



Agroforestry Facts *Babul Tree*



Botanical Name	<i>Acacia nilotica</i> L.
Name in English	Babul
Name in Kannada	Gobbali
Family	Fabaceae
Seeds Collection	A mature tree can produce 2,000-3,000 pods in a good fruiting season, each with 8-16 seeds, yielding 7500 seeds per kg.
Seeds Processing & Treatment	Soaking in hot water for 24 hours gives the best result and it has to be germinated immediately. Seeds can also be collected from animal droppings which give good germination. Seeds require 2 – 3 weeks for germination. Mechanical scarification works best for small seed lots and for large seed lots acid scarification from 60 – 120 minutes is better.
Nursery	The species can be direct seeded or established by seedlings. Babul seedlings are raised in polythene bags (5 cm x 22 cm, 150 -200 gauge). Treated seeds are sown, about 1.5 cm deep, 2-3 seeds in each bag in February - March (or May, for freshly



	collected seed) and regularly watered and weeded. Excessive watering should be avoided; shading is necessary to avoid surface cracking.
Plantation Management	Seedlings are fit for planting out in July - August of the same year (when 3-4 months old). For obtaining bigger plants, seeds is sown in June - July in bigger bags and one year old seedlings are planted out. <i>A. nilotica</i> can grow on a variety of soils, provided sufficient moisture is available. It prefers well drained fresh alluvial sandy loam soil in riverain tracts, though it can grow on clay and black cotton soil also. It can stand mild soil salinity provided sufficient moisture is available. In its natural habitat, average rainfall is 400 to 1500 mm; fairly drought resistant, but thrives best in areas with 500-1250 mm.
Model/Spacing	2 x 3 m spacing is ideal. It can also planted in contour trenches with 2 – 3 m apart.
Pests, diseases and Management	Insect is the stem borer <i>Cerostema scabrator</i> which affects young plantations, causing dieback. Leaf defoliators are <i>Euproctis lunata</i> and <i>E. subnotata</i> , which occasionally defoliate the plants. Fungal disease caused by <i>Fusarium oxysporum</i> , which causes damping off in seedlings, and <i>Fomes pappianus</i> , a stem rot that attacks unhealthy trees.
Plant Rotation	30 Years for timber, 15- 20 years for tannin
Yield	40 – 45 m ³ of wood per ha at the age of 30 years. 8 – 10 tonnes of pods per year per ha.
Uses	Leaves and pods are widely used as fodder. It is an extremely valuable source of fuel wood and charcoal of excellent quality. General utility of timbers for construction of carts, wheels, agricultural tools and implements, doors, windows, mine props, fencing materials etc. Bark yields best tannin. Babul gum is used in inks, paints, matches and confectionery. It also has medicinal values.
Buyers /Industries	Private buyers on exportersindia.com
Harvesting	For tannin it can be harvested in 8 – 10 years
Economic Returns	On an average a tree yields Rs. 30,000 – 40,000 per year.
Current Market Rate	Rs 600/cft