

Cedro Espino



Occurrence

The cedro espino is native to the west of Nicaragua and Costa Rica, Panama, Colombia and Venezuela. It grows on well-drained and gravelly soils and prefers the upper slopes of low hills. It is particularly common in dry forests, but also adapts well to other conditions.

Significance

Under good conditions, the cedro espino tree can grow very quickly and gain up to 3 cm in trunk diameter per year. The tree is resistant to many insect infestations and can adapt well to different soils. For this reason it is often used for afforestation projects.

Threats

The tree species is severely threatened due to heavy deforestation and the rapidly dwindling dry forest.

At ForestFinance

The cedro espino tree grows on our fincas in Panama in the regions of Veraguas, Chiriquí and Darién.



Cedro Espino

FAMILY MALVACEAE
GENUS BOMBACOPSIS
SPECIES BOMBACOPSIS QUINATA

↑
max. 40 metres
∅
max. 3 metres

Characteristics



Leaves

The leaf split is palmate and consists of five light green leaflets.



Bark

The most striking feature of the cedro espino tree are the thorns on its bark, which can reach a length of 2 cm. The bark is greenish at a young age and later develops a grey-brownish colour.



Fruits

Circular, 3 mm large brown seeds can be found in a seed capsule. When the mature seed capsule opens, 30-50 seeds float away and are distributed by the wind.



Flowers

The fine five-leaved white flowers are 10 cm long. They bloom at the beginning of the dry season in January and February.



Cedro Espino

Description of wood

The heartwood only matures after 20 years and dries very slowly. Only then can the wood be used. Heartwood and sapwood have different warm brown tones, whereby the heartwood is clearly lighter than the sapwood. Compared to other hardwoods, the wood of the cedro espino tree is relatively light in weight.



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DENSITY

0.41-0.45 g/cm³

JANKA HARDNESS

720 lbf



Use

The tree produces a durable wood that is ideal for making window frames, mouldings and wall panels. It is often used where a less stable wood could warp due to strong sunlight.



Pollination

When the flowers of the cedro espino tree open at the beginning of the dry season, the nectar of the flowers attracts bats. The bats suck the nectar from the flowers and then pollinate other trees with it.



The cedro espino tree is also known as ceibo tree or prickly cedar. It is sold under the commercial names red cedar or spine cedar.



Natural protection

At the beginning of the dry season, the cedro espino tree sheds its leaves. This is a natural mechanism that protects the tree from drying out through evaporation.