

ALNUS NITIDA, LINN

Note by Mahmood Iqbal Sheikh*

Alnus nitida (sharol) is a large tree (upto 30 m height and 1 m dbh), comes up naturally on banks of streams and on moist sites in Hazara, Swat and Azad Kashmir from 1000 m to 1500 m elevation. Is being heavily cut for the manufacture of bobbins.

Cones were collected in the first week of December and the paper-thin seed extracted after drying in the sun for a week. Seed was sown on February 5, 1977 at Abbottabad on raised nursery beds (25 cm high) in lines 10 cm apart and covered with 25 cm thick layer of sand mixed with leaf mould. Three media were tried in the beds: sand, equal proportion of sand and nursery soil. The beds were irrigated twice a week with a fine rose. Protection against rain was afforded by polythene sheets stretched 30 cm above the beds. Germination started on February 25 and continued for 35 days. The germination in different media out of seed sown in each was as follows:

Medium	Number of seedlings germinated (No of seeds sown 500)	Germination per cent
Pure sand	400	80
50% sand + 50% nursery soil	335	67
Nursery soil	325	65

By the end of July, the seedlings attained an average height of 10 cm in pure sand, 13 cm in the nursery soil and 23 cm in the mixture.

Branch cuttings, 25 cm long and 20 mm in diameter at the basal end were obtained from a 12 year old tree, and planted on 1-3-1975, 11-3-1975, 21-3-1975 and 31-3-1975 in well prepared nursery beds. All the cuttings sprouted well but none rooted.

45, 1-year old entire plants and 45, 1-year old root shoot cuttings were planted on 19-6-1976 at Ghari Habibullah. On 11-5-1977 survival of both was equal (34 for tube stock and 35 for root shoot cuttings) indicating that both types of planting material could be used for field planting.

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