

Botanic name : *Hyphaene thebaica* Mart. -- Hist. Nat. Palm. iii. 226. tt. 131-133. (IK)

Common name : Doum palm, gingerbread tree

Family : Arecaceae (Palmae)

Habitat : Terrestrial

Distribution : Africa - Mauritania and Senegal to Egypt, Djibouti, Eritrea and Sudan, India, Arabian peninsula. Although, its overall extent of occurrence (EOO) is very large and the species is still listed as Least Concern by IUCN-Red Data, protection program should be developed at local or national scales, in areas where the species appears to be highly threatened as in Côte d'Ivoire (Africa) due to extensive commercial exploitation by locals.

<http://dx.doi.org/10.2305/IUCN.UK.2017-3.RLTS.T19017230A95306916.en>

Description : Tall, multi-stemmed evergreen palm tree growing slowly up to an ultimate height of around 15 metres. The stem can be 15cm in diameter.

Phytochemicals: Cinnamic acid derivatives, 5 flavonoids, 6 fatty acids, 2 sphingolipids, a lignan, and a stilbene. Sugars (fruits), tannins and various concentration of flavonoids, saponins, cardiac glycosides, terpenoids, steroids and alkaloids (plant parts). doi: 10.1111/1750-3841.12253.

Medicinal/Economic uses : Anti-inflammatory, antioxidant, diuretic (mesocarp of fruits), hypotensive, hylipidaemic. Widespread medicinal and commercial use. used for dressing wounds (pounded nuts), hypertension (fruit pulp), bilharzias (roots). Roots, fruits and seeds are used for the management of jaundice, intestinal colic, hematuria, inguinal hernia bilharzias, hypertension and sore eyes respectively in livestock. Edible-orange fruit has a flavor of gingerbread to eat raw. Used to make sweetmeats, molasses and cakes, apical bud as like cabbage. Both leaves and roots contain strong fibres and are used in basket making; can be made into ropes and string; are used for making paper, fishing net, coarse textiles; are made into mats, brooms, hut walls etc; used for thatching; leaves and trunk as fuel. The stems are solid and resistant to insects and they are used for house construction and pirogues, and the dead stems are also used as firewood. The fruits are eaten in many countries and used as a black dye for leather. The leaves and roots are used for medicine.