**Brachystegia spiciformis**  
**Family:** Leguminosae  
**Mtundu**

**Other Common Names:** Messassa (Mozambique), Mundu, Myombo, Mtondo (Tanzania), Muputu (Zambia).

**Distribution:** Savanna forests of East Africa, mostly Tanzania, Zambia, and Mozambique; reaching from the coastal belt to the highlands.

**The Tree:** In moister areas may exceed a height of 80 ft with a clear bole of 30 ft; trunk diameters 1 to 3 ft; heavily branched.

**The Wood:**  
**General Characteristics:** Heartwood variable from pale brown to a red brown, darkening on exposure, striping sometimes present; sapwood creamy or white, clearly demarcated. Texture coarse; grain irregular and interlocked; lustrous; without characteristic odor or taste.

**Weight:** Basic specific gravity (ovendry weight/green volume) 0.67; air-dry density 51 pcf.

**Mechanical Properties:** (2-in. standard)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Moisture content (%)</th>
<th>Bending strength (Psi)</th>
<th>Modulus of elasticity (1,000 psi)</th>
<th>Maximum crushing strength (Psi)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12% (5)</td>
<td>17,300</td>
<td>2,080</td>
<td>9,570</td>
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</table>

Janka side hardness 1,830 lb at 12% moisture content.

**Drying and Shrinkage:** Dries slowly with some tendency to warp, mostly twist, appreciable checking and end splitting. Kiln schedule T3-C2 is suggested for 4/4 stock and T3-C1 for 8/4. Shrinkage green to 12% moisture content: radial 3.0%; tangential 4.4%. Movement in service is rated as medium.

**Working Properties:** The timber is difficult to work and to saw, moderate blunting of cutters, interlocked grain liable to tear in planing, sands to a good finish and polishes well, very poor steam-bending properties.

**Durability:** Nondurable and vulnerable to termite attack; sapwood readily attacked by staining fungi.

**Preservation:** Heartwood is extremely resistant to preservative treatments; sapwood moderately resistant.

**Uses:** General construction work, furniture components, parquet flooring.
Additional Reading: (3), (5), (52)
