

Syzygium cordatum

Waterberry Tree



Local names: Msambarau, Mzuari (Swahili Kenya), Mkarafuu mwitu (Swahili Tanzania), Kanzironziro (Luganda).

The genus *Syzygium* belongs to family Myrtaceae. In East Africa, there are two common indigenous species named *Syzygium cordatum* and *Syzygium guineese* that have been used in traditional medicine by local communities and traditional healers to cure some ailments like abdominal pains, dysentery and diarrhoea. Both species are known to local communities by their local names where they grow locally in the natural habitats. Use of indigenous medicinal plant has been practiced in East Africa for centuries and is still being widely used to-date. The present review has been primed to describe the existing data on the information on botany and ecology, plant parts used, phytochemical constituents, traditional uses and pharmacological activities of electronic database search; as well as books, journal articles searched in libraries was conducted with the search terms of *Syzygium cordatum*, *Syzygium guineese*, water berry tree and red berry tree. Not enough literature found on the pharmacological activities of the

extracts of different parts of indigenous *Syzygium* species as compared to exotic *Syzygium* species. It would be most appropriate and great challenge if modern chemical analysis done by pharmaceuticals or by research institutions could be applied in order to detect the medicinal values of the different parts of indigenous *Syzygium* species reported to be of use in traditional medicine systems for centuries.



The genus *Syzygium* is one of the genera of the myrtle family Myrtaceae. Two indigenous species named *Syzygium cordatum* and *Syzygium guineese* have been distributed throughout East Africa. Both species have been used in traditional medicine by local communities and by traditional healers to cure some ailments like abdominal pains, indigestion and diarrhoea. Using traditional medicine is an integral part of the daily lives of most local East African communities. Use of indigenous medicinal plant has been practiced in East Africa for centuries and is still being widely used to-date

Traditional medicinal uses Roots bark and leaves are used in Traditional medicine. Infusions of the roots or bark are used to treat stomach-aches, indigestion, diarrhoea and venereal diseases . The leaves are also used to treat diarrhoea . Bark soaked in water and the infusion drunk when cold to stop abdominal pains . The plant is used to treat tuberculosis, respiratory infections, stomach problems and diarrhoea and have also been used to induce vomiting . All parts of the plant species including the leaves, bark and roots, have been shown to have medicinal properties. Infusion and decoctions of *S. cordatum* have been used by traditional medicine practitioners to treat diarrhoea, stomach aches, and diabetes .



Traditional medicinal uses Root and stem bark infusions are taken to treat stomachaches and also as an anthelmintic and purgative. Infusions of the bark are taken for infertility. Bark decoction mixed with goat's soup and taken as tonic and for infertility . Fruit eaten as a remedy for dysentery Leaf decoctions are taken against intestinal parasites and stomach-ache, used as an enema against diarrhoea, and used as an

embrocation to bathe and then massage into areas of sprain. Leaf decoctions or pulverized leaves are given as tonic to pregnant women. The leaf is chewed against stomach-ache. A liquid of chewed leaves mixed with water is used as eye drops to treat ophthalmia . Leaf decoctions are taken against intestinal parasites and stomach-ache, used as an enema against diarrhoea, and used as an embrocation to bathe and then massage into areas of sprain. Leaf decoctions or pulverized leaves are given as tonic to pregnant women. The leaf is chewed against stomach-ache. A liquid of chewed leaves mixed with water is used as eye drops to treat ophthalmia .

