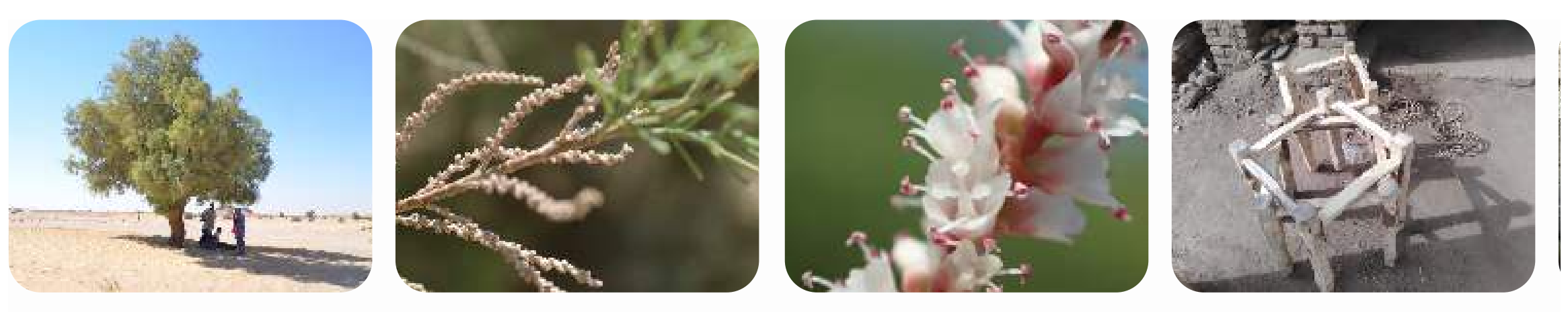
Fact Sheet - **Plants of Sudan**

Tamarix aphylla

Family name: **Athel tamarisk, Athel tree, Athel pine**

Common name: **Athel tamarisk, Athel tree, Athel pine**

Local name: **(إتل ,Etil) (طرفة ,Terfa) ,(اماب,Amab)**



Wild, Native

Role in Biodiversity

- Weed forming dense stands when invades inland rivers
- Consumes water more quickly than native plants.
- Excludes native pasture grasses and other salt-sensitive plants by concentrating salt in the ground beneath.

Environment and Growing

Tamarix aphylla grows mainly in riparian habitats: in broad floodplains of rivers, along permanent or intermittent streams, around lakes and reservoirs. It can grow in a wide variety of soils. It does not prefer saline soils but can tolerate salinity, giving it a competitive advantage over most plants which cannot.

Growth requirements:

- Temperatures range 27-40°c.
- Mean annual rainfall in the range 300-400mm.
- PH in the range 6.5-7.5.

Reproduction and Communication

- *Tamarix aphylla* reproduces by seeds that are dispersed by wind. Flowers are bisexual, and cross-pollinated by wind, bees, and other insects.The nectar from the blossoms of *Tamarix aphylla* produces high-quality honey with a unique taste.

Life span

50 -100 years.

Size

10-18 m

Parts

Young branches are light green, bark is greyish-brown, rough, and deeply furrowed.

Roots are deep and extensive, about 10 meters deep and 34 meters horizontally.

Edit / Translate

Leaves are tiny, alternately arranged along the branches.

Flowers are stalkless, pale pink or whitish.

Fruits are bell-shaped capsules.

Seeds are numerous, minute.

INTRODUCTION

Tree

Tamarix aphylla, athel tamarisk, is a small to large tree native to northern and eastern Africa, the middle-east, south-western Asia and the Indian sub-continent. It is characterized by grey branchlets, reducing to a minute triangular tooth on a sheathing base leaf. This plant exude salt which form a crusted layer on the leaves and on ground surface beneath the tree. This tree has been used as a windbreak and shade tree in agriculture and horticulture, especially in dryer regions such as the western United States and central and western Australia.

In Sudan, Tamarix trees are commonly grow along watercourses in arid and semi arid areas especially in northern, eastern and central Sudan. They are not restricted to the riverine environment but are also naturalised weeds in many agricultural lands. It is considered one of the most important trees that is consumed as fuelwood. The wood is also suitable for making many products such as saddles, furniture, agricultural tools, and others, especially in eastern Sudan.

LIVELIHOODS / CULTURE

Cultivation

This tree is naturally growing in Sudan.

Cultural Value

Tamarix is used in eastern Sudan, where it is found on both sides of the Gash River, to make:

- Traditional saddles for camels and donkeys.
- Traditional agricultural tools.
- Traditional furniture such as beds or **anqarib** and stools called **bunber**.
- Kitchen utensils such as food stirrer or **mofraka**.
- Stem wood is used by Kababeesh tribe in northern Sudan to make bridal incense or **bkhor**, and body perfuming, **dokhan**.

Medicinal and health uses

- The fumes resulting from burning the stems are used by kababeesh tribe in northern Sudan to treat rheumatic pain.
- The growing twigs with "camel thorns" (Fagonia cretica) are used by people in northern Sudan as a gargle for teeth pains, gums and tonsillitis.
- Infusion of leaves ashes are used by people in northern Sudan to clean wounds.

Cultural Expressions

No information available.

THREATS

- Climate change
- Regional threat from heavy cutting in Gash area.

Image(s) source :

Link(s)

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