



Adansonia digitata

Family name: **Malvaceae**Common name: **Malvaceae**

Local name: (تبلدي -- فنقلين) – Tabldi, Gongolais



Wild, Native



Role in Biodiversity

Adansonia digitata is an important landmark throughout the savannah land. They help keep soil conditions humid, aid nutrient recycling, and slow soil erosion with their massive root systems. In an arid climate, baobabs symbolize life in a landscape where little else can thrive. It also provides habitats for many wild animals, as well as other ecosystem services such as carbon sequestration.



Environment and Growing

Adansonia digitata grows in dry, hot savannas of sub-Saharan Africa. It grows on a wide variety of soils but prefers deep moist calcareous soils. It is tolerant of extreme drought and fire and requires a period of dry dormancy in winter.

Growth requirements:

- Annual rainfall: 100-1500 mm.
- Normal temperature range: 16-36°C.
- Altitude range: up to 1500m.



Reproduction and Communication

Adansonia digitata is reproduced mainly by seeds. It is a hermaphrodites plant with bisexual flowers that open in the early evening and attract hawkmoth and fruit bats with its distinct smell as well as nectar. *Adansonia* species are also likely self-incompatible. The tree starts producing fruits 8-10 years after growth but consistent production only occurs after 30 years.



Life span

Adansonia digitata has a long lifespan – a tree can live for hundreds of years.

Size

Adansonia digitata can reach an enormous size, trees can grow up to 25 metres high.

Parts

Stems are swollen and often hollow trunks with short, stout and tortuous branches resembling a root-system.

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Leaves are simple or digitally compound, dark-green on top, and born at the end of a 16 cm-long petiole.

Fruits are greenish-brown, ovoid, woody capsule hangs singly on a long stalk. Once ripe, the fruit envelope becomes brittle and the pulp takes on a chalky consistency.

Roots are anchored in the soil by an extensive and strong root system that grows to about 2 metres deep

Flowers are white, last for not more than 24 hours. large (20 cm in diameter and 25 cm long), and hang from stalks on pedicels up to 90 cm long.

Seeds are 10 cm in diameter, reniform, embedded in the pulp, dark brown to reddish black with smooth testa and 10-13 x 8-10 x 4-5 mm.

INTRODUCTION

Tree

Adansonia digitata, Bobab, is a deciduous tree common in thorn woodlands of African savannahs. Baobab trees are important to the livelihoods of African people and are important components of many savanna and deciduous forest ecosystems. It is the largest succulent plant in the world characterized by smooth silvery grey bark, thick, angular, wide spreading branches and a short, stout stem which attains 10–14 m or more in girth. Flowers are pendulous and creamy white, on long stalks, extending up to 1 m when the fruit develops.

In Sudan, it is most frequently found on sandy soils and by seasonal streams or 'khors' in short grass savannahs. The fruits, which are known as **gongolaise**, and leaves are an important food source for the local population, especially in Kordofan.

LIVELIHOODS / CULTURE

Cultivation

Seeds Sowing: This tree grows naturally in Sudan and is also planted in some areas through seeds propagation. The seeds are collected from ripe fruits and dried for a few days. After that, the seeds are soaked in warm water for 24 hours before planting in the soil. It is recommended to plant the seeds first in a large and deep pot so that the roots can grow freely. The tree needs a long time to grow before it becomes a strong and healthy plant.

Watering: In the first period after planting, the plant should be watered regularly to help establish strong roots. After that, the tree is able to withstand periods of moderate drought. Moderate watering is recommended and water should not accumulate in the soil, as excessive watering can lead to root rot.

Adansonia trees needs regular fertilization to promote their growth and health. Organic fertilizer made from animal manure or organic compost from plant waste is usually used. The fertilizer should be applied around the tree and watered gently to prevent root burns.

Pruning: It is recommended to prune the tree to maintain its shape and encourage healthy growth. Dead or damaged branches should be removed and long branches that hinder the proper growth of the tree should be pruned. The tree needs a large space to grow and expand and is usually planted in an area with enough space to allow the tree to spread freely.

Cultural Value

Adansonia digitata is the symbol of North Kordofan State, expressing steadfastness. It is important as food for the local population, especially in Kordofan. Leaves are used in salads, the fruits are consumed as snacks, beverages, porridges, and as a starter in the fermentation of the sorghum flour used for **kisra**.

Trunks are reported to be used to store rainwater.

Medicinal and health uses

- Bark poultice are used to treat rheumatism while raw fruits are used to treat diarrhea among different tribes in Galabat localities of El Gedaref state.
- Fruit maceration are used to treat dysentery, rheumatism, and diarrhea by the Flata tribe in the Blue Nile state and in the Melit area, North Darfur.

Cultural Expressions

Song: <https://www.sm3na.com/audio/93e171d4088b>

THREATS

Adansonia digitata is threatened by:

- Climate change.
- Over utilization of leaves.
- Coring or hollowing the stems to conserve rain water.
- Habitat disturbance.
- The *Adansonia* tree is generally hardy and resistant to pests and diseases. However, it may be exposed to some pests such as crawling insects and root-related pests.

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