting in stunted growth and formation of multiple shoots.

Protect saplings from duiker, deer and monkeys.