

Indigenous

- Ecology:** A woody herb occurring throughout East Africa extending to South Africa and east to China, though it may have been introduced in much of its range. In Uganda, it grows in low-lying wet places with short grass like *Loudetia kagerensis*. Often found in cultivated areas, especially in wet ditches near rice fields.
- Uses:** Medicine, fodder (leaves), shade (for coffee), mulch, nitrogen fixation, soil conservation, windbreak, fibre (stem), resin.
- Description:** A woody herb, tall and straight, often unbranched, in crowded stands, 6 m high, otherwise low and spreading, multi-stemmed. **Stems, leaf and flower stalks prickly.** LEAVES: **compound, with up to 30 pairs leaflets**, each 1 cm. FLOWERS: **yellow, 9-12 on a short stalk**, the largest petal spotted green outside, marked violet inside, wide wing petals. FRUIT: **very long narrow pods**, about 25 cm, **curved and beaked** with 35-40 brown seeds.
- Propagation:** Direct sowing at site.
- Seed:
- treatment:** soak seed in cold water.
- storage:** seeds can be stored.
- Management:** Very fast growing; lopping, pruning, short rotations.
- Remarks:** The stem yields a strong fibre which is especially durable under water. A fast-growing short-lived plant with vigorous nodulation. Very poor-quality fuelwood due to the hollow stems. It can stand a wide range of temperatures and difficult soils and is highly resistant to drought. The foliage turned into the soil as green manure has been shown to increase crop yields.

Sesbania bispinosa (*S. aculeata*)

Papilionaceae

