

Grandidier's Baobab *Adansonia grandidieri*, Madagascar



(picture links: [Adult Tree](#); Bernard Gagnon, Morondava; [Flower](#); [Seed](#))

Seed type and characteristics:

- In leaf: October to May
- Flowers: May to August – said to smell of watermelon.
- Fruits: November

Seed germination conditions:

Easily grown from seed, apparently, though seeds need soaking in hot water for 2-6 hours, and then sowing about 1cm deep in a well-drained medium like river sand or perlite/vermiculite mix. Should not be overwatered. And pot should be kept in warm situation 68-75°F. Germination usually occurs in 2-4 weeks, though it can be more.

Millennium Seed Bank advised approx. 11% rate germination of seeds (Jan 2016). Seeds scarified 95% conc. sulphuric acid treatment to break tough testa (February 2016).

Sapling growing requirements:

There is a series of U-tube videos on growing *Adansonia digitata*:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t02_hj1jpDA (part 1)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XMpJKL4ITwk> (part 2)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AMK9EsneCtYE> (part 3)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WvMs_KGuOaA (part 4)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yGTj_n7YnyU (part 5)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZWrtNHGFgaQ> (part 6)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B6drKfKmn4M> (part 7)

Conservation status:

Endangered on the Red List¹, and more background on GTC² and Arkive³, and FAO's Ecocrop⁴.

CCI partners, with lead partner:

Grandidier's Baobab is one of the Global Tree Campaign species, so a focus of FFI⁵ and BGCI⁶, and FFI have a close collaboration with local partner, Madagasikara Voakajy (<http://www.madagasikara-voakajy.org>). BirdLife also have a well-established Partner in Madagascar, Asity Madagascar⁷, so there are a number of approaches to *grandidieri* on the ground. As it stands, the best approach is probably through FFI and GTC, and initial links have already been made via David Gill, and Rob Brett (who leads FFI's Africa programme). Also held preliminary discussions with Kew Gardens, and the Millennium Seed Bank on the availability of *grandidieri* seed. And here is a recent post by Georgina Magin, who leads FFI's Global Trees work⁸.

Other notes:

Wikipedia entry on the Avenue of the Baobabs near Morondava⁹, on Wondermondo¹⁰, and on Dangerous

¹ Red Listing: <http://www.iucnredlist.org/details/30388/0>

² Global Trees: <http://globaltrees.org/threatened-trees/trees/grandidier-baobab/>

³ Arkive account: <http://www.arkive.org/grandidiers-baobab/adansonia-grandidieri/>

⁴ FAO account: <http://ecocrop.fao.org/ecocrop/srv/en/cropView?id=2808>

⁵ FFI page: <http://www.fauna-flora.org/species/grandidiers-baobab/>

⁶ BGCI page: <http://www.bgci.org/resources/news/0983/>

⁷ Asity's Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Asity-Madagascar/440682089288761>

⁸ Travel report on grandidieri: <http://globaltrees.org/news-blog/mother-forest-local-enthusiasm-baobabs-saviour/>.

⁹ Avenue and the potential for it to become a Natural Monument (having been proposed in 2007): http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Avenue_of_the_Baobabs, with several photos.

¹⁰ More on avenue:

<http://www.wondermondo.com/Countries/Af/Madagascar/Menabe/AvenueofBaobabs.htm>.

Roads¹¹, and its powerful value as a tourist attraction¹², and here too¹³, and a video by Conservation International that also talks about the tourism value¹⁴.

Quite a range of literature on pollination by bats, lemurs, etc¹⁵, and feeding on fallen fruit, etc¹⁶. The biologist, Richard Jenkins, will be a very useful source on information on relevant bats¹⁷.

There are some interesting stories associated with water storage, including some literature on the biomechanics¹⁸, and also some background on the nutritional value of baobab pulp¹⁹. And a now closed Indigoproject on baobab fruit²⁰.

Conservation education, and childrens books on Lemurs written by Alison Jolly, and links to the Lemur Conservation Foundation²¹.

Named for Alfred Grandidier²², and there is a great deal more on his background as an explorer on the web, but mostly in French. Other species are named for him, including a striped mongoose²³, a rather handsome frog²⁴, and a scorpion²⁵, so there might be some good story lines linked to mammals, insects, etc. that also have the name of the tree.

¹¹ And more: <http://www.dangerousroads.org/africa/madagascar/940-avenue-of-the-baobabs-madagascar.html>

¹² Tourist attraction: <http://raredelights.com/splendid-avenue-baobabs-western-madagascar/>.

¹³ <http://feelingnomad.com/2013/03/01/watch-our-for-the-baobab-madagascar-ecotourism/>.

¹⁴ CI video on Madagascar: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D04k9UadUWE>.

¹⁵ Here are a couple of links to papers on pollination, but suspect that there will be a good deal more literature on this:

<http://www.jstor.org/discover/10.2307/2399883?uid=3738032&uid=2&uid=4&sid=21104721305027>, and <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1744-7429.2006.00112.x/abstract.jsessionid=596DB62AA98FE9A81932C27A526D7393.f04t01?deniedAccessCustomisedMessage=&userIsAuthenticated=false>.

¹⁶ Fallen fruit:

http://books.google.co.uk/books?id=Vu9ZX3NWPYIC&pg=PA211&lpg=PA211&dq=mammals+associated+with+grandidieri+baobab&source=bl&ots=73I0eR67YY&sig=D6x0QIW8R1ZmhbyR6WkKVkqDIWk&hl=en&sa=X&ei=Ims9VPfNHabd7QbY84HYAQ&redir_esc=y#v=onepage&q=mammals%20associated%20with%20grandidieri%20baobab&f=false

¹⁷ Richard Jenkins: <http://www.bangor.ac.uk/senrgy/staff/rjenkins.php.en>

¹⁸ Paper on baobab water storage mechanics: <http://www.amjbot.org/content/93/9/1251.full>

¹⁹ On baobab pulp:

http://www.academicjournals.org/article/article1386078363_Ibrahima%20et%20al.pdf

²⁰ Indiegogoproject: <https://www.indiegogo.com/projects/the-baobab-project-madagascar>, and more on the same initiative, I think, here: <http://www.pinkforest.org/baobab/>

²¹ The Ako Project: <http://www.lemurreserve.org/akoproject2012.html>

²² Alfred Grandidier on wiki: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alfred_Grandidier.

²³ Grandidier's Striped Mongoose: <http://www.arkive.org/giant-striped-mongoose/galidictis-grandidieri/>.

²⁴ Grandidier's Malagasy Frog: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mantidactylus_grandidieri, or Stream Frog: http://www.alamy.com/stock-photo-Grandidiers_Stream_Frog_Mantidactylus_grandidieri_adult_at_stream-27548999.html.

²⁵ Scorpion: http://www.ntnu.no/ub/scorpion-files/g_grandidieri_biography.pdf