# Blinkblaar-wag-n-bietjie (Ziziphus mucronata)





Ziziphus mucronata, known as the buffalo thorn, is a species of tree in the family Rhamnaceae, native to southern Africa. It is deciduous and may grow up to 17 metres tall. It can survive in a variety of soil types, occurring in many habitats, mostly open woodlands, often on soils deposited by rivers, and grows frequently on termite mounds. Its Zulu name “umLahlankosi” alludes to its use as a grave marker for tribal chiefs, while the Afrikaans name “Blinkblaar-wag-'n-bietjie” alludes to the shiny light green leaves and the hooked thorns.

Rating: Not Rated Yet
**Price**
Sales price R 185,00

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Description

## Description

The buffalo thorn is a small to medium size tree, reaching a height of about 10 metres (33 ft), or rarely 17 metres (56 ft). The bark is a red-brown (on young stems) or roughly mottled grey, cracked in small rectangular blocks revealing a stringy red underbark. The bark becomes rough and turns to a dark grey or brown colour. The shrub or tree has distinctive zigzag branchlets, armed with pairs of thorns, one hooked and the other straight. In some instances adult trees lose their thorns completely. The fruit vary in size but regionally may grow larger than grape, and ripen to a deep brown-red colour. From October to April the greenish yellow flowers with silvery sheen are found in dense bunches in the axils of the leaves. Fruit are found from February to August.

## Ecology

Their small, greenish yellow flowers attract many insects. They produce abundant nectar and consequently yield honey. Several species of bird feed on the brownish-red fruit. The leaves as well as fruit are also sought after by wild animals and domestic stock. Giraffes and impala browse the leaves.

## Uses

It makes a good perimeter barrier as its thorns are rather profuse when young and are difficult to untangle because one point forward while the other points backward. Certain tribes believe the tree is safe to use as a shelter against lightning, and it may be planted as a grave marker for a deceased chief.

## Medical uses

A blend made from the roots is used as painkillers and for dysentery while the bark and leaves are used for respiratory ailments and sepsis on the skin. A paste made from the roots and leaves will treat boils, sores and swelling. The above can be attributed to the peptide alkaloids and antifungal isolated from the bark and leaves. Branches are used for protection of cattle kraal and sometimes on the graves of dead tribal members. The wood is used for implement and fuel. The leaves bark and roots are used medicinally and magically for pain relief to respiratory complaints and skin infections, especially for chest and stomach disorders. The leaves if crushed may be used to stop bleeding. Steam baths from the bark are used to purify and improve the complexion. In east Africa, roots are used for treating snake bites.

## Nutritional uses

The leaves are edible and can be cooked into spinach. The seeds can be roasted and ground as a substitute for coffee. The fruit are not very tasty, though a type of beer can be made from them. The Ovambo people use it to distill *ombike*, a traditional liquor. The leaves and fruits are also a valuable source of forage for livestock.

For more information, find source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ziziphus_mucronata

**Reviews**

There are yet no reviews for this product.