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Some less known medicinal herbs of Kandhamal District of Odisha

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Abstract
This paper deals with an enumeration of 26 angiospermic medicinal herbs under 25 genera belonging to 19 families of Kandhamal district of Odisha. Besides, some effective measures for immediate conservation of the medicinal plants have been suggested.

Keywords: medicinal herbs, medicinal plants

Introduction
Kandhamal, one of the centrally located districts of Orissa lies between 190341 N – 200541 N latitudes and 830201 E – 840481 E longitudes. This is a district dominated by the tribal people. Out of 62 tribes identified for the state of Odisha, 29 tribes are concentrated in different pockets in this district. The dominant tribes are Kandha, Ganda, Saora and Kanda-gaud. The tribal population is ca40.43% of the total tribal population of Odisha. The forest cover is ca 7336 sq.kms which is 66% of the total geographical areas of the district. The vegetable wealth is a grand repository of floristic elements of high economic potentialities, where from the tribals get their food, clothing, medicines etc. Besides the district is a grand repository of medicinal plants. In spite of rich and diverse floristic composition, Haines, the pioneer plant explorer for the state of Bihar and Orissa and Mooney, the subsequent worker could not botanize this region thoroughly and as such various uses of plant by the natives have not been documented in their respective treatise [1, 2]. There is considerable amount of genetic erosion in the plant wealth with the march of urbanization, establishment of factories coupled with the interferences of various categories such as shifting cultivation, illegal falling of tree species for timber and fuel etc. Paradoxically the magnitude of devastation is in increasing order during recent times, quite a good number of medicinal and food plants have already been wiped away. On the other hand, establishment of hospitals in remote areas has fascinated the aboriginal people to adopt the modern medical practices. Hence therapy is almost ignored. Similarly their food habit and utilization of plants and plant products for cultural activities have also been changed due to influence of modern civilization. Hence critical identification as well as conservation of these fast disappearing elements is highly essential. Realising this Jain; Sexen and Dutta; Subudhi and Choudhury and Sahoo have made some sporadic reports on the ethnobotanical aspects of this district [3, 4, 5, 6].

Methodology
Seasonal field explorations were carried out in different forest rich as well as tribal dominated areas of the Kandhamal district in order to study the plants having high therapeutic importance. Due attentions were made towards the distribution pattern and flowering time of the plants. The plants collected, have been identified in consultation with the regional floras [1, 7] and monographs and preserved under ex-situ in AJCBIBG. Information pertaining to the medicinal values of the plants has been collected from the local inhabitants through regular contact. The authenticity of the medicinal importance of the species have also been confirmed.
by following standard literatures [4, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15]. In the present treatment, an enumeration of 26 herbs along with their correct nomenclature, brief phytotherapy, phenology, ecology and medicinal uses have been provided. The species are arranged alphabetically and their family names are provided in the parenthesis. The vernacular names have also been given where ever available.

Enumeration

1. Ammannia baccifera L.Sp.Pl.120.1753; Haines, Bot. Bihar and Orissa 2:396.1961; Matthew, Fl.Tam.Carnatic 1:605.1983; Saxena & Brahmam, Fl.Orissa 2:707.1995. “Ramdaunie” (LYTHRACEAE) Erect herbs. Leaves oblong-elliptic or oblanceolate, 2-6 x 0.4-0.7 cm, base cuneate, entire, acute. Cymes dichasial, sub-sessile. Fls. 4-merous, red. Hypantheum panamulate. Petals absent. Fls. & Frts.: August-December; commonly found in marshy places and rice fields. Leaves are used in removal of kapha, vata and blood troubles. Leaves are used to raise blisters in rheumatic pains and fevers. Leaves are employed to cure herpetic eruptions. Fresh or dried plant is administered in decoction with zinger and cyperus root for intermittent fevers and its ashes are mixed with oil and applied to herpetic eruptions.


woody root stock. Leaves linear or lanceolate, 2-5 to 6 cm long, base truncate or hastate, several toothed, acuminate. Inf. axillary solitary or few flowered cyme. Fls. pale yellow with purple eye. Sepal's glabrous, elliptic-oblung. Corolla campanulate. Fls. & Frts.: August-December. The plant is tonic and laxative. It is used in rheumatism, piles and urinary disorder.


Discussion
Although quite a good number of medicinal plants have been wiped away from the district due to operation of various biotic factors still this district is a grand repository of many indigenous medicinal plants. Hence appropriate protection and conservation steps of these species are highly required. These life forms can be conserved by developing medicinal gardens in educational and research complexes in general and Ayurvedic hospitals in particular. These will awake adequate interest among the common people for judicious utilization of medicinal plants, which are on the verge of extinction.

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References