

Boscia senegalensis

Capparidaceae

Indigenous

Bl: Hamta

Hd: Teham

Km: Goda

Nr: Kushi

Tg: Hamta

Tr: Hamta

Ecology: A tree typical of semi-arid Africa from Senegal to Ethiopia. In Eritrea, it grows in the western lowlands, e.g. around Tokombia, Tekeze valley, Shambuko, upper and lower Barka, Hidai valley, Mai-lam, Hagaz and lower Anseba valley in rocky, clay, stony and lateritic soils. Prefers sandy-clay plains.

Uses: Firewood (smoky), poles, food (seed in emergencies), **fodder** (leaves browsed by sheep and goats), water purification (bark that is dried and ground into powder).

Description: A small evergreen tree or a shrub reaching a height of 4 m. **BARK:** Dark grey to black. **LEAVES:** Alternate, **tough and hard but the surface covered with hairs**, darker above than below, to 12 cm long, **oval, the tip blunt or notched and with a tiny point, lateral veins prominent and looped in bows**, with a clear vein network in between. **FLOWERS:** Greenish-white to yellow green, unpleasant scent, in short dense heads. **FRUIT:** **Globose, 1-2 cm in diameter** in small heads. Surface of fruits rough and **hairy, green then brown-yellow** when ripe, containing 1-2 large seeds.

Propagation: Seedlings, wildings.

Seed: No. of seed per kg: 2,500-3,500.

treatment:

storage:

Management: It is often better to protect natural regeneration rather than planting this species.

Remarks: During famine seeds can be washed several times to remove the bitter taste, soaked in water for 7 days then dried to be prepared in the same way as lentils. They can also be ground into flour. The seeds have also been roasted and used as a substitute for coffee.

