

## EK PED MAA KE NAAM 2.0

### YCIS CLUB ACTIVITY

Plant: Almond plant (*Prunus dulcis*)

Name of the plant: Shaheen

Meaning: In the Urdu language the name Shaheen means falcon. The famous philosopher-poet Allama Iqbal frequently used the word Shaheen. “Tu shaheen hai, parwaz hai kaam tera” (you are a falcon, flight is your nature) wishing the plant a long and healthy life

## INTERESTING FACTS

### Botanical facts:

- It is a deciduous tree from the rose family (Rosaceae)
- Grows 10-15 feet long and lives for 20-25 years
- Produces white to pale pink flowers in early spring
- Almonds are not nuts, they are actually seeds inside a hard shell
- Grown mainly in a Mediterranean climate
- There are two types of almonds:
  1. Sweet almonds are edible and used in cooking.
  2. Bitter almonds contain amygdalin, which can produce **cyanide** and are toxic unless properly processed.

### Care tips:

- sunlight : Almond trees need full sun (6-8 hrs a day)
- Soil : they thrive in well drained soil with a slightly acidic to neutral pH(6.0 - 7.5)
- Watering : Water regularly especially during the first few years
- Fertilizers : use fertilizers suitable for fruit trees
- Pruning : Prune annually to maintain shape and size
- Pest control : monitor for pests and diseases

## Ecological benefits :

- Provides early spring nectar and pollen for honeybees and pollinators
- Helps with carbon sequestration and soil stabilization
- Supports biodiversity when cover crops are planted between trees.
  
- Almond shells and hulls are reused as livestock feed, compost, or biofuel.
- However, almonds are water-intensive, requiring about 1,900 gallons per pound, raising sustainability concerns.

## Religious/Cultural significance:

- Biblical Reference: Almonds are mentioned several times in the Bible, symbolizing watchfulness and promise.
- In Islamic traditional medicine, almonds are valued for their health benefits
- In some Sufi symbolism, the almond represents the human soul: hard outside, sweet inside.
- Almonds are ancient, symbolizing health, sustenance, and blessing