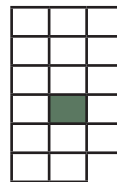


Pithecellobium dulce

Fabaceae



S. America

Am: *Temar*

Eng: *Madras thorn, Manilla tamarind*

Ecology

Originally from South America, this tree has so far been cultivated in Harerge and Illubabor regions. It tolerates arid and semi-arid conditions and performs well in Dry and Moist Kolla agroclimatic zones, 500–1,600 m.

Uses

Firewood, timber (general construction), poles, food and drink (fruit pulp), fodder (leaves, pods, seeds), bee forage, soil conservation, shade, ornamental, windbreak, live fence, tannin and oil (seeds), dune fixation.

Description

A thin shapeless shrub or tree reaching 4–15 m. **BARK:** Pale and smooth with horizontal marks, bole short, young branches thorny, drooping. **LEAVES:** Thin stalks bear 2 pairs of leaflets, each to 5 cm, asymmetric oval, the tip rounded or notched, short spines at the base of each leaf pair. **FLOWERS:** Small, cream-yellow on a short stalk, bunches of green-white stamens 1 cm across. **FRUIT:** Heavy pods, about 12 cm, spirally twisted, narrowed between seeds, red when mature, splitting to release glossy black seeds almost covered with the fleshy red and white edible aril. A sweet pulp surrounds the seeds.

Propagation

Seedlings, direct sowing at site, cuttings.

Seed

7,000–26,000 seed per kg.

Treatment: Not necessary.

Storage:

Management

Fairly fast growing. Coppicing, trimming (for live fence).

Remarks

The species can become a weed in moist climates if not well managed. It is popular as a spiny hedge to keep out livestock. The timber of a large tree is strong and flexible, heavy and red brown. It is difficult to cut but can be used in making local ploughs. The flowers are a good source of nectar and pollen for honey bees.



Photo: Patrick Maundu

