

# *Hyphaene thebaica*

Arecaceae



## Indigenous

**Am:** *Zembaba*

**Br:** *Kone*

**Eng:** *Doum palm, Egyptian doum palm*

**Or:** *Meti*

**Sm:** *Bar*

**Tg:** *Kambash*

## Ecology

One of 10 African *Hyphaene*, this is the common doum palm of Ethiopia, Egypt and the Sudan, growing also in West Africa. It is usually found on lowland plains mainly in river valleys and around oasis, also often in damp places in woodland and at hot springs in Dry and Moist Bereha and Dry and Moist Kolla agroclimatic zones from 100 m below sea level at Dallol Afar in the Danakil Depression to 1,000 m in Gonder, Gojam and Ilubabor. It resists bush fires.

## Uses

Timber, food (nuts), baskets and mats (leaves).

## Description

A tree 10–15 m, easily recognized by the regular branching which may form up to 16 leafy heads. LEAVES: Fan-shaped, nearly 2 m x 1 m across on long spiny stalks. FLOWERS: Male and female trees. Male flowers in a leafy sheath over 1 m long. Female spike fatter, producing the fruit. FRUIT: Smooth, shiny orange-brown when ripe, like rounded cubes with 2 flat faces, 6–8 cm long. Edible pulp surrounds 1 white seed.

## Propagation

Seedlings.

## Seed

**Treatment:**

**Storage:**

## Management

Coppicing, lopping.

## Remarks

This palm is widely used in Sudan and elsewhere and often indicates an area of good soil with shallow ground water. A mature tree can produce 50 kg of fruit a year.

