

Note: This new find can at once be distinguished from *P. paradoxa* in the absence of the callus on the lip coupled with crenate-serrate margins. So far, attempts to collect more specimens from the same locality as well as neighbouring areas with similar ecological conditions have proved futile.

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SOME INTERESTING NEW USES OF THE WELL KNOWN PLANT *VITEX NEGUNDO* LINN. (NISINDA)

Vitex negundo (Verbenaceae) is a well known economic plant. Several medicinal and other uses of this plant are known from literature such as Watt (1893), Biswas et al. (1973), Anonymous (1976) and Bhat-tacharjee (1977).

Vitex negundo is a large aromatic shrub upto about 5 m high or sometimes small tree and is found almost throughout India. The plant is easily recognised by its thin grey bark and lanceolate leaflets which are glabrous above and white tomentose below with bluish purple flowers. The plant is grown readily from stem-cuttings.

During ethnobotanical study (August 1977) among the Oraon tribe in Hazaribagh District of Bihar, the author observed additional medicinal uses of this plant as well as its use as insect repellent and insecticide for paddy fields. The following new uses are reported in this paper.

Uses of Plant & their parts: Hot extract of leaves is useful in rheumatism, the powder of dry leaves is applied on wounds, the juice of leaves boiled with Til oil is applied on itching, the water obtained after

boiling leaves in water is said to produce antiseptic effects, kills germs in teeth and relieves pain due to swelling of gums by washing the mouth with it, leaves juice for reducing sexual emotions, leaves fomentation is considered as a remedy for different diseases of testis (*Eksira*, *Orchitis* or *Epidydamitis*). It has been gathered from the tribes of the region that its leaves if kept under bed, drives away bed bugs and small twig inserted into vagina causes abortion in an early stage.

As regards the use of this plant as insect repellent, and as an insecticide in the paddy fields, it was observed that the tribals at Barhi made a bunch of twigs and brushed the top of the paddy plants vigorously and repeatedly all over the field (Plate 1). In order to have a regular supply of these plants the tribals grow these plants as hedges around their agricultural fields.

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Plate I: Bunch of *Vitea negundo* L. leaves being swept over a crop of Paddy

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CHEMOTAXONOMIC STUDIES IN LYTHRACEAE

Recent studies in the members of the Lythraceae indicate that the compounds present in them show a wide spectrum of distribution, for example the restricted occurrence of naphthaquinones in species of *Lawsonia* and *Ammania*, C-flavonoids in *Lythrum*. This complex nature of the distribution pattern of chemical constituents