

## **Some Lesser Known Medicinal Plants of the Kondha and Gond Tribes of Bolangir, Orissa, India**

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### **ABSTRACT**

The present paper enumerates about 25 plant species used by the Gond and Kondha tribe of Bolangir dist, Orissa, against human ailments and livestock diseases. These plants are used as folk medicines in the treatment of various diseases. These plants were collected from nearby forest. The medicines prepared from these plants are used against various common and serious diseases in human and also against animal diseases.

**Key Words:** Folk Medicine, Local name, Piscidal, Tribe, Bolangir.

### **INTRODUCTION**

India is very rich in floristic diversity as well as ancient folk literature which may be trapped for information since all system of medicine have their roots in one way or the other in folk medicine and house hold remedies. As the rural Indian tribal villagers are deprived of modern health care system, they are highly dependent on traditional therapeutic methods of medicinal plants for meeting their health care needs. The present is one of its kinds in the Bolangir dist. of Orissa which depicts the use of less known folk medicinal plants against various diseases of human being and live stock ailments.

### **STUDY AREA**

The district of Bolangir is flanked in the North West by Gandhamardhan hills, a name of Ramayana fame, the north east by the rock infested Mahanadi. It lies between 20<sup>0</sup>11' 40" – 21<sup>0</sup> 05' 08" northern latitude and 82<sup>0</sup> 41' 15" – 83<sup>0</sup> 40' 22" east longitude. The district is situated in the valley of rivers like Ang and Tel. It is in the western highlands of Orissa state with an average rain fall of about 1230 cm. and red sandy to red loamy soil nature. . In the Bolangir district less than 25% of the area is under forests which are basically scrub and dry deciduous which is reported botanically under explored (Panigrahi, 2002).

Ethno- botanical surveys were conducted in the eleven tribal villages (randomly selected) of three panchayat namely Chikalbahal, Kudasingha and Bhutiyarbahal of Bolangir Dist. of Orissa. Out of 6 million tribal about 62 notified tribes are seen in Orissa ( Mohapatra, 1993 ). Bolangir is dominated by tribal like Sangara, Kondha, Mahar, Gond etc. First hand information regarding the therapeutic properties of wild plants was recorded from these areas. Frequent visits were made to collect plants from the forest. Voucher specimen were collected and preserved as

herbarium specimen and deposited in the department of Botany, Ravenshaw University, Cuttack.

## METHODOLOGY

1. Realizing the fact that tribal rich forest pockets of Bolangir dist. were not adequately worked out from the ethno botanical point of view, field trips were conducted at regular interval in different season. Tribal uses of plants were studied in situ by establishing close intimacy with the tribal healers. Care was taken to priorities vulnerable areas for immediate attention. Folk lore claims were documented along with voucher specimens.

2. **Data recording**- The detailed information about plants, plant parts, dosages, duration, method of preparation, mode of administration, precautions to be taken etc. was recorded.

3. **Plant collection and Herbarium studies**- The supportive plant specimen of folk lore claims were collected, processed, critically studied, identified and preserved in the Dept. Of Botany, Ravenshaw University, Cuttack. Identification of plants was done using Haines (1921-25) and Saxena and Brahmam(1994-96).

4. **Criss cross checking**- An effort was made to cross check the folk lore claims. This study involved checking and re checking of a particular folk lore claim by the different dwellers of the same tribe in different forest pockets. This has cleared many doubts regarding use and identity of plant specimens.

5. **Critical identification**- Correct identification of plant was given highest priority. Identification by the local name is the non-specific and redundant. It so happens that a plant may be known by several names and one name may be applied to more than one species. If the plant can't be identified all the effort of ethno botanical knowledge becomes a futile exercise. Hence, every effort was taken to identify the plant in the field itself by extending the stay in the field.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Out of the 62 tribes notified as scheduled for the state of Orissa (Mohapatra, 1993), as many 17 are found in the district. A careful scrutiny reveal that the bulk of the population belong to only two tribes i.e. Kondha and Gond. Some of the tribal communities of this district have been rated as the primitive by all standards ad they still eke out their living as hunters and food gathers. Their knowledge of plants for curative as well as offensive purpose is un- parallel in the indigenous medical history.

Out of the 50 different species of plant specimen collected only 25 species were found to possess the ethno botanical information in one form or the other. These 25 plant species are shown in 3 tables (17 species in Table-1, 4 species in Table-2, 4 species in Table-3), under 3 headings, i.e. Less known folk medicinal plants, Veterinary medicinal plants, Piscidal plants. These plants are arranged alphabetically in their botanical names.

**TABLE-1.** List of Some Less Known Folk Medicinal Plants.

Sl.No..	Local name	Botanical name	Family	Tribe	Disease
1	Indramarisha	<i>Acalypha indica</i> (L.)	Euphorbiaceae	Gond	Bronchial asthma
2	Pokasungha	<i>Ageratum conyzoides</i> (L.)	Asteraceae	Kondha	Gastric pain
3	Semel	<i>Bombax ceiba</i> (L.)	Bombaceae	Kondha	Dysentery
4	Kumbi	<i>Caryea arborea</i> (Roxb.)	Lecythydaceae	Gond	Leucoderma
5	Kharkhari	<i>Clerodendron serratum</i> (L.)	Verbenaceae	Gond	Indigestion

6	Nirmuli	<i>Cuscuta reflexa</i> (Roxb.)	Convolvulaceae	Gond	Snake bite
7	Badachandal	<i>Desmodium gangeticum</i> (L.F.)	Fabaceae	Gond	Dysentery
8	Kendu	<i>Diospyros melanoxylon</i> (Roxb.)	Ebenaceae	Kondha	Leucorrhoea
9	Kanta padma	<i>Eurayle ferox</i> (Salisb.)	Nymphaeaceae	Gond	Arthritis
10	Ghar podia	<i>Hedyotis corymbosa</i> (L.) Lam.	Rubiaceae	Gond	Dyspesia
11	Champa	<i>Michaelia champaca</i> (L.)	Magnoliaceae	Gond	Oral contraceptive
12	Acchu	<i>Morinda citrifolia</i> (Roxb.)	Rubiaceae	Gond	Rehumatic pain
13	Anela	<i>Phyllanthes emblica</i> (L.)	Euphorbiaceae	Gond	Abdominal disorder
14	Chitaparu	<i>Plumbago zeylanica</i> (L.)	Plumbaginaceae	Gond	Piles
15	Muturi	<i>Smilax zeylanica</i> (L.)	Liliaceae	Gond	Leucorrhoea
16	Chanapata	<i>Triumfeta rhomboidea</i> Jacq.	Tiliaceae	Gond	Piles
17	Dhatki	<i>Woodfordia fruticosa</i> (L.) Kurz	Lythraceae	Kondha	Leucoderma

**TABLE-2.** List of Veterinary Medicinal Plants.

Sl.No.	Local name	Botanical name	Family	Tribe	Disease	Animal
1	Chatiana	<i>Alstonia scholaris</i> (L.) R.Br.	Apocynaceae	Gond	Cold	Goat
2	Danglia siju	<i>Euphorbia tirucalli</i> (L.)	Euphorbiaceae	Kondha	Neck swelling	Buffalo
3	Kurum	<i>Haldinia cordifolia</i> (Roxb.)	Rubiaceae	Gond	Dysentery	Calves
4	Kusum	<i>Schleichera oleosa</i> (Lour.)	Sapindaceae	Gond	Wounds	Sheep

**TABLE-3.** List of Piscidal Plants.

Sl.No.	Local name	Botanical name	Family	Tribe	Parts used
1	Chakunda	<i>Cassia alata</i>	Caesalpinaceae	Gond	Fruit
2	Badi anala	<i>Phyllanthus urinaria</i>	Euphorbiaceae	Kondha	Whole plant
3	Gab	<i>Ricinus communis</i>	Euphorbiaceae	Gond	Seed
4	Dhatki	<i>Woodfordia fruticosa</i> (L.)	Lythraceae	Gond	Flower

## CONCLUSION

The folk medicinal claims listed in Table-1 can be pursued clinically. By dint of veterinary practices most of the tribals

are getting their bread and butter. As more than 50% of people are tribal in the district, their indigenous knowledge can be utilized for well being of others.

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