



# Lagenaria siceraria

Family name: Cucurbitaceae

Common name: Cucurbitaceae

Local name: (قرع البخسة) Garaa Al Bokhsa



## Wild and cultivated



### Role in Biodiversity

*Lagenaria siceraria* is of environmental concern because it is a vigorous and fast-growing vine that often grows over other plants.



### Environment and Growing

*Lagenaria siceraria* can grow in light, medium and heavy soils, flat areas and moderate slopes, rocky ridges, riverbanks, dry riverbeds, riverine thickets, woodland and savannahs. It is also common in disturbed sites, secondary forests, rural areas near villages and along roadsides.

Growth requirements:

- Annual temperatures range 19-27°C.
- Optimum temperature for germination is 20-25°C .
- Annual rainfall range 700-2800 mm.
- PH range 5.5-7.5.



### Reproduction and Communication

*Lagenaria siceraria* is bisexual and monoecious plant (male and female flowers on the same plant). It is reproduced by seeds. It has cross-pollination depending on nocturnal insects, mainly moths. It also spreads by seeds. Fruits can be dispersed by ocean currents and by large mammals. Fruits are known to float in the sea for many months without the seeds losing their viability.



### Life span

*Lagenaria siceraria* is an annual plant and completes its life cycle within one growing season.

### Size

*Lagenaria siceraria* can grow up to 5 metres long.

### Parts

Stems are brittle, softly and hairy. with tendrils split in two.

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Roots are deep and have many lateral branched rootlets.

Leaves simple, heart-shaped.

Flowers are solitary, pale yellow and creamy. They are unisexual (rarely bisexual), 5 numerous, up to 15 cm in diameter.

Fruits are berries, very variable in size and shape, often globular, bottle or club-shaped, usually brown when mature and dried, many-seeded.

Seeds are oblong, compressed, with 2 flat facial ridges, smooth, sometimes rugose, whitish to brownish.

## INTRODUCTION

### Creeper and vine herb

*Lagenaria siceraria*, the bottle gourd, is a branched prostrate or vine common in tropical short grass savannahs with dry summers. The bottle gourd is one of humankind's first domesticated plants, providing food, medicine and a wide variety of utensils and musical instruments. It is characterized by fruits appearing in a variety of different shapes, including rounded, dumbbell-shaped, bottle-shaped or crookneck-shaped, and has dark green cordiate leaves that are covered with soft hairs, especially on the undersurface.

In Sudan, *Lagenaria siceraria* is most common in Kordofan, Darfur, Blue Nile State. Its fruits are very famously used for musical instruments, as well as utensils used for many purposes.

## LIVELIHOODS / CULTURE

### Cultivation

*Lagenaria siceraria* is reported as wild plant. Sometimes people plant seeds in the areas surrounding their huts, especially in Kordofan and Gadarif areas, to provide shade when the plant grow and climbs the huts walls.

### Cultural Value

In Sudan people use the dry bottle gourd fruits as:

- Utensils for drinking water, preserving food, fermenting milk, and separating milk from butter to prepare ghee.
- Making musical instruments.
- House decorations.

*Lagenaria siceraria* is toxic to animals. No medicinal use is reported.

### Cultural Expressions

- [Traditional dance- Kordofan](#)
- [Bokhsa dance- South Kordofan](#)

## THREATS

Although Bottle gourd has the potential to tolerates moderate to high levels of abiotic stress, including heat and drought stress, It could be regionally threatened by climate change which leads to both habitat and pollinators loss.

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