Traditional herbal remedies among the tribes of Bijagarh of West Nimar district, Madhya Pradesh

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The paper reports about the traditional herbal remedies common among the tribal people of Bijagarh of West Nimar district of Madhya Pradesh. In all, 38 species belonging to 37 genera and 21 families, used by the tribals in the treatment of various human ailments are reported.

Key words: Ethnomedicine, Medicinal plants, Madhya Pradesh, Traditional knowledge


In recent years, there has been an increasing interest in ethnomedicine, mainly due to the renewed interest in traditional herbal medicines. Ancient literature of world on medicines suggests that the primitive people of antiquity and those of earlier centuries have been using several kinds of food and medicinal plants for healthcare. Of 119 plants based drugs, today about 74% are from traditional medicine. It has been strongly recommended that all these plants, used by the folk-healers and ethnic societies of world should be scientifically investigated. Since last four decades considerable progress has been made in the field of ethnomedicine. A review of literature on ethnomedicine indicates that various workers have contributed from different parts of India including Madhya Pradesh, mainly limited to few districts of Balaghat, Jabalpur, Mandla and Sidhi. An ethnobotanical survey of Sirwel hills of Madhya Pradesh has been done in recent past. The present study deals with certain less known medicinal plants used by the tribal people of Bijagarh, located at 27°48' N and 75°33' E of Greenwich. Biogeographically, it is a part of Central India and situated about 120 Km away from Khandwa Central railway station towards South (Fig. 1).

Methodology

Plants used by the tribal people to cure various diseases were collected during survey conducted during 2002-03 (Figs. 2-10). Identification of these plants was done with the help of standard literature. Plants, arranged alphabetically with their scientific names, synonyms, local or vernacular names, plant family, plant parts used and uses in curing various diseases have been enumerated. The herbarium sheets are deposited in the Botany Department, Government PG College, Khargone for future records.

Enumeration

Abras precatorius Linn. (Safed gomchi) Fabaceae, Seeds are used in the treatment of intestinal worms

Acacia nilotica (Linn.) Delile (Keekar) Fabaceae, Leaves are used as fodder and in the treatment of diarrhoea, dysentery and diabetes

Achyranthes aspera Linn. (Hathijhara) Amaranthaceae, Leaf juice is applied on snakebite and scorpion bite. Root is used as toothbrush. Root juice cures patients suffering from stone trouble

Actinopteris australis Link (Bhuitar) Polypodiaceae, Plant extract produces cooling effect in body

Adhatoda vasica Nees (Adusa) Acanthaceae, Leaf juice is used in cough trouble and as an expectorant. To cure tuberculosis, two leaves are chewed and swallowed daily in the morning for six months

Ageratum conizoides Linn. (Osari) Asteraceae, It is used in skin diseases especially in leucoderma

Ailanthus excelsa Roxb. (Arru) Siamrubaceae, Leaves and bark are used in fever, asthma, bronchoitis, and general debility
Aristolochia bracteata Retz. (Girdhan)  
Aristolochiaceae, Seed powder is taken in case of intestinal worms

Asparagus racemosus Willd. (Nimari Haranchara)  
Liliaceae, Dry powdered roots are used as tonic

Barleria prionitis Linn. (Deo Katasla) Acanthaceae,  
Plant powder is used in dental troubles

Boerhaavia diffusa Linn. (Vishkhapra)  
Nyctaginaceae, Leaves are used in jaundice and kidney trouble

Butea monosperma (Lam.) Kuntze (Palas) Fabaceae,  
Flowers are used in urinary troubles and colic pains. Seeds are anthelmintic.

Cassia tora Linn. (Pawar) Fabaceae,  
Curry prepared with leaves and black pepper is used in piles

Cheilanthes argentea (Gmel.) Kuntze (Bal)  
Adiantaceae, Plant extract produces cooling effect in body

Chlorophytum tuberosum Baker (Safed musli)  
Liliaceae, Roots are used as tonic

Cuscuta reflexa Roxb. (Amarbel) Convolvulaceae,  
Plant extract is used as anthelmintic

Cynodon dactylon Pers. (Durba) Poaceae,  
Plant extract is used in chronic diarrhoea, dysentery and epilepsy

Desmodium gangeticum DC. (Sarivan) Fabaceae,  
Roots are used in spermatorrhoea and as tonic

Eclipta alba (Linn.) Hessk. (Bhangra) Asteraceae,  
Seed oil is used for hair growth

Euphorbia clarkeana Hook.f. (Chhoti dudhi)  
Euphorbiaceae, It is used to cure spermatorrhoea and mouth blisters

Euphorbia hirta Linn. (Bari dudhi) Euphorbiaceae,  
Plant juice is used in colic trouble, dysentery and urinogenital diseases

Evolvulus alsinoides Linn. (Sankhpushpi)  
Convolvulaceae, Plant extract is used to increase memory

Gloriosa superba Linn (Kalhari) Liliaceae,  
Tuber extract is used to cure gout, rheumatism and gonorrhoea

Gynandropsis gynandra (Linn.) Briq. (Hurhur)  
Capparidaceae, Seeds are used as anthelmintic

Ipomoea carnea jacq. sub-species fistulosa Linn (Behaya) Convolvulaceae, Leaves are used in swelling of joints

Jatropha gossypifolia Linn. (Lal arenda)  
Euphorbiaceae, Stem is used as toothbrush to check bleeding gums. Its latex and seed oil are applied over eczema and itches

Leucas cephalotes Spreng. (Gatta tumba) Labiatae,  
Flowers are used for curing cough and cold

Oxalis corniculata Linn. (Tinpattia) Oxalidaceae, Leaf juice is used in menstrual disorder and helps in fertility

Phyllanthus fraternus Webster (Bhui Amla)  
Euphorbiaceae, Plant extract is used in jaundice

Psoralia corylifolia Linn. (Bawchi) Fabaceae, Seed oil is applied in leucoderma and leprosy

Tamarix ericoides Rottl. (Jhau) Tamaricaceae, Bark infusion is used in diarrhoea and dysentery and also as an expectorant

Tephrosia purpurea Pers. (Sarpokhha) Fabaceae,  
Root decoction is used in asthma, diarrhoea and dysentery

Tinospora cordifolia Miers (Gulvel) Menispermaceae,  
Stem extract is used in stone trouble, vomiting, fever, sleeplessness, sunstroke and normal delivery

Trianteha portulacastrum Linn. (Gotlai) Aizoaceae,  
Leaf juice is used in urinary troubles especially in dilation of the ureter

Tribulus terrestris Linn. (Gokharu) Zygophyllaceae,  
Plant extract is used in stone trouble. Dried fruits with honey are taken in urinary and kidney troubles

Vernonia cineria Less. (Sahdevi) Asteraceae, Plant extract is used in piles and also used as anthelmintic

Vitex negundo Linn. (Nirghundi) Verbenaceae, Leaves are used in catarrah and as an insecticide. Flowers are used in cardiac troubles and liver disease

Withania somnifera Dunal (Asgand) Solanaceae,  
Roots are stimulant, increase appetite and are used as tonic. Roots possess antibacterial, antibiotic properties and are used in rheumatism and to cure tuberculosis

Results and discussion

A total of 38 plant species belonging to 37 genera and 21 families are reported, which are used by the tribals of Bijagarh in the treatment of various human ailments. Out of these plant species, 2 species belong to 2 genera and 1 family of Pteridophyta and remaining species belong to Angiospermic families. Few plants of this locality possess potential of better economic exploitation. Important among these are Achyranthes aspera (Hathijhara), Actinopteris dichotoma (Bhuitar), Adhatoda vasica (Adusa), Aristolochia bracteata (Girdhan), Asparagus
racemosus (Satavari), Barleria prionitis (Vajradanti),
Boerhaavia diffusa (Punarnava), Butea monosperma
(Palas), Cheilanthes argentea (Bala), Chlorophytum
tuberosum (Safed musli), Eclipta alba (Bhangra),
Euphorbia clarkiana (Chhoti Dhudhi), Evolvulus
alsinooides (Shankhpushpi), Phyllanthus niruri (Bhui
Amla), Vitex negundo (Nirgundi) and Withania
somnifera (Ashandh).

Since these species are used in
most parts of the world, and have potential for
bioprospecting, there is urgent need to protect and
conservet them.

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