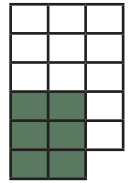


# *Ziziphus spina-christi*

Rhamnaceae



## Indigenous

**Agn:** *Lang*

**Am:** *Qurqura*

**Brt:** *Atsoda*

**Nur:** *Bow*

**Or:** *Qurqura*

**Tg:** *Geba*

## Ecology

A spiny shrub which grows in the Sahel from Senegal to the Sudan and Arabia in wooded grasslands, on flooded river banks and at edges of cultivation. It prefers alluvial plains with deep soil. In Ethiopia, it occurs in Bereha and Dry and Moist Kolla agroclimatic zones in Afar plains, Dire-dawa, Hararge, Bale, Gamo Gofa, Shewa, Welo, and Tigray, 0–1,900 m.

## Uses

Firewood, charcoal, timber (spear shafts, roof beams), furniture, utensils, food (fruit), fodder (fruit, leaves), shade, live fence, fencing material (dry branches).

## Description

A thorny shrub becoming a tree to 10 m, evergreen on wet sites but losing all its leaves in a long dry season. The tree lives a long time. **BARK:** Grey-brown, when cut the edge is reddish, mature bark grooved and cracking. The paired spines are “thumb pointer”, the straight thorns long and thin. Branchlets yellow-white, somewhat zigzag. **LEAVES:** Rather small, narrowly ovate, variable in length, 1–8 cm, shortly stalked, usually narrowed to the base where each side is similar, 3 clear veins from the base, the edge lightly toothed. **FLOWERS:**

Small, 10–25 in heads beside leaves, yellow-green, stalks and calyx hairy white. **FRUIT:** Round, 1–2 cm, woolly at first, ripening yellow to red, with edible flesh covering one hard stone that contains 2–3 seeds.

## Propagation

Seedlings, cuttings.

## Seed

1,000—2,000 seed per kg. Remove the flesh, clean, dry and store.

**Treatment:** The hard woody stones should be cracked with a hammer and soaked in warm but not hot water overnight.

**Storage:** Stores well.

## Management

Coppicing, lopping, pollarding. Produces root suckers.

## Remarks

It develops an extremely deep taproot system. It can make an impenetrable thicket. The wood makes excellent firewood and charcoal. It coppices very well.

