

# Prosopis chilensis

## Mimosoideae

South America, Texas, Mexico

Ar: *Temer musa*

Hd: *Temer musa*

Eng: *Mesquite*

Tr: *Sesban*

- Ecology:** A thorny shrub or tree cultivated all over the tropics. It is drought-resistant and grows on light sandy soils. It tolerates some waterlogging but is sensitive to weed competition while young. In Eritrea, it was introduced from the Sudan in the 1970s and now occurs all over the north-eastern and north-western lowlands, e.g. around Tesenei, Karora, Mahmimet and Massawa, from sea level to 1,200 m.
- Uses:** **Firewood, charcoal**, posts, timber, carving, food (fruit, leaves), **fodder** (leaves, pods), **bee forage**, medicine, soil conservation, nitrogen fixation, river-bank stabilization, shade, windbreak, live fence.
- Description:** A small tree or shrub 8-15 m with a shallow spreading root system. Light drooping foliage. **BARK:** Grey, cracked. **LEAVES:** Alternate, compound. **Leaflets oblong, tip pointed, narrow, 1.5 cm long, no terminal leaflet.** **FLOWERS:** Greenish yellow spikes. **FRUIT: Pods, about 10-cm long, yellow when ripe**, becoming black, numerous up to 25 seeds within a sweet pulp.
- Propagation:** Seedlings, direct sowing.
- Seed:** Germination 40-80 %. No. of seeds per kg: 30,000-35,000. Seeds can be extracted by exposing pods to termites or soaking in water.
- treatment:** Immerse in hot water, allow to cool and soak for 24 hours.
- storage:** Seed stores well both in pods and when extracted as it is not attacked by most insects.
- Management:** Fairly fast growing; lopping, pollarding and coppicing.
- Remarks:** The tree can become a weed on wetter sites. Pods contain sugar and are good animal feed.

