

ETHNOBOTANICAL STUDIES OF CHANDIGARH REGION

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Aim:

The aim of this study was to locate and document the medicinal herbs growing in Chandigarh and Mohali area.

Introduction:

Chandigarh and Mohali are beautiful cities with a wide range of medicinal herbs growing under varying conditions. These medicinal herbs have been traditionally used in number of diseases. Chandigarh is a type of city, which has been provided with rich green flora. Areas like Kansal forests, Sukhna Lake, and Rock garden have rich bio diversity as far as medicinal herbs are concerned.

Methods:

In addition to Chandigarh and Mohali, number of villages around Chandigarh and Mohali were visited for locating medicinal herbs. Following is the list of the areas, which were traveled extensively for collection of medicinal herbs. Herbal vendors, Hakims and Vaidyas were consulted for regional names of the medicinal herbs and their use in traditional medicine.

Results:

Sr. No.	Botanical Name	Common Name	Place of collection	Date of collection
1.	<i>Ajuga bracteosa</i>	Kakamuti	Bhagomajra	24.8.99
2.	<i>Abutilon indicum</i>	Kanghi booti	Maujpur	12.6.99
3.	<i>Acalypha indica</i>	Kuppi	Banur	1.4.01
4.	<i>Achyranthes aspera</i>	Poothkanda	Chandigarh	Collected number of times.
5.	<i>Adhatoda vesica</i>	Basuti	Sohana	11.3.98
6.	<i>Anagallis arvensis</i>	Jonkmari	Sohana	16.6.98
7.	<i>Chenopodium ambrosoides</i>		Ph 7 Mohali.	18.2.00
8.	<i>Ranunculus sceleratus</i>	Bhandeer	Leisure valley Mohali.	18.12.99
9.	<i>Clemone viscosa.</i>	Hulhul	Khuda lahora.	17.7.00
10.	<i>Fumaria officinalis</i>	Parpat	Open fields of Dhanas.	3.1.99.
11.	<i>Saponaria vaccaria.</i>	Machar phadi.	Manak majra.	28.10.98.

12.	<i>Stellaria media</i> .		Sec-35, Chandigarh.	26.11.98.
13.	<i>Sida cordifolia</i>	Khernti.	Manak majra.	17.7.98.
14.	<i>Cassia tora</i> .	Chakmad.	Chandigarh.	28.8.98.
15.	<i>Blumea lacera</i> .	Kukurunda.	Leisure valley Mohali.	28.8.98.
16.	<i>Vernonia cineria</i> .	Sandori.	Zirakpur.	13.2.00.
17.	<i>Grangea madersaptan</i> .		Rice field Burial.	12.12.98.
18.	<i>Eclipta alba</i> .	Bhangra.	Common.	30.4.98.
19.	<i>Urnea rependa</i> .		Ph- 9 Mohali.	26.10.99.
20.	<i>Xanthium sturmarium</i> .	Chota dhatura.	Kansal forest.	16.3.00.
21.	<i>Solanum nigrum</i> .	Mako.	Manakpur.	17.3.98.
22.	<i>Solanum xanthocarpum</i> .	Kandyali.	Badali.	12.12.98.
23.	<i>Withania somnifera</i> .	Ashgandh.	Common.	Collected number of times.
24.	<i>Boerhavia diffusa</i> .	Poonarnav.	Mohali.	4.5.98.
25.	<i>Polygonatum barbatum</i> .		Mohali.	1.5.97.
26.	<i>Rumex sp.</i>	Chuk.	Badmajra.	3.1.99.
27.	<i>Tridax procumbens</i> .		Open grounds Mohali.	2.3.98.
28.	<i>Bellis agyepita</i> .		Rice fields Burial.	18.8.99.
29.	<i>Sonchus sp.</i>	Bakribooti.	Mohali.	12.2.99.
30.	<i>Emilia sonchifolia</i> .		Rock garden, Chandigarh.	4.6.97.
31.	<i>Euphorbia hirta</i> .	Vaddi shun.	Common.	19.8.98.
32.	<i>Euphorbia thymifolia</i> .	Dudhi.	Open lands.	Usually collected.
33.	<i>Chrozophora rottleri</i> .	Okra.	Kansal forest.	23.4.01.
34.	<i>Evolvulus alsinoides</i> .	Chuhakanni.	Mohali.	14.3.99.
35.	<i>Elephantopus scaber</i> .	Gobhi.	Ropar canal.	12.3.01.
36.	<i>Martynia diandra</i> .		Waste places in Mohali.	12.6.98.
37.	<i>Pluchea lanceolata</i> .	Rasna.	Open grounds in Mohali.	11.11.99.
38.	<i>Helitropium indicum</i> .	Hathisund.	Ditches in Sohana.	30.2.01.
39.	<i>Limnophila sp.</i>	Brahmi.	Stagnant water in Mohali.	2.2.99.
40.	<i>Tinospora cordifolia</i> .	Gilo.	Kansal forests.	12.4.97.
41.	<i>Cissampelos pariera</i> .	Patha.	Kansal forests.	15.5.98.
42.	<i>Dhatura alba</i> .	Dhatura.	Common in Chandigarh.	14.4.98.

These plants were located in areas around Mohali and Chandigarh. Their medicinal uses were recorded and documentation was based on account provided by herbal vendors and tribes practicing herbal medicine.

A brief account of medicinal importance is described below.

1] **Ajuga bracteosa** It is an aromatic plant growing in damp places and open fields in various regions in Mohali. Maximum presence was recorded from village Bhago majra. It grows in clusters and has red flowers born in terminal spikes. In native language it is known as cheyadan. Medicinally it is used as diaphoretic and in loss of appetite. Flowers from Sept to April.

2] **Ranunculus sclertus:** A plant growing abundantly in ponds in leisure valley of Mohali. Native people reported about dermatitis caused by touch with the herb. In Lambyia village poultice of the herb is used in skin diseases. It is found growing in Dec and flowers in April. Its root is deeply embedded in soil and after complete growth plant is decomposed and it regenerates from root next year.

3] **Clemone viscosa:** It grows along roadsides, damp places and open grounds in Chandigarh. It was collected in huge amount from Mohali bus stand road. It gives typical smell resembling mustard. Lajja ram vaid in Manak majra reported about use of the expressed juice of the drug in chronic ear discharges. Grows in rainy season and flowers in Aug to Sep.

4] **Fumaria officinalis:** It is common in fields in winters. Natives call it pitpapra. In infusion form the drug is used in fevers.

5] **Saponaria vaccaria:** Another winter annual found in cultivated fields. A dirty plant with weak structure liable to break. It was collected, dried and stored. It is rich source of saponins and when powdered root is put in water frothing occurs. It is used medicinally coughs.

6] **Stellaria media:** Another weed growing widely. Common in winters. It is a weak herb having star like flowers. In Maujpur village it is used as antacid. Externally it is used as poultice in joint pains also. According to Dajeet Singh, resident of the village if used for long time it can restore mobility.

7] **Abutilon indicum:** Among natives it is known as kanghi booti. The plant grows in open areas and forms dense forests. According to vaid Lajja ram a native of Manak majra village it is useful in diabetes.

8] **Sida cordifolia:** While roaming for herb collection in Manak majra village vaid Lajja ram told us about a drug known locally as khrenti. It is common in Chandigarh and Mohali. It is used as cooling drink in fevers and in asthma.

9] **Cassia tora:** A weed growing in rainy seasons in huge amount in Chandigarh. Natives use it in treatment of psoriasis. Later on clinical trials were carried out in Sohana eye hospital for the use of the herb in psoriasis.

10] **Blumea lacera:** It is a common herb in shady places. It is remarkable for its aroma that resembles camphor. Natives indicated use of the herb in bleeding piles.

11] **Vernonia cineria:** An herb common in waste places and shady areas. A native call it sandori and is used in curing fevers and leucoderma.

12] **Grangea madersaptan:** It is a creeping herb found in rice fields of Burail village. In native practice it is used in *ovarian disorders*. A native of the village told us about the name of the herb known in native language where it is called as machipatri.

13] **Eclipta alba:** Very common in shady places of Chandigarh and Mohali. It is commonly known as bhangra. In Sohana a paste of the herb is used in *glandular swellings*.

14] **Anagallis arvensis:** A common weed collected in Sohana roadside. Natives use the herb in treating *gout*. It is commonly known as jonkmari. It is used for killing moths.

15] **Urnea rependa:** It grows to considerable height and is commonly growing in Mohali. In Khuda lahora another variety named Urnea lobata was located. Ali Mohammed a local native told about use of the drug in *insect bites*.

16] **Xanthium sturmariium:** It is commonly known as chotta dhatura. Grows wild in local areas of Chandigarh. A fruit on cutting provides yellow color. No medicinal use was recorded.

17] **Solanum nigrum:** Very common herb found in shady places. It is easily identified by berries, which are highly poisonous, according to herbal vendors. Shiva Shakti Ayurvedic clinic in Mohali indicated its role in psoriasis and glandular swellings.

18] **Polygonum barbatum:** It is common along water streams in Mohali. It grows in clusters. The leaves are used in diarrhea. It is also a reputed remedy in snakebites in Maloya in Chandigarh.

19] **Rumex dentatus:** It is a common weed of rainy season in Chandigarh and Mohali. In clinical trials on psoriasis it was found beneficial.

20] **Tridax procumbens:** A tiny herb present in open grounds of Chandigarh. Its expressed juice is used in bleeding.

21] **Bellis sp:** A weed common in all parts of Chandigarh. Same role as that of Tridax procumbens.

22] **Ageratum conyzoides:** A troublesome weed of winter in Mohali. No medicinal use was recorded.

23] **Sonchus asper:** Weed omnipresent in all parts of Chandigarh. All parts abound in milky juice. Natives of Landra reported its use in jaundice.

24] **Cichorium intybus:** It grows wild in winter. It contains milky juice. Used as laxative in constipation.

25] **Evolvulus alsinoides:** A small herb found in open places in leisure valley in Mohali and has pretty blue flowers. Commonly known as chuha kanni. Herbal vendors indicated its use in loss of memory.

26] **Elephantopus scaber:** Very common plant in winter and is commonly known as gobhi. Leaves impart mucilage to water. Gardener of Punjab University Chandigarh helped in maintaining its identity. It is used in prolonged fevers in Maloya village.

27] **Martynia diandra:** It is found in selected places in Mohali and Chandigarh. Found in waste places. Natives of Naya graon use the nuts in insect bites.

28] **Pluchea lanceolata:** It is common in open areas of Mohali. Used in joint pains.

In addition following plants were found growing wildly in Mohali and Chandigarh areas. A list is given below.

1] Euphorbia thymifolia.[Badi dudhi].

2] Euphorbia hirta [Chotti dhudi].

3] Acalypha indica [Kuppi].

4] Phyllanthus niruri [Bhui amla]

5] Phyllanthus urinaria.

6] Terminalia belerica. [Baheda].

7] Plumerea acuminata.

8] Terminalia arjuna [Arjun].

9] Basella alba.

- 10] *Tribulus terrestris* [Gokhru]
- 11] *Solanum torvum* [Kandi].
- 12] *Solanum xanthocarpum* [Kandyali].
- 13] *Solanum surratense* [A variety of kandyali].
- 14] *Physalis minima*.
- 15] *Spheranthus indicus* [Mundi].
- 16] *Cannabis indica*. [Bhang].
- 17] *Psoralea corlyfolia*. [Bavachi].
- 18] *Sida spinosa* [Kanda khernti].
- 19] *Ligusticum diffusum* [Jangli ajwain].
- 20] *Ammannia baccifera*.
- 21] *Argemone mexicana*.

Conclusion:

This concludes the summary of the medicinal plants growing in Mohali and Chandigarh areas. Some more medicinal herbs are expected in future.