

Indigenous

Af: Mekeany

An Sallm

Sh: Asasia

Tr: Hal-aqba

Ecology: A shrubby tree of north-eastern Africa, west to Mauritania, found in rocky or sandy soils often along seasonal stream beds. In Eritrea, it grows mostly from sea level up to 500 m in the eastern coastal plains, e.g. around Metkelabiet, Mai-atal, Wadi-labka, Erafale, Hirhigo and on the Buri Peninsula, often associated with *Acacia tortilis* and *Acacia laeta*.

Uses: **Fodder** (leaves), **fibre (bark)**, nitrogen fixation, **sand stabilization**.

Description: A shrub or small tree 2-4 m, often with typical bundles of opposite twigs. **BARK: Green-brown, shining like varnish and curling up when removed; branchlets red.** **THORNS: White, in pairs, straight and thin, small or to 5 cm, beside the leaves and longer than the leaves.** **LEAVES: Compound, 1-4 pairs pinnae each with 8-10 pairs of very tiny leaflets.** **FLOWERS: Bright yellow round heads on stalks 2-3 cm.** **FRUIT: Narrow pods, 6-15 cm, slightly curved, sometimes twisted, containing 6-15 seeds, narrowed between each one. Young pods bright red, later red-brown.**

Propagation: Seedlings, direct sowing.

Seed:

treatment: Immerse in hot water, allow to cool and soak overnight.

storage:

Management: Pollarding, coppicing. Seedlings are very sensitive to competition and weeding is thus essential.

Remarks: A useful species in hot arid areas. Although similar to *Acacia seyal*, the bark, thorns and pods are slightly different.

