

Acacia mellifera

Mimosoideae

Indigenous

- Common names:** **Arusha:** eiti; **Eng:** black thorn, hook thorn; **Gogo:** mkambale mvugala; **Iraqw:** yudek; **Mbug:** mangarada; **Nyam:** mgongwa, mkwata; **Nyat:** mjujumi; **Rangi:** kinwato, mkalankanga; **Suku:** mrugara; **Swah:** kikwata; **Zigua:** msasa.
- Ecology:** A low shrubby Acacia with a natural range in North and East Africa. Widespread in dry scrub with trees, deciduous bushland. In Tanzania, common in Shinyanga, Dodoma, Same and Singida. It may be the main species in dense thorn bush at 300-1,000 m.
- Uses:** Firewood, charcoal, utensils (pestles), fodder (pods, twigs, leaves, flowers), bee forage, medicine (bark), live fence, nitrogen fixation, soil conservation.
- Description:** A shrub or small tree up to 9 m. **BARK:** pale grey-brown, smooth. **THORNS:** distinctive, **small hooked prickles, in pairs, grey with black tips.** **LEAVES:** usually **2-3 pairs of blue-green leaflets each to 2 cm.** **FLOWERS:** creamy spikes to 4 cm attracting bees. **FRUIT:** short, wide pods, tapering abruptly at both ends, **flat papery, pale brown-yellow, rarely to 8 cm,** veined, 3 seeds within.
- Propagation:** Direct sowing, seedlings.
- Seed info.:** No. of seeds per kg: about 20,000. Seed germinate in 2-14 days and germination is 50-80% with good seed.
- treatment:** Soak in cold water for 12 hours or nick seed coat at cotyledon end of seed.
- storage:** Can be stored for long periods if kept dry and insect free.
- Management:** Coppicing.
- Remarks:** The flowers produce excellent-quality honey. The tree is heavily browsed by game and cattle where few trees grow. Can make impenetrable thickets.

