



NOTES FROM THE UNAFAS CVP TREE NURSERY, ON HOW TO GERMINATE AND NURSE USEFUL TREE SPECIES OF CAMEROON

Bush onion

Scientific Name – *Afrostyrax lepidophyllus*

[link to seedling photo 1](#)
[link to seedling photo 2](#)

Afrostyrax fruits mid wet season. The trees grow quite slowly, and take 10-15 years before bearing fruit, but seedlings can be grafted, which means that if you have seedlings and access to a mature tree that bears well, then you can produce a ‘photocopy’ of that mature tree that will bear fruit within 3-4 years.

Afrostyrax is known to grow naturally from sea level up to 1400 m altitude.

Nursery technique

Seeds from the market tend to have been dried over fire, consequently will not germinate. Fresh seeds germinate very easily.

- It is best to sow seeds directly into pots or bags (germination rate is high so few bags will be wasted, plus the roots of small plants are delicate and easily damaged when transferred from a seed bed or ridge.
- Put each seed in a medium sized bag or container filled with soil. Cover the seed lightly with soil. Seeds germinate in a strange way – called cryptocotylar – when the first leaves grow they are ‘trapped’ inside the remains of the seed and when this falls it breaks off the stem and first leaves leaving the seedling damaged, but both the stem and new leaves will grow back.
- When the seedlings are as thick as a bic pen they are ready for grafting.
- When seedlings are as tall as your knee they can be planted out.

NOTES