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Some Medicinal Weeds Associated with Terraces of Crop Fields of Pauri, India

Upma Dobhal, Snehlata Bhandari and N.S. Bisht

Department of Botany, H.N.B.
Garhwal University Pauri Campus
Pauri(Garhwal),Uttaranchal-246001

mailto:upmadobhal@rediffmail.com

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Abstract

An ethnobotanical survey was conducted in order to identify the medicinal weeds of crop fields in Pauri (located at an elevation of 1650m in northwest Garhwal Himalayas of Uttaranchal) and to find out the possibilities of utilizing these weeds. The information about their potential uses were collected with help of reference literature of different medicine systems. The study revealed that about 18 species of weeds in crop fields, of Pauri possessed medicinal properties. The study suggested a tremendous scope of utilizing these weeds, to promote additional income to the inhabitants.

Key Words: *Garhwal, Weeds, Pauri*.

Introduction

Plants have been, and still are, a rich source of many natural products most of which have been extensively used for human welfare especially in toning up loss of vitality or general debility and also to elevate human pain and sufferings in illness or disease. From ancient time man has used several plants in attempt to cure diseases and relieve pain. Throughout the world, several thousands of plants are used for medicinal purposes. Comparatively few drug plants are cultivated. Most of the supply of drugs is obtained from the plants. The medicinal value of drug plants is due to the presence of certain chemical substances in plants. These substances produce definite physiological action on human body. With regards to medicinal plants, Himalayas are the rich source of medicinal herbs. The herbs grow on roadsides, forests and in fields along with important crops.

Pauri is located at 1650m elevation from sea level along 30^{o} 8 ‘59” longitude and 78^{o} 49’8” latitude in northwest Himalayas of Garhwal in Uttaranchal and its highest point is Jhandidhar (2500m elevation from sea level). Pauri has a wealth of medicinal herbs. There are various medicinal weeds growing on roadsides, forests and crop fields. These weeds are generally familiar to the inhabitants of the place. These weeds are rich source of medicines and drugs. The local people can make an extra income by selling these medicinal weeds.

Material and methods

The collection of various weeds was made from different crop fields of Pauri and the

herbarium was prepared for identification of weeds. The identified weeds were further studied for their medicinal value, local people and vaidyas were also interviewed to know the medicinal importance of these weeds. Studies regarding medicinal importance of plants from other parts of Garhwal Himalaya have been conducted by several workers (Bisht *et al*., 1988, Samant *et al*., 1998, 2001, Negi *et al*., 1999 and Dhar *et al*, 2002).

Result and Discussion

The study revealed that out of 52 problematic weeds, 18 weeds are of medicinal importance and used against many diseases. All these weeds are arranged by their botanical names, family name; local name and mode of usage are summarized in Table 1. These weeds grow along with the crop plants and are regarded as nuisance for crops, but are the boon to the pharmaceutical industries as these weeds yield chemicals used in formulation of various important drugs. These are also used by Vaidyas for preparing various herbal formulations.

Due to lack of awareness about medicinal importance of these weeds they are discarded by the farmers. These weeds can become an additional source of income for the farmers, if they are made aware of the medicinal importance of these crop weeds.

A weed is a plant growing in the wrong place, yet with small shift in perspective we can change the definition to a plant whose virtues have not yet discovered. Those plant we call weeds, can have many useful functions, many are edible, medicinal, attract wildlife, increase biodiversity and also provide valuable information about the condition of our land.

Table 1. List of Medicinal Weeds.

S.N	Botanical name	Local name	Family	Uses
1.	*Artemisia Capillaris*	Jhirum	Asteraceae	Decoction of leaves taken as a bitter tonic for worms and colic.
2.	*Asparagus racemosus*	Satawari	Liliaceae	The sweet and bitter herb is particularly balancing to pitt dosha. Useful for hyperactivity, stomach ulcers, dysentery, and bronchial infection. Roots are good for eyes, muscles reproductive organs, increases milk secretion and help to regain vigour and vitality. Root decoction with jaggery used as arborifacient.
3.	*Berginia ciliata*	Pasanbhed	Saxifragaceae	The rhizomatous part used as tonic and febrifuge, used in digestive and cutaneous disorders, dry leaves adulterated with tea. An important drug is obtained from rhizome for

				dissolving kidney and bladder stone.
4.	*Bluplerum hamiltoni*	Jangli jeera	Apiaceae	Roots used in stomach and liver disorders
5.	*Cardamine impatiens*	--	Brassicaceae	Juice of plant given in fever
6.	*Centella asiatica*	Brahmi	Apiaceae	It is alterative, tonic diuretic and blood purifier. It is remedy for skin diseases, chronic nervous disorders and rheumatism. The powder of leaves mixed with milk and given in mental weakness and to improve memory
7.	*Commelina bengalensi*	Kanjula	Commelinaceae	Plant juice is given in dysentery and paste applied on body swelling and ache.
8.	*Cynodon dactylon*	Doob	Poaceae	Root taken in fever and in internal injury. Decoction of root taken as diuretic, in hysteria ,epilepsy and secondary syphilis
9.	*Geranium nepalense*	Syuli	Geraniaceae	The plant infusion is used in fever and renal disorders. The root paste is applied externally on itching and eczema.
10.	*Innula cupsidata*	Jhuri	Asteraceae	Root decoction given in dyspepsia and colic, root also used in local beverages.
11.	*Nepeta ciliaris*	Nueet	Lamiaceae	Decoction of leaves and seeds taken in fever, Leaves also yield essential oil.
12.	*Rubia manjith*	Manjeeth	Rubiaceae	Root medicinal as tonic and astringent, stem used as an antidote to snakebite, flowers extract in bacillary dysentery.
13.	*Rumex hastatus*	Almoru	Polygonaceae	The leaf extract of plant are applied on wounds and cuts to check bleeding. Plant is also believed to relieve from suffering of nettle sting.
14.	*Thalictrum foliosum*	Mamiri	Berberidaceae	Roots used in ophthalmic and also in colic and fever. The rhizome used as an antiperiodic, and purgative .Paste of plant locally used in skin diseases.
15.	*Taraxacum*	Kanfulia	Asteraceae	The root extract is used in treatment of

	officinale			migraines, hepatitis and headache.
16.	*Trifolium prantense*	Mithla	Fabaceae	The dried pods are used in cough and bronchitis root paste applied externally on venereal diseases.
17.	*Utrica diocia*	Kandali	Utricaceae	The seed oil of plant is believed to be medicinal in sciatica; rheumatism and several skin ailments .Hair wash from leaf extract believed to avoid baldness. Its leaves extract is given to cure anemia.
18.	*Viola canescens*	Banfsa	Violaceae	The decoction of plant is useful in malarial fever, bronchitis and asthma. Root used as emetic, flower demulcent Leaf juice applied on wounds and cuts

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