

Twisted Acacia, *samur*

A flat-topped tree, *A. tortilis* is ubiquitous in arid regions of Africa and widespread in Saudi Arabia, where it is known as *samur*. It tolerates the severe desert environment, as well as being hardy to frost, although it is vulnerable until established. With multiple spreading trunks and the typical silhouette of an inverted triangle; *A. tortilis ssp. raddiana* occurs in northern Africa extending through Egypt to Saudi Arabia. Its crown is often irregularly rounded, and young branchlets, leaves and pods are glabrous. It grows in wadis and sandy plains, usually in water catchment areas. With small, highly aromatic, creamy-white flowers in tight clusters appearing from spring to summer, the tree has characteristic, spirally twisted seed pods rolled up into a tight coil. Evergreen with small feathery leaves, which line the thorny twigs, it has a moderate growth rate and prefers sandy soils while accepting most others. It has a very deep taproot. *A. tortilis* is a key species in greening deserts in the Middle East, being important for people and domesticated animals; it also improves soil fertility. Propagation is by fresh, scarified, or boiled seed. It has landscape value as a hedge or windbreak and in afforestation, but is unsuitable for planting near to pedestrians because of its shape and thorns. Irrigation is necessary until well established, but deep watering during the summer will enhance growth. Low maintenance only, except for pruning to improve appearance; can be trained as a standard single leader tree.



GENERAL

Origin	: tropical
Vigour	: fairly fast growing
Humidity	: extremely arid, very arid, semi-arid
Propagation	: sowing and pricking out
Maintenance	: low

CONDITIONS

Urban climate	: resistant
Dessication	: resistant
Stagnant water	: vulnerable
Irrigation	: low
Salinity/ppm	: moderate (2000 ppm)
Hardiness	: -6°C

SHAPE

Type	: tree
Height	: 12 m
Spread	: 14 m
Foliage	: evergreen

FLOWER

Colour	: white
Period	: March - July

FRUIT

Type of fruit	: pod
Fruit size	: 15 cm