

OBSERVATIONS ON THE ETHNOBOTANY OF MADHYA PRADESH

H. O. SAXENA*

Regional Research Laboratory, Bhubaneswar, Orissa

ABSTRACT

Ethnobotanical observations were recorded during the floristic survey carried out in Madhya Pradesh for a period of over seven years. The interesting folk-uses, covering eighty eight species of vascular plants which are not recorded in the important published literature, are presented in the paper.

INTRODUCTION

Madhya Pradesh is one of the states with high concentration of tribal population. The tribal people form on an average, 20-25 percent of the total population of the state and in some districts like Mandla and Bastar, their percentage goes up to 70 percent. The main tribes of the state are, Gond, Baiga, Maria, Bhil, Korku, Saharia, Moghia, Halba, Dorla, Parja and Bhatra. They have fairly good knowledge of the medicinal and other values of their surrounding plants and mostly depend on them for the remedies of their ailments.

During the course of the floristic survey, ethnobotanical observations were also recorded from different parts of the state. The interesting folk-uses, covering eighty eight species of vascular plants, which are not recorded in the important published literature on the medicinal and other economic plants of the country, are presented in the paper.

The species are arranged in the alphabetical order giving notes on the local names and local uses, followed by the name of the locality from where the notes

were gathered and the field book number of the plant specimen collected. The botanical specimens are preserved in the herbaria of the State Forest Research Institute, Jabalpur, M.P. and the National Botanical Research Institute, Lucknow, U.P. The abbreviations used in the paper are, G.: Gond; M.: Mari; Hal.: Halbi and H.: Hindi.

ENUMERATION

Abelmoschus crinitus Wall.

Jangli Bhindi (H.); Banbhindi (G.); Gor-krakanda (Hal.).

Roots of this plant and those of 'Kalimusli' (*Curculigo orchoides*), 'Safed musli' (*Asparagus racemosus*) and 'bhojraj' (*Peucedanum nagpurens*) are mixed together, powdered and used for a few months as aphrodisiac (Amarkantak, 4603).

Root-paste (5 g) is given in snake-bite (Bastar, 1822).

Achyranthes bidentata Bl.

Adhajhara (G.).

Root-paste is applied to scorpion-sting. It is applied on the forehead for relief in hemicrania (Pachmarhi, 582).

*Formerly, Forest Botanist, State Forest Research Institute, Jabalpur, Madhya Pradesh.

***Alysicarpus vaginalis* (L.) DC.**

Bhuikurwa (M.); Phadkuli (Hal.).

Plant-paste is applied to bone-fractures and joints to relieve pain (Baster, 4366).

***Ampelocissus latifolia* (Lam.) Planch.**

Punjertonda, Banmutri (M.); Barkur, Dotokand (Hal.)

Decoction of the root (5-7 g) is administered twice daily in skin diseases (Bastar, 3016).

***Ampelocissus tomentosus* (Heyne ex Roth) Planch.**

Dokarbel (G.); Belikand (H.).

Root-powder (5 g.) is given twice a day in menorrhagia (Pachmarhi, 83306).

***Angiopteris evecta* (Forst.) Hoffm.**

Ghoratap (G.).

Root-paste is applied to ribs in pain. Mature stipe-bases with their dark blotched surface are said to possess curative property for leprosy because of their appearance very similar to a leper's skin. Powdered stipe-base is mixed with sugar-candy in equal proportion and given in quantity equal to the size of a plum, daily in the morning for seven days for cure of leprosy (Pachmarhi, 8271, 81386).

***Argemone mexicana* L.**

Sujarkanta, Ajan Bodshar (G.); Kateli (H.).

Root is ground with the pulp of a bottle gourd of bitter taste, black sorghum, fruits of 'maingri', and jaggery. Pills of the size of a pea are made and given three times a day for about a week in rabies or as a preventive from rabies after dog-bite (Amarkantak, 4920).

***Blechnum orientale* L.**

Hathajodi (G.); Jalkesri (H.).

Rhizome-powder (5 g) is given two or three times a day in delirium (Pachmarhi, 8152).

***Blepharispernum subsessile* DC.**

Rasna, Rachna (M.); Rasnajadi, Batvati (G., H.).

Root-powder (5 g) is given in scabies and other skin diseases. Plant-juice is administered in common cold and rhinitis in children (Bastar, 5397).

Plant-juice is given to cattle on 'Pola' festival day under the belief that this would keep them free from intestinal worms for the whole year. Root-powder (50-70 g) is given to cattle to relieve flatulence (Bastar, 12011, 1592).

***Boerhavia diffusa* L.**

Patharchatta (G.).

Decoction of the whole plant is given in pneumonia (Amarkantak, 1543, 4800).

***Borreria articularis* (L.f.) F.N. Will.**

Leaves are mixed with 'ganja' (marijuana) to increase its intoxicating property (Katni, 2764).

***Butea parviflora* Roxb.**

Bara|Okhar (G.).

Decoction of the root is given to relieve pain in ribs and in rheumatism (Amarkantak, 4790).

***Calotropis gigantea* (L.) R. Br.**

AK (G., H.).

Cumin is mixed in the latex, fried and pills of pea size are made with jaggery and given twice a day in asthma (Pachmarhi, 81397).

***Ceropegia macrantha* Wight**

Bosiakand, Alukand (G., H.).

Tubers are said to be good appetiser. One will feel hungry even on full stomach after eating about 10 g of fresh tuber of the plant. Tubers of *C. hirsuta* Roxb., also possess similar property (Pachmarhi, 993, 83546).

***Clematis smilacifolia* Wall.**

Gajapasaran (G.).

Decoction of the root (10 g) is given twice a day in rheumatism (Amarkantak, 4675, 4928).

***Colocasia esculenta* (L.) Schott**

Dhoka (M.).

Tuber-paste is applied to wounds in hen (Bastar, 5318).

***Conyza stricta* Willd.**

Hodari (G.).

Entire plant is made into paste along with some other ingredients and applied to fractured bones for their quick union (Amarkantak, 2990, 6351).

***Corallocarpus epigaeus* (Rottl. & Willd.)**

C.B.Cl.

Khirkand, Mirchikand (G.).

Tuber-powder equal to the quantity of a wheat grain is given with jaggery for expelling worms. It is given with honey in asthma, fever and cough (Pachmarhi).

***Costus speciosus* (Koenig ex Retz.) Sm.**

Keokand (G.).

Rhizome (10 g) is given to nursing women as a lactagogue. Women after delivery are given bath with the diluted decoction of the rhizome to keep them free from rheumatic pains (Pachmarhi, 83384).

***Crotalaria albida* Heyne ex Roth**

Ghurghuri (G.).

The plant is kept under the bee-hive while collecting honey to keep off the bees (Amarkantak, 2961, 4634).

***Crotalaria alata* Buch.-Ham. ex D. Don**

Ghurghuri (G.).

Paste of the entire plant is administered orally and also applied locally in snake-bite (Bastar, 1856).

Plant powder (5 g) is given in stomach-ache, flatulence and other stomach disorders (Amarkantak, 9649).

***Cymbopogon schoenanthus* (L.) Spreng.**

Indrababai (G., H.).

Paste of the entire plant is applied to mumps. This is a reputed medicine of the locality (Bhedaghat, Jabalpur, 2685).

***Cynoglossum lanceolatum* Forst.**

Balraj, Kamraj, Bhavar band, Janyari (G.).

Root, along with some other ingredients, is used as aphrodisiac (Amarkantak, 2932).

***Dillenia pentagyna* Roxb.**

Suarukh (G.).

Powdered bark is mixed with jaggery and pills, equal to the size of a cherry, are made. These are given twice a day for about a week to allay body heat (Pachmarhi, 403, 81374).

***Diplazium esculentum* (Retz.) Sw. ex Schrad.**

Jatashankri (G.).

The root-stock is kept in cattle-shed to prevent the attack of 'baiga' disease (thickening of the tongue and appearance of tubercles on it and also swelling of the glands in neck) in the cattle (Pachmarhi, 8181).

***Drosera burmannii* Vahl**

Jalkeshar (G., H.).

Plant-paste is given in dysuria (Katni, 2753).

***Dryopteris cochleata* (Don) C. Chr.**

Hathajodi, Bari Bhulan (G.).

Decoction of the rhizome (5 g) is given thrice a day in cholera (Amarkantak, 2963, 3860, 4748).

***Echinops echinatus* Roxb.**

Unt katara (H.).

Root is made into paste, heated and applied warm to relieve pain in bones (Tikamgarh, 11367).

***Elaeodendron glaucum* (Vahl) Pers.**

Jamrasi (G.).

Bark (5 g) is given in diarrhoea. Women after delivery are given bath with the diluted decoction of the leaves as a safeguard against rheumatic pains (Pachmarhi, 8130).

***Enicostemma hyssopifolium* (Willd.) Verd.**

Koraipal (G.).

Plant-juice (2 ml) is heated and given in malarial fever (Pipariya, 357).

***Eulophia explanata* Lindl.**

Bansingara (G.).

Pseudobulbs are crushed and boiled in 'ghee' (clarified butter). One teaspoonful of this 'ghee' is given twice daily with milk in 'dhat rog' (spermatorrhoea). (Pachmarhi, 1004).

Eulophia herbacea Lindl.

Bansingara (G.).

Pseudobulbs are powdered, mixed with dry fruits and fried wheat-flour and given as general tonic (Pachmarhi, 83537).

Euphorbia neriifolia L.

Thuar, Vishkali (G.).

For cure of whitlow, a hollow cap is made out of the stem of this plant and the affected finger is kept inserted in it for a few days (Pachmarhi).

Evolvulus alsinoides (L.) L.

Khurni ghas (G.).

Leaf-paste is applied to the finger affected with 'khurni' (whitlow). (Pachmarhi, 493, 83301).

Flemingia strobilifera (L.) R. Br. ex Ait.

Root-powder (10 g) is given in leucorrhoea. It is given to women after delivery as a safeguard against leucorrhoea (Pachmarhi, 7824, 7849).

Grewia hirsuta Vahl

Gursakri (Hal.).

Root-paste is applied to boils (Bastar, 1248, 8513).

Grewia rothii DC.

Gangerua (G.).

A preparation of the root with jaggery is used as a general tonic (Pachmarhi, 83517).

Gymnema hirsutum W. & A.

Phulkat (G.).

Paste of 3-4 leaves is given with water in diabetes. Leaf-paste is also administered in menorrhagia (Pachmarhi, 83542).

Gymnema sylvestre (Retz.) R. Br. ex Schultes

Phulkat (G.).

Leaf-paste is used as a local application in corneal opacity (Pachmarhi).

Hedyotis verticillata (L.) Lam.

Ronder (M.).

Paste of the flowers is applied to 'skin diseases like athlete's foot (Bastar, 5405).

Holostemma annularis (Roxb.) K. Schum.

Dudhi (Hal., H.).

Decoction of the root (5-6 g) is given to women at the time of labour pains for easy delivery. Root-juice is administered and also applied to the breast to promote flow of milk in nursing mothers (Bastar, 1866).

Hoya pendula Wight

Plant is tied to the cradle of infants under the belief that this would keep the diseases away (Bastar, 5696).

Plant is kept in the cattle-shed to keep off the insects and germs of diseases (Pachmarhi, 81359).

Hymenodictyon orixense (Roxb.) Mabb.

H. excelsum (Roxb.) Wall.

Mac (G.); Machh (Hal.).

Root (8 g) is given raw in snake-bite (Bastar, 1821, 1852).

Hypodamatium crenatum (Forsk.) Kuhn.

Bhutkesi.

Root-stock is kept in the houses and its 'tabiz' (armlet) is tied round arm to keep off evil spirits. Fumigation of the root-stock is given in 'nazar' and to drive off evil spirits. This is a popular plant, also sold on the pavements in the town area (Pachmarhi, 83400).

Indigofera cassioides Rottl. ex DC.

Birhul (G.).

Paste of the leaves and the root is applied to the face and the ears for cure of swelling on the face after delivery (Amarkantak, 4704).

Iphegenia indica (L.) A. Gray

Lahsunkand (G., M.).

Paste of the bulb is applied locally in snake-bite and scorpion-sting (Bastar, 5346; Pachmarhi, 81363).

***Leea crispa* van Royen ex L.**

Hansiadhapan (G.).

Root-powder (5 g) is given thrice a day in 'parna' and 'sajak' diseases (discharge of pus during urination). Root-paste is given orally and also applied locally in snake-bite (Pachmarhi, 81389, 83319).

***Leucas lavandulifolia* J.E. Smith**

Banhurri, Gomibhaji (Hal.).

Oil expressed from the seeds is sometimes used for edible and other purposes (Bastar, 1582, 3479).

***Leucas mollissima* Wall. ex Benth.**

Geeta Kushir (G.).

Plant-paste is applied to bone dislocations (Amarkantak, 3548, 4249).

***Litsea glutinosa* (Lour.) C.B. Robins.**

Mainda (G., H.).

Bark-paste (10 g) is given 2-3 times a day in dysentery (Pachmarhi, 7940, 7987).

***Lobelia nicotianaefolia* Heyne**

Janglitamaku (G., H.).

In hydrocele leaf-paste is applied locally and the leaves, with oil smeared on them, are tied around the scrotum. Root-paste is applied to the wounds of dog-bite (Pachmarhi, 83380).

***Lycopodium cernuum* L.**

Runijhuni (G.).

Plant-powder (3 g) is given to infants in rickets (Pachmarhi).

***Manilkara hexandra* (Roxb.) Dubbard**

Khinni (G., H.).

Powder of the root and the stem-bark (5 g) is given in dysuria. Bark-paste is applied on the forehead in conjunctivitis and also in insanity (Pachmarhi, 7904, 8221).

***Murraya paniculata* (L.) Jacq.**

Raktaviral (G.).

Leaves are immersed in the hot bathing water for women after delivery as a safeguard against body pains. Leaf-paste is applied to inflammations (Pachmarhi, 7996).

***Nelsonia canescens* (Lam.) Spreng.**

Fruit-powder (2-3 g) is given 2-3 times a day in syphilis (Amarkantak, 5177).

***Nervilia aragoana* Gaud.**

Van vatasha (G.).

Fresh tuber is edible and said to repress body heat (Pachmarhi, 83538).

***Nesaea lanceolata* (Heyne ex W. & A.)**

Kochne

Jalneem (H.).

Plant-juice (1 teaspoonful) is given in gonorrhoea and jaundice (Jabalpur, 4570).

***Ocimum americanum* L.**

Bantulsi (H., M.).

Decoction of the plant is given in stomach-ache. Root-paste is applied to the wounds of animals (Bastar, 1641, 5404).

***Oenanthe stolonifera* Wall.**

Jalraj (G.).

A preparation of the plant, along with some other ingredients, namely, 'Bhojraj' (*Peucedanum nagpurens*), 'Tejraj' (*Peucedanum dhana* var. *dalzelli*) and 'Hansraj' (*Pimpinella bracteata*) is used as aphrodisiac (Amarkantak, 4619).

***Oroxylum indicum* (L.) Kurz**

Bhainspadar (G.).

Seeds are put on fire and the fumes so produced are allowed to pass over anal region to relieve piles (Pachmarhi).

***Peristylus stocksii* (Hook. f.) Kranz.**

Salamkand (G.).

Root is given as tonic against general debility (Pachmarhi, 83561).

***Peucedanum nagpurens* Prain**

Bhojraj (Amarkantak); Tejraj (Raipur, Bastar).

Root is used along with some other ingredients, namely, 'Tejraj' of Amarkantak (*Peucedanum dhana* var. *dalzelli*), 'Jalraj' (*Oenanthe stolonifera*), 'Kalimusli' (*Curculigo orchoides*) etc. as aphrodisiac (Amarkantak, 4740; Raipur, 3645).

Phyllanthus virgatus Forst. f.

Leaves are cooked as a vegetable and also given in stomach-ache (Bastar, 7038).

Pimpinella bracteata Haines

Hansraj (G.).

A preparation of the root along with the roots of 'Bhojraj' (*Peucedanum nagpurensé*), 'Tejraj' (*Peucedanum dhana* var. *dalzelli*) etc. is used as aphrodisiac (Amar-kantak, 3876, 4749).

Pueraria tuberosa (Roxb. ex Willd.) DC.

Patal Kumra (G.).

Root-powder, in quantity equal to the size of a plum, is given early morning with sugar and water for cure of asthma (Pachmarhi).

Pycnocycla glauca Royle

Deokand (G.).

Root-powder (5 g) is given to women in the morning for about a week for fertility. It is believed that the use of this drug gives birth to a male child. Fumigation of the plant in the house keeps off the evil spirits. Root is also used as a general tonic (Pachmarhi, 83317).

Pygmaeopremna herbacea (Roxb.)

Moldenke

Kamraj (G.).

As the local name signifies, administration of the root stimulates sexual desire in both the sexes (Pachmarhi, 83390).

Remusatia vivipara (Roxb.) Schott

Mankand, Bicchukand, Mainakand (G., H.).

Paste of the corm is used as a local application on mumps and scorpion-bite (Pachmarhi, 81384).

Rivea hypocrateriformis Choisy

Garyparh (Hal.).

Root is administered to regain consciousness after fits (Bastar, 1865).

Sarcostemma acidum (Roxb.) Voight

Hadjor (G.E., H.).

Paste of the plant along with some other ingredients is applied to bone-fractures,

for quick union of the bones (Pachmarhi, 83372).

Sauromatium venosum (Ait.) Kunth

Bhasmakand (G.).

Corm is made into a paste with cows urine and applied to 'gulthi' (tumours) and various skin diseases (Pachmarhi).

Scleria pergracilis (Nees) Kunth

Plant-juice is used to kill bed-bugs (Bastar, 5393).

Scoparia dulcis L.

Madhurmi (G.).

Decoction of the plant is given in gonorrhoea (Raipur, 4885).

Solena heterophylla Lour.

Gulakri (G.).

Root is used as a general tonic (Pachmarhi, 83321).

Sterculia villosa Roxb.

Udarkand, Bharga (G.).

Root of the sapling is eaten raw after peeling of the bark. It is said to vitalize the body (Pachmarhi, 1049).

Tamilnadia uliginosa (Retz.) Tirv. & Sast.

Randia uliginosa (Retz.) DC.

Tilka (M.).

Root-paste is applied on the forehead to relieve headache (Bastar, 11872).

Thunbergia fragrans Roxb.

Pandi Kushir (Hal.).

Decoction of the plant (10 g) is given in cough (Bastar, 4279).

Trichodesma indicum (L.) Lehman

Aundhi (M.).

Root-paste is given to cattle to expell the intestinal worms (Bastar, 3539).

Uraria lagopodioides (L.) Desv. ex DC.

Root (5 g) is given orally and also applied locally in snake-bite (Bastar, 1862).

Uraria picta (Jacq.) Desv.

Decoction of the root (10 g) is given in fever (Bastar, 1875).

Urginia indica (Roxb.) Kunth

Jangal gondri (G.).

Decoction of the bulb is given in rheumatism (Pachmarhi, 83309).

Vicoa indica (L.) DC.

Onharli (G.).

Root is chewed to relieve tooth-ache (Amarkantak, 4733).

Waltheria indica L.

Pittamara (Hal.).

Plant-juice (1 teaspoonfull) is given in bile troubles (Bastar, 5300).

Wendlandia heynei (R.&S.) Sant. & Merch.

Tilwan (G.).

Powdered stem-bark is spread over the wounds for quick healing (Amarkantak, 4761).

Woodfordia fruticosa (L.) Kurz

Sartili (G.).

Decoction of the roots and the leaves is applied to burns and skin diseases (Amarkantak, 4713, 5144).

Youngia japonica (L.) DC.

Oil obtained by expressing the seeds is sometimes used for edible purpose (Amarkantak).

Zingiber roseum Rosc.

Jangli adrak (G., H.).

Rhizome-paste is given with honey in rheumatism (Pachmarhi, 8132).

Zornia gibbosa Spanoghe

Hiran kurni (G.).

Powdered plant (5g) is given twice a day in spermatorrhoea (Pachmarhi, 483).

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