

Entada africana

Guill. & Perr.

Fabaceae

+ Synonyms

Common Name:

General Information

Entada africana is a deciduous tree with a low-branching, wide crown; it can grow up to 10 metres tall, but is lower in the west of its range[328, 332]. The bole can be up to 30cm in diameter[303]. The tree is a popular traditional medicine within its native range, where it is commonly harvested from the wild both for local use and for sale in local markets. The tree is also occasionally used for food and supplies wood, tannins and fibre.

Known Hazards

The leaves are used to make a fish poison[774]. An infusion of the leaves at a concentration of 1:1,000 kills Carassius auratus (goldfish) in 12 hours[303].

Botanical References




Range

Tropical Africa - the sub-Saharan belt from Senegal to Ethiopia, south to eastern Zaire and Uganda.

Habitat

Savannah subject to fires; degraded regrowths; wooded scrub in flooded hollow; marigot banks; sometimes rather frequent or very common; wooded savannahs; open wooded grassland; at elevations from 450 - 1,100 metres[328].

Properties

Edibility Rating	
Medicinal Rating	
Other Uses Rating	
Habit	Deciduous Tree
Height	6.00 m
Cultivation Status	Wild

Cultivation Details

A plant of drier areas in the tropics, where it can be found at elevations from 450 - 1,100 metres. It is found in areas with a mean annual rainfall in the range 600 - 1,200mm and mean annual temperatures of 20 - 32°C[303, 774]. The plant is found in the wild in deep sandy soils and more or less rocky soils[328]. The tree is very tolerant of bush fires[328]. The plant is very sensitive to bush fires and is often found wild in a fire-mutilated state[774].

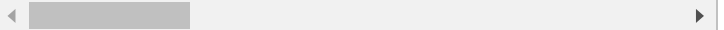
Edible Uses



Tree growing in native habitat

Photograph by: [Annette Gockele: African plants - A Photo Guide](#)

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Tender young leaves - cooked[617]. Occasionally harvested from the wild and used in sauces[617].

Medicinal

The plant is commonly used as a traditional medicine within its native range[332]. The leaves have been shown to contain rotenol[774].

The leaves are stomachic. They are used to make a tonic tea[375, 774].

Applied externally, the leaves are used for healing wounds[375]. They make a good wound dressing, preventing suppuration[303].

The bark is abortifacient[375, 774].

The roots are stimulant and tonic[774]. Because of their emetic properties, they are said to have antidotal effects against various toxic agents and fish poison[375, 774].

Other Uses

A fibre obtained from the inner bark is used for making ropes, bands, storage bins etc[375, 774].

The bark is a source of tannins[375, 480, 774].

A low quality gum is obtained from the tree[303].

The bark contains rotenone, which has insecticidal properties[375].

The wood is light red, rather soft and easy to work[332, 774].

Propagation

Seed - it has a hard seedcoat and may benefit from scarification before sowing to speed up germination. This can usually be done by pouring a small amount of nearly boiling water on the seeds (being careful not to cook them!) and then soaking them for 12 - 24 hours in warm water. By this time they should have imbibed moisture and swollen - if they have not, then carefully make a nick in the seedcoat (being careful not to damage the embryo) and soak for a further 12 hours before sowing.

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