



RESEARCH ARTICLE

ETHNOBOTANICAL STUDY OF SOME COMMON PLANTS FROM DISTRICT
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Abstract

The paper documents the ethnobotanical uses of 25 wild medicinal plant species that are used by local peoples residing in remote areas of Shivalik hills of district Sirmour (H.P.) in household remedies. The plant parts most commonly used in the treatment of various diseases are root, leaves, seeds and whole plant. The people of the district still depends upon the uses of local plants for their prime health problems handling. The reliance on folk medicine for healthcare is associated with the traditional belief of effectiveness.

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INTRODUCTION

The region selected for the present study is district Hamirpur (Fig.1) in Shivalik hills of Himachal Pradesh. The district is situated between 76° 18' – 76 44' East longitudes and 31 52' North latitudes. The way is mountainous covered by Shivalik range and the distance from the ground varies from 450-1,100 meters. The district is the smallest district of Himachal Pradesh due to its area. But due to favourable environment and climatic conditions, this region act as store –house of medicinal wealth. Local peoples of this area have good knowledge about pattern of use of local medicinal plants for the treatments of various diseases. Traditional medicine becomes an integral part of health system in this region. This region is rich in diverse flora and suitable for studies related to medicinal plants and various plants are used for the treatment of body ache, cough, fever, minor injury, gastric problems and joints pains. A perusal of literature shows total absence of ethnobotanical representation of this vast varied vegetation except for few reports by Rawat *et al.* [1], Prakash and Aggarwal [2], Kumar and Choyal [3] on medicinal plants used by local inhabitants of this district. So it was thought valuable to document, whatsoever ethnobotanical information could be collected. This way, such details have been noted for 25 medicinal species belonging to diverse genera and families of flowering plants. Details of medicinal plants with their botanical name, family, local name, part used, disease/ailment treated and mode of treatment are given in Table.

2. MATERIAL AND METHODS

Detailed survey has made in the district during June 2012- July 2013 and the information regarding the use of medicinal plants by the local peoples has been documented. For a better understanding of local beliefs, habits and uses of plant, different categories of people like family heads, hakims, Charvahas, Gujars, old experienced and knowledgeable informants were repeatedly interviewed. The collected plants thus pressed, mounted and properly numbered were identified by consulting literature and floras as Collett [4], Aswal and Mehrotra [5], Kaur and Sharma [6], Singh and Sharma [7].

Table: Ethnobotanical informations about some wild medicinal plants from the district Hamirpur, Himachal Pradesh (India).

Sr.No	Botanical names	Local name	Part used (Fig.2)	Disease/ailment	Treatment
1.	<i>Aegle marmelos</i>	Bil	Fruits	Gastric problems	Fruit juice is taken for a few days.
2.	<i>Ageratum conyzoides</i>	Neela phulnu	Leaves	Minor injury	Leaves paste is applied on the affected part.
3.	<i>Adhatoda vasica</i>	Adusha	Leaves	Antiseptic	Leaves paste is used.
4.	<i>Andrographis peniculata</i>	Kalmegh	Whole plants	Fever	Entire plant is ground, boiled in water and filtered, taken regularly till fever breakdown.
5.	<i>Asparagus racemosus</i>	Shatavar	Roots	Aphrodisiac	The dry roots are powdered and taken orally with warm water once a day for 10-15 days.
6.	<i>Azadirachta indica</i>	Neem	Roots	Joints pain	Roots paste is applied on the affected area.
7.	<i>Bryoropus laciniosa</i>	Shivlingi	Roots, Seeds	Women pregnancy	Root and seed powder is taken with hot water for 10 days.
8.	<i>Celastrus paniculata</i>	Malkangni	Seeds	Joint pain, rheumatism	Seed oil is applied on the affected part.
9.	<i>Cymbopogon flexosus</i>	Nimbu ghass	Leaves	Back ache	Leaves paste is applied to affected parts.
10.	<i>Cuscuta reflexa</i>	Akash bel	Leaves	Cold	Leaves extract is used.
11.	<i>Eucalyptus hybrid</i>	Safeda	Leaf	Head pain	Leaf oil is massaged on the head at bedtime.
12.	<i>Holarrhena antidysentrica</i>	Kutaj	Whole plants	Dysentery	The decoction of entire plant is used.
13.	<i>Jatropha curcas</i>	Rattan jot	Roots	Fever	A decoction is prepared and given orally, twice a day.

14.	<i>Mallotus philippinesis</i>	Kamela	Seeds	Wounds	Seeds paste is applied on the affected area.
15.	<i>Pistacia integessima</i>	Kakarsinghi	Seeds	Cough	A decoction is prepared and given orally, twice a day.
16.	<i>Pogostemon pleclranthoids</i>	Kala bansa	Leaves	Black fever and cough	The decoction of roots is used.
17.	<i>Ricinus communis</i>	Arrand	Seeds	Joint pain	Seeds paste is applied on joint.
18.	<i>Solanum khasianum</i>	Van bhindi	Fruits	Head pain	Fruits paste is applied on head.
19.	<i>Spilanthus acmella</i>	Akarkara	Seeds	Tooth carries	Seeds are chewed.
20.	<i>Syzigium cumini</i>	Jamun	Leaves	Diabetes	Leaves powder with tea is taken once a day in the morning for a few days.
21.	<i>Terminalia arjuna</i>	Arjun	Bark	Blood pressure	The dry bark is powdered and taken orally with lukewarm water twice a day for 3-4 days.
22.	<i>Tinospora cordifolia</i>	Gloy	Roots	Abdomen pain, fever	The decoction of root is used.
23.	<i>Viola odorata</i>	Bansafa	Leaves	Cold and cough	A decoction is prepared and given orally, twice a day.
24.	<i>Withania somnifera</i>	Ashwgandha	Seeds	Physical and mental weakness	Seeds are powdered and taken with hot water for 10days, twice a day.
25.	<i>Woodfordia fruticosa</i>	Dhak, Dhataki	Roots	Physical and mental Diabetes	Seeds are powdered and taken with hot Roots powder are taken with hot water.

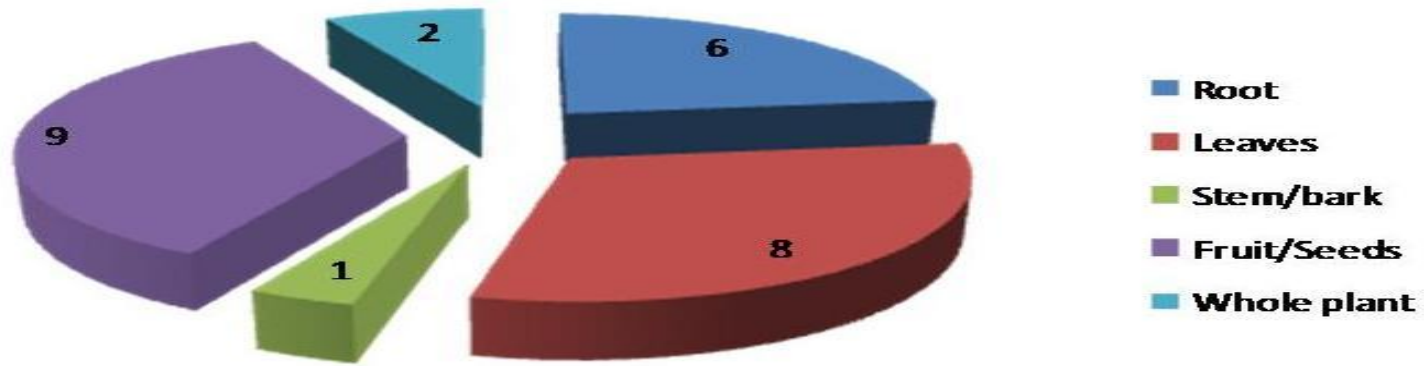


Figure: 2. Statistics of plant part used.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION:

Medicinal plants have been used since primordial period for healing variety of diseases. The folks living in villages have been using these wild growing medicinal plants as medicines since ages because this information transfers from generation to generation. Since, these are in common use by the local people and are of great importance. The information generated from the study regarding the medicinal plants used by the local peoples need a through phytochemical and pharmacological analysis, which may be a step ahead towards the new drug development. This could help in creating mass wakefulness concerning their preservation and endorsement of ethnobotanical knowledge. An inclusive database of the plants used for various purposes could be saved for the forthcoming generations.

4. CONCLUSION

The information about medicinal value of these wild plants growing in Shiwalik hills of Hamirpur district has vital significance in life and how these ethno-botanical facts have key role in life. Moreover, it can be suggestion for further phytochemical and pharmacological investigations about the medicinal use of the plant, which may be a footstep in front on the way to the new drug development.

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