

Albizia amara

Mimosoideae

Indigenous

Kunda: Mnjelenjete

Nyanja: Mkalanga, msengwa, nyele

Ecology: A common tree found from South Africa north to Ethiopia and throughout Zambia. It can be found on anthills and at margins of dambos in the miombo woodlands, 400–1,200 m.

Uses: Firewood, timber, poles, **medicine** (bark, seed oil, leaves, fruit, roots), fodder (leaves), **ornamental**, soil conservation, **nitrogen fixation**, resin.

Description: A semi-deciduous tree growing up to 18 m but often smaller, trunk short, soon branching, crown flat to rounded, fairly dense. **BARK:** pale then dark brown and cracked with age, a brown gum when cut. **LEAVES:** appear pale and **feathery**, with very many leaflets, each one straight. Leaf stalks, **twigs and leaves are soft due to yellow-orange hairs**. **FLOWERS:** many in cream-pink heads, 2–3 cm across in October–December. **FRUIT:** large pods, 20 x 3 cm, straight, thin like paper, bulging over 4–8 seeds. Collect seed June–September.

Propagation: Seedlings, direct seeding, cuttings.

Seed: No. of seed per kg: 10,000–13,000.

treatment: Soak in hot water and allow to cool for 24 hours.

storage: Seeds can be stored for a long period if kept dry and insect-free.

Management: Coppicing, pollarding, lopping.

Remarks: The bark and roots can be used for washing clothes since they contain a saponin which produces a soapy lather in water. The pods are used as an emetic and as a remedy for cough and malaria. The seed oil has been used for treating leprosy, and the leaves for treating inflammation and abscesses. Can be planted in urban areas as an ornamental and avenue tree and also along roads in rural areas.

