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MEDICINAL PLANTS USED BY LOCAL TRADITIONAL HEALERS OF MAHUR RANGE FOREST OF NANDED DISTRICT, MAHARASHTRA, INDIA

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ABSTRACT :

Mahur forest is rich in medicinal plant biodiversity since ancient times. The tribal people and medicinal plant practitioners of this region are using medicinal plants for the treatment of different diseases. The present study reveals the enumeration of 40 medicinal plants collected from ethnomedicinal practitioner. Tribal and local people were totally depending on medicinal plants of the vicinity. Each tribe has its own formulation and dosages based on individual experiences and it is passed on one generation to other generation. Information of ethnomedicinal recipes, dosage and their mode of administration etc. was recorded from tribal of this area. The enumerated angiospermic plants species are employed by the tribal in the form of infusion, juice, extract vapors or fumes, decoction and paste either as a sole drug or in combination with other plant drugs to treat various ailments. The enumerated plants are arranged alphabetically with their family, botanical names, and local names.

Keyword: Medicinal plant diversity, Mahur, tribal, Maharashtra.

INTRODUCTION

The Mahur forest of Nanded district of Maharashtra has been widely acknowledged for medicinal plants. The tribal and rural population of Mahur taluka is composed of different communities. The principle tribes in Mahur are *Andh*, *Kolam*, *Naikede*, *Gond* and *Pradhan*. Tribal people fulfill their needs of plant medicines from nearby forests for curing different ailments. The valuable indigenous knowledge about plants of this area is an important Indian heritage. Tribals are good at knowledge of herbal wealth and related vegetation in the immediate vicinity. The region is still ethnobotanically under exploration. The present investigation was carried out to collect the information regarding ethnomedicinal values from the tribals of Mahur Taluka of Nanded District, Maharashtra.

Geographically the Mahur taluka is situated between 19°49' to 19°83' North latitude and 77° 91' to 77°55' East longitude. The total geographical area of taluka is 52160 hectares of which 14397.39 hectares area covered with forest and 37762.61 hectares are non-forested area and its population is 86782 (Census-2001), out of this 15.5 percent is inhabited by tribal population of aborigines like *Andh*, *Kolam*, *Gond*, *Naikede* and *Pradhan* (Pawade *et al.*, 2008).

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Topography:

Mahur taluka is a thick forested area of Nanded District. The main river is Penganga which flows from the South to North direction. Mahur taluka is located in northern part of Nanded district. It is bounded North and South by Yavatamal district. East part by Andhra Pradesh and West by Pusad taluka of Vidarbha region.

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Methods of Collection:

Ethnobotanical data was collected between 2008-2011; the information was mainly gathered through semi structured interview. Most of the interviews and discussions were held in Mahur Taluka. In this study 13 knowledgeable elders (between the ages of 45 to 65) chosen with the assistance of local administrators and community leaders who served as key informants. During the course of the study each informant was visited three times in order to verify the reliability of the obtained data. Repeated visits also helped to get some additional information that was not mentioned during the earlier interviews.

The collected plants were identified with help of standard floras (Naik, (1979); Naik et al., (1998) and Yadav and Sirdesai (2002). The plants were enumerated alphabetically along with botanical name, family and vernacular name.

ENUMERATION

The plant were enumerated alphabetically along with botanical name, family and vernacular name.

Sr. No	Plant Name	Part(s) Used	Disease
1	<i>Acacia farnesiana</i> (L.) Willd.	Stem bark, fruit	rickets
2	<i>Acacia leucophloea</i> (Roxb.) Willd.	Stem bark.	Fits
3	<i>Ageratum conyzoides</i> L	stem	cough
4	<i>Balanites aegyptica</i> (L.) Del.	Seed.	eye diseases cough
5	<i>Bambusa vulgaris</i> L.	Tender shoot	Piles
6	<i>Barleria prionitis</i> L.	leaf	earache and tympanitis
7	<i>Benincasa hispida</i> (Thunb.) Cong.	Fruit.	Rheumatism abdominal pain
8	<i>Cadaba fruticosa</i> (L.) Druce.	Leaves	rheumatism
9	<i>Caesalpinia bonduc</i> (L.) Roxb.	Seed and Pod	abdominal pain rheumatism
10	<i>Cajanus cajan</i> (L.) Millsp.	Leaves	fractured part
11	<i>Calotropis procera</i> (Ait.) R. Br.	Root and Leaves.	eczema boils and cough
12	<i>Capparis divaricata</i> Lamk.	Fruits.	dysentery intestinal worms
13	<i>Capparis zeylanica</i> L.	Root and Fruit	diarrhoea
14	<i>Carthamus tinctorius</i> L.	Leaves and seeds.	digestive problem
15	<i>Curcuma pseudomontana</i> Grah.	rhizome	cough
16	<i>Datura metel</i> L.	leaves and fruit	tumorous neck
17	<i>Dendrophthoe falcata</i> (L.f.) Etting.	Stem bark and leaves.	weakness
18	<i>Echinops echinatus</i> Roxb.	Root and stem	Piles and skin diseases
19	<i>Eclipta alba</i> (L.) Hassk.	Leaves	Hepatitis
20	<i>Euphorbia thymifolia</i> L.	Whole plant	typhoid
21	<i>Ficus benghalensis</i> L.	Aerial root and latex	stop premature hair feet crack
22	<i>Grangea maderaspatana</i> (L.) Pior	Entireplant.	earache dysentery
23	<i>Helicteres isora</i> L.	Leaves and pod	abdominal pain dysentery
24	<i>Indigofera cordifolia</i> Heyne ex Roth	Leaves	rheumatism
25	<i>Ipomoea pes-tigridis</i> L.	Leaves	joint pain
26	<i>Ixora pavetta</i> Andrews	Stem bark	bleeding of teeth
27	<i>Leucas cephalotes</i> (Roth) Spreng	leaves	abdominal pain
28	<i>Madhuca longifolia</i> (Koen.) Macbr.	Seed and flowers	cough rheumatism

29	<i>Mangifera indica</i> L.	Stem bark	Leucorrhoea hepatitis
30	<i>Phyllanthus emblica</i> L.	Leaves and fruit	toothache asthma
31	<i>Pongamia pinnata</i> (L.) Pierre	Leaves and seeds	Wound and swelling
32	<i>Ruta graveolens</i> L.	Leaves.	chronic diarrhea
33	<i>Rorippa indica</i> (L.) Hiern.	Leaves and seeds	joint pain
34	<i>Santalum album</i> L.	Stem bark	skin diseases headache
35	<i>Sapindus emarginatus</i> Vahl.	Seeds	Headache
36	<i>Soyimida febrifuga</i> (Roxb.) A. Juss.	Stem bark.	dysentery
37	<i>Tephrosia hirta</i> Buch. Ham.	Leaves	Cough
38	<i>Trigonella foenum graecum</i> L.	Seed and leaves	rheumatism
39	<i>Triumfetta rotundifolia</i> Lamk.	Leaves.	dysentery
40	<i>Vanda tessellata</i> (Roxb.) Hook. ex G. Don	Epiphytic root and stem	paralysis

DISCUSSION


In the present paper it has been revealed that the enumeration of 33 plant species belonging to 24 families reported to cure various human ailments. During survey information was gathered from aged medicinal practitioner of this area. The tribal and local people of this area use medicinal plants in their day to day life. The knowledge about medicinal plants and their utilization was passing from generation to generation. Different parts of plant like root, stem, leaves were used medicinally to treat abdominal pain, skin diseases, joint pain, piles, diarrhea, eczema, boils, cough, and eye diseases. The present survey showed that the tribal of Mahur have detailed knowledge regarding medicinal plants and their utilization in curing various diseases.

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