

Indigenous

Common names: **Ateso K:** Eoi **Ateso T:** Etirr **English:** Umbrella thorn.

Ecology: A common acacia all over Africa. Favours alkaline soils and can grow on shallow soils. Produces enormous deep roots penetrating a wide area to collect water and so reaches into semi-desert scrub as well as wooded grasslands. In Uganda it tends to be riparian. Commonly found near Greek River in Kapchorwa and Moroto Districts and around Moroto town.

Uses: Firewood, charcoal, timber, poles, posts, fodder (shoots, leaves, pods), bee forage, soil conservation, nitrogen fixation, shade (livestock), fibre (bark), fences (cut branches).

Description: A characteristic tree of drylands, 4-21 m, the **crown layered, flat and spreading** or rounded, sometimes a shrub. **BARK:** grey-brown-black **and fissured when mature**, young branchlets very hairy. **THORNS:** Two kinds: **small hooked** and **long, straight white**, sometimes mixed pairs, all on one stem. **LEAVES:** bipinnate, 2-10 pairs pinnae on a **short stalk** only 2-4 cm. **FLOWERS:** Fragrant, **cream**, in round heads. **FRUIT:** **yellow-brown pods, each containing up to 10 brown seeds**, hang in dense bunches **spirally twisted, sometimes in rings**.

Propagation: Seedlings (sow seeds in pots), wildings.

Seed: Slow germination, low germination rate. No. of seeds per kg: 12,000-31,000.

treatment: seed is very hard. Pour boiling water over seed, leave to soak and cool for 24 hours.

storage: seed can be stored for a very long period without losing viability. Add ash to reduce insect damage.

Management: Slow growing but if well protected can grow relatively fast on dry sandy soils. Protect young plants from goats. Lopping.

Remarks: Can be left to grow on pasture or crop land. In North Western Region the pods are the most important source of fodder for goats and sheep during the dry season. They are also eaten by game.

