CURRENT BOTANY

Curr. Bot. 2(1):45-47, 2011

REGULAR ARTICLE

Folk medicinal uses of the plants of Bijnor district (U.P.), India

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KEYWORDS

Folk medicinal uses, sustainable development

ABSTRACT

Present paper deals with the survey of folk medicinal plant and its medicinal uses of Bisnor district (U.P.), India.

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EDITOR
Gadgile D.P.

CB Volume 2, Year 2011, Pages 45-47

Introduction

The variety of plants useful to man is enormous. Medicinal plants constitute the most important element in traditional medicines. The Indian system of medicines has played an important role in providing primary health care. About 80% of population in developing countries depends directly on plants for medicines according to WHO (Pareek, 1996, Mukhopadhyay, 1998). Whereas, in India more than 2000 drugs used are of plant origin (Dikshit, 1999). The vast subcontinent of ours with its wealth and variety of medicinal plants has accumulated through the ages. A great mass of popular remedies for many diseases which are in common use throughout the country even today are endowed by plants present in our environment. Anything that leads to the greater utilization of our natural products deserves encouragements. Today, there is an increasing desire to unravel the centuries old secrets of traditional medicines which inturn deserve sustainable development of our environment.

The knowledge about these indigenous drugs has come through generations verbally is the main subject of Ethonobotany (Dhiman and Khanna, 2001). In India Ethnobotanical Studies with good scientific base has appeared in the later half of the twentieth century. Some work of folk medicinal plants have been done by Jain (1965); Paul and Mudgal (1985) and Jain (1997). Some literatures of Ethnobotany have alos been considered like Yadav and Suresh (2003) and Pushpangadan and Kumar (2005).

Materials and Methods

The study involved field work and interviews. Periodic field visits were made to various parts of Bijnor, encompassing throughout the seasons and interviews were taken to obtain data from the native informants who are hakims, vaidhyas, tribes, sanyasis and common rural people who have knowledge of the therapeutic value of plants. Oral interviews were held in villages and derived information was recorded at the spot. Plant identification and nomenclature are followed after the Flora of Garhwal (Gaur, 1999)

Result and Discussion

A list of local plants was prepared by enquiring from vaidhyas and a "Doomsshahi" tribal man. An excursion was made to collect them with Vaidhyas and a tribal man before interviews. Then the specimens of all collected plants were shown to them to obtain information. Villagers, tribes, hakims and vaidhyas have common belief regarding various types of diseases, however, sometime variation in remedial measures are also prevailed. Some medicinal angiospermic species which are found in district Bijnor have been given in table 1.

Table1. List of some medicinal angiospermic plants of district Bijnor (U.P.) India

S. No.	Botanical Name	Family Name	Local Name	Medicinal Uses
1.	*Abutilon indicum* Linn. (fig 1)	Malvaceae	Kanghi Ghas	Boils: A poultice of the leaves is applied on boils.
2.	*Acalypha indica* Linn. (fig 2)	Euphorbiaceae	Kuppi, Khokali	Causing Vomiting & Ulcers: Juice of leaves is considered an efficient emetic, that is a medicine for causing vomiting. A poultice of fresh leaves is useful on ulcers.
3.	*Achyranthes aspera* Lnn. (fig 3)	Amaranthaceae	Chirchita	Asthma: A pinch of plant ash mixed with 4 drops of honey is taken twice daily.
4.	*Argimone maxicana* Linn.	Papaveraceae	Peeli Kateli	Wound: Whole plant of Kateli is ground &

	(fig 4)			fried in mustard oil, this is applied over the wound twice daily for three days.
5.	*Asparagus racemosus* Willd	Liliaceae	Satawar	Stomachache: 3-4 gm. of tuber is made paste and taken daily twice for three days.
6.	*Azadirachta indica* A. Juss	Meliaceae	Neem	Pyorrhea: Bark and young branches are used as tooth brush for curing Pyorrhoea.
7.	*Barleria prionitis* Linn.	Acanthaceae	Kala bansa	Bronchitis: 2-3 teaspoons of decoction made of 15gm. of roots in taken daily twice for one week.
8.	*Boerahvia diffusa* Linn. (fig 5)	Nyctaginaceae	Punarnava	Asthma: 10-20 gm. of roots powder is taken with 3 gm. of black pepper powder daily once for a fortnight.
9.	*Calotropis procera* (Ait) Dryander (fig 6)	Asclepiadaceae	Aak	Cholera: The juice extracted from 12-15 gm. roots of Aak is given thrice a day for 3-4 days. This also acts as preventive drug, if taken early in the morning.
10.	*Cannabis sativa* Linn. (fig 7)	Cannabinaceae	Bhang	Piles: A poultice of leaves of Bhang is applied externally around the anus for one month to cure piles.
11.	*Cassia fistula* Linn. (fig 8)	Caesalpiniaceae	Amaltas	Constipation: Soup is prepared with fruit pulp and taken twice in a day.
12.	*Chenopodium album* Linn.	Chenopodiaceae	Bathua	The powder of seeds is taken orally to cure swollen gums by the tribes. The leaves are tied to cure sprains.
13.	*Citrus medica* Linn.	Rutaceae	Choota Neebu	Bruises: A half cut fruits of Neebu with black salt is rubbed on the affected part after mild heating. Juice is also squeezed on it. Treatment is given once a day for 3 days and bruises are cured.
14.	*Datura stramonium* Linn. (fig 9)	Solanaceae	Dhatura	Asthma: The inhalation to smoke from the buring leaves is good for relieving asthma.
15.	*Euphorbia hirta* Linn. (fig 10)	Euphorbiaceae	Dudhi	Leucorrhoea: Leaves extract is given orally with honey once a day in the murning for a month to cure leucorrhoea.
16.	*Ipomoea pestigridis* Linn. (fig 11)	Convolvulaceae	Kaladana	Laxative or Purgative: Roots of this plant are used as laxative or purgative.
17.	*Musa paradisiaca* Linn.	Musaceae	Kela, Kell	Guinea - Worms: Make an incision in the fruits stuff comphor (Desi Kapur) in it and tie with the thread and keep it overnight. Next day, the peel of fruit is removed and fruit is eaten. This process is repeated for 3 days so that the guinea worm may came out of body.
18.	*Tinospora cordifalia* (Willd) Hook. f. (fig 12)	Menispermaceae	Giloe	Diarrhoea and Dysentery: The starch obtained from the roots and stems of the plant known as "Giloe ka sat" is used in diarrhoea and dysentery.
19.	*Zea mays* Linn.	Poaceae	Makka/Makai	Asthma: The male flower is smoked to cure asthma and the ash left after smoking is taken orally with water.
20.	*Zingiber officinale* Rose.	Zingeberaceae	Adarak	Sores and Choked Throat: Rub the rhizome on the stone adding some water, the sap so produced is smeared all over the tongue to cure sores and choked throat.

Because of deforestation and other anthropogenic activities, wild medicinal plants are loosing their habitat day by day. The local people and researchers face the challenging task of not only documenting knowledge on plants, but also applying the results of their studies to biodiversity conservation and community development in a sustainable way.

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Photo plate 1. Folk medicinal plants of Bisnor district (U.P.), India

Conclusion

It has been realized that ethnobotanical studies of different area are going to play an important role for future in social health system as well as sustainable development of areas. Now the people are accepting indigenous or Ayurvedic medicine system due to easy accessibility as well as involved with their social life and practice. Thus the populace is ready to understand the necessity of environment and sustainable development. Therefore, it becomes necessary to acquire and preserve the traditional knowledge system through proper documentation and identification of specimens, which also supports the conservation and management of biological resources.

Acknowledgement

The authors are thankful to Vaidhyas, Hakims, Tribes and native people of district Bijnor who gave this information. Our sincere thanks are also to Dr. P.C. Pande, Head of the Department of Botany, Meerut College, Meerut, India for his extensive cooperation.

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