

Indigenous

An Heghetn

Bl: Guam

Km: Susa

Sh: Unugto

Tg: Ghonok

Tr: Heghem

Ecology: A shrub growing from West Africa to Ethiopia to South Africa in a variety of habitats—open grassland, river banks, rocky hillsides and coastal plains. In Eritrea, it is common throughout the country, 700-2,500 m, particularly on the eastern escarpment and western lowlands, e.g. around Dongolo, Mereb, Ailagundet, Hazemo plains, lower Gash and in the central highland plains.

Uses: **Firewood, charcoal**, poles, posts, **tool handles**, medicine (leaves, roots), **fodder** (leaves, pods), bee forage, nitrogen fixation, soil conservation, **live fence**, fibre (bark), fencing (cut branches), smoking jars and milk pots for added flavour.

Description: A small shrubby tree, although it can reach 6 m. The feathery leaves show it is close to the genus *Acacia*. **BARK:** Grey, thick and fibrous. **Thorns short and single, alternate and slightly hooked.** **LEAVES:** Compound, leaflets narrow, slightly hairy, to 1 cm. **FLOWERS:** In **two-coloured heads**, upper half pink, lower half yellow. They hang on a thin stalk 2-5 cm long. **FRUIT:** A **twisted cluster of thin flattened pods**. Each spiral pod contains 4 seeds. The pods fall to the ground and rot to set seeds free.

Propagation: Seedlings, direct sowing, root suckers, cuttings.

Seed: The tree seeds prolifically when in open land. 30,000-45,000 seeds per kg.

treatment: Immerse seed in hot water allow to cool and soak for 24 hours.

storage: Dry seed can be stored in a cold room for a year.

Management: Coppicing, lopping and pollarding.

Remarks: The tree can be an aggressive weed, has vigorous root suckers and can form a dense thicket. The timber is very heavy and hard but of quite small dimensions.

