PLANT FACT SHEET

Senegalia mellifera subsp. detinens (Burchell) Kyal. & Boatwr.

GENUS *Senegalia* **FAMILY** Fabaceae

COMMON NAMES Black thorn, Hook-thorn

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Gum, Leaves, Fruit, Pods

The edible gum is produced when branches are damaged.
The roots are used to sour milk and as a curdling agent.

DESCRIPTION

It is often a shrub but can be a small tree. It grows 5-8 m tall. The young branches are rigid and spiny. The prickles are dark brown. They are 5 mm long and in pairs below each node. It loses its leaves during the year. The leaves are compound. They have 2-3 pairs of leaf stalks with very few leaflets. There are often only 1-2 pairs. The leaflets are 0.4-2.2 cm long by 0.3-1.6 cm wide. The flowers are white in balls. The fruit is a small pale brown pod. It can be 9 cm long by 2.5 cm wide. It is thin, straight and smooth.

HABITAT

It is a tropical and subtropical plant. It grows in dry bushveld. It is often on sand and semi-desert. It can tolerate drought and frost. It grows in areas with annual rainfalls between 60-1,300 mm. The dry season can be 6-11 months. It can grow in salty and alkaline soils. It grows from sea level to 1,800 m above sea level. It can grow in arid places.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Plants can be grown from seeds. The seeds can be soaked in hot water overnight then planted. It is best grown in a nursery in sand then transplanted early without damaging the taproot.

Harvesting and Seed Production

It grows at a moderate rate.

NOTES

There are about 1,350 Acacia species. Over 1,000 occur in Australia. Also as Mimosaceae.

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