

Ziziphus mauritiana**Rhamnaceae****North Africa, Asia**

COMMON NAMES: **Boran:** Quaqura, Kurkuurah; **Chonyi:** Mukunazi, Kunazi (fruit); **Daasanach:** Gabite, Gaba; **Digo:** Mukunazi; **English:** Jujube; **Giriama:** Mukunazi, Kunazi (fruit); **Ilchamus:** Lmampaai; **Kambe:** Mukunazi, Kunazi (fruit); **Maasai:** Oloilalei; **Marakwet:** Tilomwo, Tilam (plural); **Pokot:** Tlomwo, Tilomwo, Tilam (plural); **Rendille:** Gab; **Sabaot:** Katagi; **Samburu:** Ilerendei; **Sanya:** Kunazi (fruit), Mukunazi; **Somali:** Gup, Gob, Goob; **Swahili:** Mkunazi, Mukhalita; **Teso:** Esilang; **Tugen:** Chepkomonit, Tilomwo; **Turkana:** Ekalale, Ngakalalio (fruit).

DESCRIPTION: A much-branched spiny shrub or tree, to 10 m. Crown rounded, branches drooping, branchlets zigzag and young ones hairy; spines paired, one straight, the other recurved. **BARK:** Silvery to grey-black in older parts. **LEAVES:** Markedly alternate along the stem, small and oval, to 8 cm, leaf bases rounded and equal, shiny yellow-green above, white and soft hairy below, 3 veins from the base. **FLOWERS:** Small yellow-green, on hairy stalks, in clusters by the leaves, giving a sharp sweet smell. **FRUIT:** Rounded, 1–2 cm, shiny yellow then red-brown, edible pulp surrounding a large stone.

ECOLOGY: Widespread in Africa, especially in the north, also the Mediterranean to India, and cultivated in other tropical and subtropical parts of the world. Probably introduced in southern Africa. A tree that does very well in extremely dry areas, e.g. in West Pokot, Baringo and Turkana, but also found in humid areas at the coast. Grown as an ornamental at medium altitudes such as in Nairobi; 0–1,800 m. It does best in areas with a high water table. Agroclimatic Zones III–VII.

USES: Firewood, charcoal, timber, furniture (beds), poles, tool handles, carvings, boat building (dhow ribs), bows and arrows, edible fruit, medicine (roots, leaves, fruits, bark), fodder (leaves and fruit), bee forage, shade, soil conservation, windbreak, tannin, dye, live fence, gum, fire making by friction, veterinary medicine.

PROPAGATION: Seedlings, direct sowing at site, cuttings. Produces root suckers.

SEED: Germination rates low, unless the hard cover is cracked prior to sowing; 2,000–3,300 stones per kg. Each stone contains 2–3 seeds (multi-germ).
treatment: Carefully crack hard cover.

MANAGEMENT: Fast growing; coppicing, lopping, pollarding, pruning.

REMARKS: A very important tree for drylands because of its many uses. Fruits often dried like dates and eaten by pastoralists when herding their animals. Many parasites attack the leaves and fruits. Large-fruited varieties have been developed in India and the Middle East. Can be grafted on wild plants.

FURTHER READING: <http://www.worldagroforestrycentre.org/Sites/TreeDBS/AFT/AFT.htm>; Beentje, 1994; Bekele-Tesemma et al., 1993; Dharani, 2002; Jensen, 1999; Katende et al., 1999; Kokwaro, 1993; Maundu et al., 1999; Mbuya et al., 1994; National Academy of Sciences, 1980, 1983; Noad and Birnie, 1989; Palgrave and Palgrave, 2002; Ruffo et al., 2002; Verheij and Coronel, 1991; von Maydell, 1990.

