

BUFFALO THORN

Ziziphus abyssinica

Rhamnaceae

ECHO® FICHE D'INFORMATIONS DE LA PLANTE

Origine

This *Ziziphus* species is indigenous to Malawi, Kenya, Mozambique and South Africa. It is found growing wild in Ethiopia, Zimbabwe and other east African countries. It is a thorny shrub or small tree, 7-12 m (25-40 ft) with rough, grey-brown bark that is used for making a dye and has leaves that are furry with hairs on the underneath side. It is grown for both its fruit and foliage for human and livestock consumption. The flowers have an unpleasant smell but are attractive to bees for the nectar and pollen. The wood makes good firewood, charcoal, fence posts and furniture. Because of its thorns and tangled branches, the tree makes an effective live fence. Poultices made from the steamed leaves and burned leaf ash are applied to the chest and throat respectively for infections.

Noms courants

- anglais
 - Buffalo Thorn
 - Jujube
 - Catch Thorn
 - Kankhande

Culture

Z. abyssinica is a valuable tree as it prefers growing in arid, tropical and subtropical climates in woodlands, grasslands, or riverbeds at low altitudes 400-2000 m (1300-6500 ft). It tolerates a wide variety of soils, temperatures as low as -25°C (-13° F) and rainfall from 300-2000 mm (12-80 in) yearly. The trees flower in mid-rainy season and the fruit is mature in the cool, dry season before the next rainy season begins.

récolte et production de semences

The fruit is 2-3 cm (1 in) in diameter, red/red brown with one or two seeds inside an inner stone. Seeds do not require special conditions for storage other than cool and dry. In order to speed germination, stones need to be covered with hot water for 24 hours or cracked and soaked in cool water. Seeds can be sown in pots or the ground.

Ravageurs et maladies

The wood is resistant to termites and borers. In spite of the thorns, *Z. abyssinica* is browsed by cattle and sometimes cultivated as a fodder crop.

Cuisine et nutrition

The sweet fruits of the *Z. abyssinica* are 2-3 cm (1 in) in diameter with red or reddish brown skin. An inner stone contains 1 or 2 seeds. Fruit may be consumed fresh or in sauces. The leaves can be cooked and eaten as a vegetable.

Références

Orwa C, Mutua A, Kindt R, Jamnadass R, Simons A. 2009. Agroforestry Database: a tree reference and selection guide version 4.0 (<http://www.worldagroforestry.org/treedb2/speciesprofile.php?Spid=84>)

<http://ecocrop.fao.org/ecocrop/srv/en/cropView?id=243766>