

# Ziziphus mauritiana

Rhamnaceae



## Indigenous

**Am:** *Qurqurah*  
**Br:** *Kurkurrah*  
**Eng:** *Jujube*  
**Nur:** *Gaba, Gabi*  
**Or:** *Qurqura*  
**Sm:** *Gob*  
**Tg:** *Geva*

## Ecology

A tree widespread in tropical Africa, often naturalized, also Mediterranean to India and cultivated in other tropical and subtropical parts of the world. In Ethiopia, it is common in Dry and Moist Kolla agroclimatic zones in Ilubabor, Gamo Gofa, Bale, Sidamo and Harerge, 400–1,600 m. It has a strongly developed root system and does best in areas with a high water table.

## Uses

Firewood, charcoal, timber (utensils), fodder (leaves, fruit), food (fruit), bee forage, soil conservation, live fence, fencing material (dry branches).

## Description

A much-branched spiny shrub or tree, to 10 m, drooping angular branches, crown rounded. BARK: Grey-black, pairs of dark brown thorns, both straight and recurved (“thumb-pointer”) or small, single and recurved. LEAVES: Markedly alternate along the stem, small and oval, to 8 cm, leaf bases rounded and equal, shiny yellow-green above, hairy white below, 3 veins from the base, young stems hairy. FLOWERS: Small yellow-green, in clusters by leaves, on hairy stalks, a sharp sweet

smell. FRUIT: Rounded 1–2 cm, shiny yellow then red-brown, pulp edible, 2 seeds in a large stone.

## Propagation

Seedlings, direct sowing at site, cuttings.

## Seed

Germination rates often low. 2,000—3,300 stones per kg. Each stone contains 2—3 seeds (multigermin).

**Treatment:** Soak in cold water, crack hard seed cover.

**Storage:** Uncracked but cleaned stones can be stored. Storage in airtight containers for a year improves germination.

## Management

Fast growing in dry areas; coppicing, lopping, pollarding, pruning. Produces root suckers.

## Remarks

A very important tree for dry areas because of its many uses. Many parasites attack the leaves and fruits.



Photo: Patrick Maundu

