

Ethnobotany of Andhra Pradesh: A Review

K.N. Reddy

Laila Impex R&D Centre, Unit-I, Phase-III
Jawahar Autonagar, Vijayawada 520 007

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ABSTRACT

This paper reviews the work done so far in the ethnobotany of Andhra Pradesh.

OVERVIEW

Plants have been used both in the prevention and cure of various diseases of humans and their pets. With the advent of human civilization, many systems of therapy have been developed primarily based on plants. Ayurveda, Homeopathy, Sidda, Unani, etc. are our traditional systems of medicines. The plant-based traditional medical systems continue to provide the *primary health care* to more than three-quarters of the world's populace. The World Health Organization has estimated that over 80% of the global population rely chiefly on traditional medicine (Akerele 1992).

Indigenous herbal treatment is a part of the culture and dominant mode of therapy in most of the developing countries. These traditional phytotherapies, with a considerable extent of effectiveness, are socially accepted, economically viable and mostly are the only available means. Still, one-third of the modern pharmaceutical preparations have botanical origin. International trade on medicinal plants is, therefore, increasing rapidly mainly as result of intensified adoption of crude extracts for self-medication by the general public in the developed countries. In India, the use of plants for medicinal treatment dates back to 5000 years. It was officially recognized that 2500 plant species have medicinal value while over 6000 plants are estimated to be explored in traditional, folk and herbal medicine (Huxley 1984).

Ethnobotanical research can provide a wealth of information regarding both past and present relationships between plants and the traditional societies. Investigations into traditional use and management of local flora have demonstrated the existence of extensive local knowledge of not only about the physical and chemical properties of many plant species, but also the phenological and ecological features in the case of domesticated species. In addition to its traditional roles in economic botany and exploration of human cognition, ethnobotanical research has been applied to current areas of study such as biodiversity prospecting and vegetation management. It is hoped that, in the future, ethnobotany may play an increasingly important role in sustainable development and biodiversity conservation (Rajasekaran & Warren 1994). In interaction with the traditional areas of science, ethnobotany gives out several

interrelated and interdisciplinary subjects link *ethnomedicine*, *ethnoarchaeology*, *ethnobotany*, *ethnoecology*, *ethnoagriculture*, *ethnonarcotics*, *ethnopharmacology*, etc.

Ethnobotanical investigation has led to the documentation of a large number of wild plants used by tribal for meeting their multifarious requirements (Anonymous 1990). Studies on ethnobotany was initiated by Janaki-Ammal as an official programme in the Economic Botany Section of Botanical Survey of India (Howrah) in 1954. From 1960, Jain started intensive field studies among tribal areas of central India (Jain 1963 a-e; 1964 a-c; 1965 a-b). These publications in early sixties triggered ethnobotanical activities in many botanists, anthropologists and ayurvedic medical practitioners. An AICRP on Ethnobiology came into operation from 1982 at NBRI, Lucknow, and four centres (Shillong, Howrah, Coimbatore and Port Blair) of Botanical Survey of India (Jain & Mitra 1997). Mudgal (1987) provided a synoptic account of ethnobotanical works in India. Binu *et al.* (1992) compiled the ethnobotanical work carried out in India. Later, Lalramnghinglova & Jha (1999) reviewed work on ethnobotany of the World with special reference to India. An important prerequisite for proper utilization of raw materials of the country is the survey of its natural resources and the preparation of an inventory. It is necessary that we should have full knowledge regarding the occurrence, frequency, distribution and phenology of various plants for their proper utilization. The forests of Andhra Pradesh have great potentiality both from the economic and botanical points of view. The State is one of the timber and non-timber rich forests in India.

ETHNOBOTANICAL STUDIES IN ANDHRA PRADESH: A REVIEW

Andhra State was carved out of the erstwhile Presidency of Madras in 1953 with Kurnool as its capital in response to the desire of telugu-speaking people. According to the State Recognition Commission, Andhra Pradesh was formed on November 1, 1956 by the addition of nine districts, which were formerly in Nizam's Dominion. Later on, three more new districts were constituted out of the existing. The 23 districts of the State are grouped into three geographically distinct regions called *Circars* or *Coastal Andhra* (with nine districts), *Rayalaseema* (with four districts) and *Telangana* (with 10 districts).

While Edgar Thurston (1909) provided a glimpse of the castes and tribes of southern India, S.S. Hassan (1920) describes the castes and tribes of H.E.H. the Nizam's Dominions. Later, C.V.F. Haimendorf, the British Anthropologist, was appointed by the Nizam to study the plight of the tribes in his dominion in the light of tribal unrest in Madras Presidency. Haimendorf (1943, 1945, 1979) published accounts of Chenchus, the Reddis of Bison hills and the Gonds of Adilabad. These publications carry information largely about the life-styles, customs, socio-economic conditions and, to some extent, the crops raised and plants used by the ethnic tribes.

Andhra Pradesh State is ethnobotanically well-explored, most of the work done was during 1985-2002. The work so far done in the field of ethnobotanical resources by different workers to help the modern World as well as local communities in the rein disappearing knowledge and returning it to local communities in Andhra Pradesh are reviewed here.

Pal & Banerjee (1971) reported the less-known plant-foods among the tribals of Andhra Pradesh and Orissa. Krishnamachari (1900) has reported the use of the leaves of *Erythroxylum monogynum* (Devadari)

and the roots of *Aloe vera* (Kalabanda) as a food during famine. Hemadri (1976) wrote a paper on the procurement of raw drugs in Andhra Pradesh. Rao & Hamadri (1979) published the book on *Andhra Pradeshlo Mandumokkalu* (The Medicinal Plants of Andhra Pradesh). Later, Hemadri wrote two books in Telugu, namely, *Andhra Pradesh lo Vanamulikalu* (1987) and *Shastravettalanu Akarshinstunna Girijana Vaidyam* (1994). The latter is about the ethnobotany of various tribes more or less covering the three geographical regions of Andhra Pradesh. The medicinal plant wealth of Andhra Pradesh by Hemadri *et al.* (1986, 1987) contains a mere list of medicinal plants. Ramarao *et al.* (1999) published a brief note on phyto-zootherapy of the tribes of Andhra Pradesh. V. S Raju (2001) made a note on Ethnoveterinary medicine in Andhra Pradesh, Ratnam & Raju (2005) reported Folk medicine used for common women ailments by Adivasis in the Eastern Ghats of Andhra Pradesh. S.N. Jadhav & K.N. Reddy (2006) presented detail account on threatened medicinal plants of Andhra Pradesh. Bhakshu & Raju (2007) made abstract account on Ethno-medico-botanical studies of certain medicinal plants and certain Euphorbiaceae medicinal plants of Eastern Ghats, Andhra Pradesh. Geetha & Raju (2007) made a note on Ethno-medico-botanical properties of *Terminalia* species in the forests of Eastern Ghats of Andhra Pradesh.

There are ethnobotanical works either based on an ethnic tribe or on phytotherapy of a disease. Anonymous (1966) provided the information on Koyas of Andhra Pradesh. Hemadri (1981) reported the tribal medicine for rheumatism and Hemadri & Rao (1983, 1984) enlisted the plant species for leucorrhoea, menorrhagia and jaundice. Ramarao *et al.* (1984) presented the note on ethnobotanical studies in Andhra Pradesh while Ramarao (1988) did his Ph.D. work on the Ethnobotany of Eastern Ghats in Andhra Pradesh. Vedavathy & Mrudula (1996) list out the herbal medicines used by Yanadis. Rao & Prasad (1995) enlisted the ethnomedicines from the tribes of Andhra Pradesh while R.V. Reddy *et al.* (1996) studied the ethnobotany of less-known tuber-yielding plants of Andhra Pradesh. Vedavathy & Mrudala (1996) reported the Herbal folk medicine of Yanadis of Andhra Pradesh. Rajendran *et al.* (1996, 1997) reported the hepatic stimulant and ichthyotonic plants of Andhra Pradesh. M.H. Reddy *et al.* (1996) provided a perspective of tribal medicine from Rutaceae. Ramarao & Henry (1996) carried out the publication on Ethnobotany of Eastern Ghats in Andhra Pradesh.

C.S. Reddy *et al.* (2000) contains a note on medicinal uses of *Hildegardia populifolia* and *Pterocarpus santalinus*: Red listed and endemic taxa in Andhra Pradesh. S.N. Jadhav *et al.* (2001) proceedings of the workshop on conservation Assessment and Management Planning (CAMP) for medicinal plants of Andhra Pradesh. C.S. Reddy *et al.* (2001) enumerated the threatened medicinal plants of Andhra Pradesh. R. Jeevan & Raju. (2001) described certain potential crude drugs used by tribals of Nallamalais, Andhra Pradesh for Skin diseases. K.N. Reddy *et al.* (2002) reported the ethnobotany of some of the orchids of Andhra Pradesh while S.N. Jadhav & K.N. Reddy (2002) presents a paper on In-Situ Conservation of Medicinal Plants in Andhra Pradesh. K.N. Reddy & C.S. Reddy (2002) published a booklet on floristic and phytosociological studies on plant wealth with focus on medicinal plants of Sukkumamidi Medicinal plants Conservation Area, Bhadrachalam South Division, Khammam district and K.N. Reddy & Sujata (2002) enumerated some selected fibre yielding plants from Eastern Ghats of Andhra Pradesh. K.N. Reddy & Subbaraju (2005) provided the list of plants used for ethnomedicine from Maredumilli region of East Godavari district while K.N. Reddy *et al.* (2005, 2006, 2007) published four papers on the rheumatic diseases of Eastern Ghats, ethnobotany for certain orchids, ethnoveterinary medicine for livestock and the ethnobotanical uses for respiratory disorders in Eastern Ghats of Andhra Pradesh. C.S. Reddy *et al.* (2006) reported the

ethnobotanical observations on some endemic plants of Eastern Ghats. Pullaiah (2007) provided the information for 412 plants in his publication of Medicinal plant of Andhra Pradesh. Savitramma *et al.* (2007) studied the ethnobotanical survey of plants used to treat asthma in Andhra Pradesh. Thulsi Rao *et al.* (2007) contains a note on Ethnomedicinal Importance of Pteridophytes used by Chenchus of Nallamalais, Andhra Pradesh. R. Jeevan *et al.* (2007) enlisted the rare and little known medicinal plants from Nallamalais of Eastern Ghats. K.N. Reddy *et al.* (2007) reported the traditional knowledge on wild food Plants in Andhra Pradesh while K.N. Reddy & C.S. Reddy (2008) enlisted First Red-list of Medicinal plants of Andhra Pradesh - Conservation Assessment Management Planning (CAMP) K.N. Reddy *et al.* (2008) carried out the work on plants used in traditional handicrafts in North-eastern Andhra Pradesh. Gayatri & Srividya (2008) made a note on Ethnomedicinal knowledge of traditionally used edible leaves, seeds flowers among women-A transgenerational study. G.T. Reddy & Raju (2007) enumerated Medico-botanical evaluation of crude drugs used for alimentary disorders and Folk-medicine as antidote by adivasis of Eastern Ghats, Andhra Pradesh.

Ethnobotanical work research works carried in Andhra Pradesh are arranged region wise alphabetically.

COASTAL ANDHRA

Krishnamurthy (1958) published a paper on the tribal people of Rampa and Gudem agency of Godavari lower Division, East Godavari district. Banerjee (1977) & Gupta *et al.* (1997) has reported the ethnobotany of Araku valley in Visakhapatnam district. T.A. Reddy (1980) note down some medicinal plants of Polavaram Agency, West Godavari district. Nisteswar & Kumar (1980, 1983) reported the phytomedicine from Rampa and Addateegala Agency, East Godavari district. Rao & Harasreeramulu (1985) described the selected medicinal plants of Srikakulam district. Sudhakar & Rao (1985) enlisted the medicinal plants of East Godavari while Arunee Kumar *et al.* (1990) enumerated the medicinal plants of Kakinada. The medicinal plant wealth of Krishna district was described by Venkanna (1990). Hemadri (1991) made a note of the medicinal flora of Srikakulam district. Sudarshanam & Balaji (1994) published the medicinal plants of Nellore district used by Yanadis. M.S. Raju (1996) reported the antidotes to snake-bites and other poisonous animals from East Godavari. Krishamohan & Bhairavamurthy (1992) and Vijaykumar & Pullaiah (1998) studied the ethnomedicine of Prakasham district. Prasad *et al.* (1999) documented the food plants of Konda Reddis of Rampa Agency, East Godavari district. Dahdouh-Guebas *et.al.* (2006) Analysing ethnobotanical and fishery-related importance of mangroves of the East-Godavari Delta (Andhra Pradesh, India) for conservation and management purposes. K.N. Reddy & Subbaraju (2005) made a note on ethnomedicine from Maredumilli region of East Godavari district while K.N. Reddy *et al.* (2005) published a work on Ethno-therapeutics of certain Ayurvedic medicinal Plants of Kondapalli Fort. and *Aphanamixis polystachya* (Wall.) Parker: Red-Listed medicinal plant from Maredumilli region, East Godavari district. V.L.N. Rao *et al.* (2006) made a note of ethnomedicinal practices among *Khonds* of Visakhapatnam district. K.N. Reddy *et al.* (2007) enlisted the ethnomedicinal Plants used by the Valmiki of Visakhapatnam district. Haribabu & T.V.V.S. Reddy (2008) made a note on Ethnomedicine for women problems in Visakhapatnam district. Lakshmi & Lakshminarayana (2008) prepare a note on Some traditional medicinal plants used by jatapu tribe of Vizianagaram district.

RAYALASEEMA

Hemadri (1985) reported the medicinal plant wealth of Chittoor district. Rajareddy & Sudarshanam (1987) reported the veterinary medicinal plants of Chittoor district while Chetty & Rao (1989) studied the ethnobotany of Sarakallu and adjacent areas of the district. M.B. Reddy *et al.* (1988, 1989) surveyed the plants of Chenchu tribe and the medicinal plant crude drugs of Anantapur district. Nagaraju & Rao (1990a, b) enlisted the locally scarce and endangered medical plants of Tirumala hills and the plant crude drugs of Rayalaseema while Thammanna & Rao (1990) enumerated the common medicinal plants of Tirumala. Vedavathy & Rao (1989, 1991) published a work on Nephroprotectors-folkmedicine of Rayalaseema and Antipyretic activity of six indigenous medicinal plants of Tirumala hills while Vedavathy *et al.* (1991) prepared a note on folklore information from Rayalaseema region for family planning and birth control. Vijayalakshmi (1993) did her M.Phil dissertation work on the Chenchus of Ahobilam of Kurnool district. K.E. Reddy (1994) did his M.Phil dissertation work on ethnobotany of Gooty mandal, Anantapur district. R.V. Reddy (1995) did his Ph.D. work on Ethnobotanical and Phytochemical Studies on Medicinal Plant Resources of Cuddapah District. Balaji *et al.* (1995) carried on folkmedicine of a Rayalaseema region. Sudarshanam *et al.* (1995) enlisted the veterinary crude drugs of Rayalaseema region. Vedavathy *et al.* (1994, 1995) worked on herbal folk medicine of Tirumala and Tirupati region and for birth control and ante post-partum treatments of Chittoor district. R.V. Reddy *et al.* (1995, 1996) noted the ethnobotany of *Aristolochia* and reported the anti-fertility crude drugs from Cuddapah district. Rao *et al.* (1996) reported the ethnomedicinal plants of Tirumala hills for dental disorders. M.H. Reddy *et al.* (1996) enlisted the phytoterapy of snake bite in Nallamalais. Goud & Pullaiah (1996) enumerated the folk veterinary medicinal plants of Kurnool district. Vedavathy *et al.* (1997) Published a book on Tribal medicine of Chittoor district. K.N. Reddy (1997) did his M.Phil dissertation work on ethno-medico-botanical studies of Anantapur district. Goud *et al.* (1997) reported non-timber forest resources in the economy of tribals of Nallamalais. R.V. Reddy *et al.* (1997) reported the ethnomedicine for ephemeral fevers and anthrax in cattle from Cuddapah district. K.N. Reddy & Raju (1999) enumerated the plants in ethnoveterinary practices in Anantapur district. K.N. Reddy, *et al.* (2002) enlisted the Ethnobotanical plants among the Chenchus of Nallamalais of Kurnool district. Pullaiah *et al.* (2003) report a note on medicinal plants used by the tribals of Nallamalais. K.N. Reddy *et al.* (2007) published a paper on Ethnobotanical studies on medicinal plants of Seshachalam hills in Cuddapah district. Hema & Yosodamma (2008) made abstract account on Importance of Medicinal plants of Ardhagiri hill, Chittoor district. Nazaneen & Shali (2008) report a note on Plants traditionally used as galactagogue in Nallamalais of Kurnool district.

TELANGANA

Khan (1953) mentioned the ethnobotanical uses of some plant species in his Forest Flora of Hyderabad. Kapoor & Kapoor (1980) enumerated the medicinal plant wealth of Karimnagar district. Hemadri (1990) gave a list of plant names, which are of medicinal value from the districts of Karimnagar and Warangal. Ravishankar (1990) did his Ph.D on Ethnobotanical Studies in Adilabad and Karimnagar Districts. In 1996, Pullaiah & Kumar enumerated the herbal plants in Mannanur forest of Mahabubnagar district. Kumar & Pullaiah (1998) made a note on Ethnomedicinal uses of some plants of Mahabubnagar district. K.N. Reddy *et al.* (1998) provided the detailed account of plants used in ethnoveterinary practices in

Warangal district. As many 49 additions (added as Appendix) to the *Dictionary of Ethnoveterinary Plants of India* by S.K. Jain (1999). There are studied on the ethnobotany of Gonds of Telangana region (Adilabad district: Ravishankar & Henry 1992; Karimnagar district and Warangal district: Hemadri 1990; C.S. Reddy *et al.* 2002 Warangal district) while the works on Adilabad is about ethnobotany, that of Karimnagar and Warangal concern ethnoveterinary medicine. Padmarao *et al.* (1999) published a note on folk treatment of bone fractures in Ranga Reddy district. C.S. Reddy *et al.* (2000) enlisted the folklore biomedicine of common veterinary diseases in Nalgonda district. Upadyay & Chauhan (2000) noted the ethnobotany of Gundala mandal, Khammam district. K.N. Reddy *et al.* (2001) note on uses of rare endemic medicinal plant, *Heterostemma deccanense*, at Sukkumamidi, Khammam district. The Ph.D. works of Naqvi (2001) and C.S. Reddy (2001) include chapters on ethnomedicine from Karimnagar and Warangal districts, respectively. K.N. Reddy (2002) provided the information for 550 ethnobotanical plants in his Ph.D. work on Khammam district. K.N. Reddy & Raju, (2002). Presented paper on ethnobotanical observations on Konda reddis of Mothugudem in Khammam district. Raju V.S. & Reddy (2005) published a paper on Ethnobotanic medicine for Dysentery and Diarrhoea from Khammam district. Murthy *et al.* (2007) enumerated the Plants used in ethnoveterinary practices by Koyas of Pakhal Wildlife Sanctuary, Warangal district.

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