



## PLANT FACT SHEET

# *Ziziphus abyssinica* Hochst. ex A Rich.

GENUS *Ziziphus* FAMILY Rhamnaceae

COMMON NAMES Jube-jube

## EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

**Edible parts:** Fruit, Seeds, Leaves

The ripe fruit pulp and seeds are eaten raw. Often the seeds are discarded.  
The fruit are also cooked as a vegetable.

## DESCRIPTION

A thorny semi-evergreen shrub. It grows 3-6 m high. It has a single straight trunk. The branches droop to give a rounded crown. The bark is dark grey and deeply grooved. Branches zigzag and are hairy. They have single or paired, dark brown thorns 2 cm long. In a pair, one is straight and one is curved backwards. Leaves are alternate along the stem. They are oval and leathery. Their length varies from 5-8 cm. The leaf base is unequal. Leaves are shiny green on top and hairy and orange yellow below. There are 2-3 clear veins. The leaf has a finely toothed edge and a short hairy stalk. Flowers are green or yellow in small star like heads. They are 1-2 cm across on stalks 1 cm long. The flowers have an unpleasant sharp smell. Fruit are rounded and 2-3 cm across. They are smooth and ripen to a shiny red-brown. There are 1-2 seeds inside a stone. The flesh of the fruit is edible.

## HABITAT

A tropical plant. It grows in the lowlands. It occurs in medium to low elevations in Africa. It grows in dry savannah. It is often beside rivers. It grows in the Sahel in West Africa. It can grow in arid places. In Ethiopia it grows between 450-2,000 m above sea level.

## PRODUCTION

### Cultivation

Plants are grown from seeds. Seeds can be sown in pots then transplanted or sown directly where they are to grow. To collect seeds the fruit pulp is removed then the seeds dried. The hard seed cover should be cracked carefully or soaked in cold water for 24 hours before sowing. Plants can be pruned. It is used as a hedge. Plants can be cut back and will re-grow.

### Harvesting and Seed Production

In Zimbabwe fruit are ripe June to September.

## NOTES

There are about 86-100 *Ziziphus* species. They grow in the tropics. There are 30 species in tropical America.

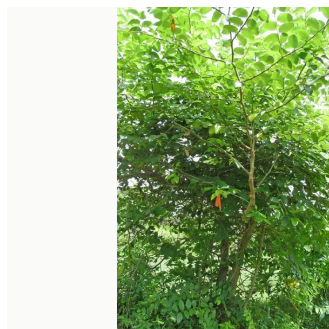
## PICTURES



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



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