Ethnomedicinal Plants Used Against Skin Diseases in Some Villages of Kali Gandaki, Bagmati and Tadi Likhu Watersheds of Nepal

Ananda Raj Joshi¹ and Kunjani Joshi²

¹President, Environmentalist Association of Nepal and ²Harvard University Herbaria, USA
Email: ajoshi9@gmail.com; kunjanijoshi@gmail.com
Web: http://www.anandakunjani.com.np

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Abstract
The paper enumerates the traditional uses of 73 plant species belonging to 62 genera representing 47 families, which are used by the village communities of Kali Gandaki, Bagmati, and Tadi Likhu watersheds of Nepal for the treatment skin diseases. Some of useful species are under serious threat due to unsustainable activities. Hence, a proper documentation of useful plants with their present status and local traditional knowledge as well as practices is urgently needed. Effort should also be initiated to implement appropriate conservation measures for preservation and sustainable uses of these useful species.

Introduction
The rural communities of Nepal are still dependent upon wild plants for their primary healthcare and treatment of diseases. They collect the useful plants from various habitats such as forests, scrub, grassland, cultivated fields and use these plant materials as raw drugs. These communities have acquired good knowledge on the useful and harmful properties of the useful plant resources in course of their constant association with forest and agro-ecosystems. However, at present, this vast store of information is being eroded as a result of human’s unsustainable activities. The loss of traditional knowledge within
cultures undergoing rapid change is just as irreversible as the loss of species (Joshi and Joshi, 2005). Hence efforts should be made to document the various uses of plants before some of these plants are eliminated from the area, or before these inhabitants shift over to modern remedies. In this context, the rich and diverse forest ecosystems and vast tribal population with traditional knowledge systems due to cultural and environmental diversity in the country have attracted a number of workers for ethnomedicinal studies in the past (Acharya, 1996; Bhattarai, 1992; Chaudhary, 1994; Coburn, 1984; Joshi, 1988; Joshi, K. 1991; 1996; 2000; 2003a & b; 2004a & b; 2005; Joshi and Edington, 1990; Joshi and Joshi, 2000; 2005; Joshi, Shrestha and Joshi 2003; Manandhar, 2002; Phole, 1990; Sacherer, 1979; Taylor, Manandhar and Towers, 1995; Toba, 1975). However, the vast store of ethno-medicinal information of these study areas have not been fully documented.

In the present paper an attempt has been made to present indigenous knowledge and uses of the wild plants which are used by local communities for treatment of skin diseases.

The study is carried out in some villages of Kali Gandaki, Bagmat and Tadi Likhu Watersheds of Nepal. The land forms of the study areas are characterized by moderate to steep sloppy mountainous terrain. The study areas are endowed with rich and varied vegetation types due to their diverse topography and variable climatic conditions. The human pressure on these vegetative resources is very heavy except on very steep, almost vertical and inaccessible rock faces near the river. The villages are inhabited by different ethnic tribes which are rich in folklore.

**Materials and Methods**

Several field trips in and around the study areas were undertaken during the years 2004-2006 with a view to collect plant species of ethnomedicinal value and to document the indigenous practices. The information was gathered using various techniques such as open and structured interview, and discussion with local informants, such traditional healers / “jkankri”, and experienced village elders including
midwives and by direct observations on the way different plant materials were being collected and used (Joshi and Edington, 1990). The plant specimens were identified with the help of floras. Voucher specimens are deposited in the Botany Department, Patan Campus, Tribhuvan University, Kathmandu, Nepal.

**Enumeration of Plants**

During the field survey, ethnobotanical information of 73 species of medicinal plants belonging to 47 families was compiled from various habitats of the study areas. The study shows that among the skin diseases, scabies, wounds, and boils are the major diseases in the villages. During the treatment of the diseases, various forms of preparation are used. In the following enumeration, the species are arranged alphabetically. Botanical name followed by family, Nepalese name, uses of the plants and their parts as reported by the local inhabitants, and habitat along with the information collected areas.

*Abrus precatorius* L. Leguminosae
  Nep. Ratigedi, Lalgedi
  Use: Fresh leaf is crushed to paste and warmed slightly. It is applied over boils.
  Habitat: Forests, Sundarijal, Bagmati watershed, Kathmandu District.

*Acacia catechu* (L. f.) Willd. Leguminosae
  Use: Leaf paste mixed with mustard oil is applied externally in case of scabies.
  Habitat: Along the bank of Kali Gandaki River and forests, Beltari, Mirmi and Setibeni, Kali Gandaki watershed.

*Achyranthes aspera* L. Amaranthaceae
  Nep. Apamarga
  Use: Plant is crushed to paste which is applied externally to cure eczema.
  Habitat: Forests, Sundarijal, Okharni and Mulkhadka, Kathmandu District, Central Development Region; Kakani, Nuwakot District, Central Development Region.

*Achyranthes bidentata* Blume, Amaranthaceae
  Nep. Datiwan, Rato apamarga
Use: Roots are powered, mixed with crushed snails and applied in case of pimples.
Habitat: Forests and cultivated fields, Adhi khola and shady places of
Mirmi, Kali Gandaki watershed; Chaubas, Kathmandu district, Central Development Region; Thansen and Likhu, Nuwakot district, Central Development Region.

*Acorus calamus* L. Araceae
Nep. Bojho
Use: Rhizome is crushed to paste and then applied externally to cure scabies.
Habitat: Mershy places, Chaubas, Bagmati watershed, Kathmandu District, Central Development Region.

*Adiantum caudatum* L. Adiantaceae
Nep. Uneu
Use: Green leaves are pounded in water and juice is applied in case of itchies.
Habitat: Stone crevices and rocky slopes, Kakani and Talakhu of Tadi Likhu Watershed, Nuwakot district, Central Development Region.

*Adiantum incisum* Forssk, Adiantaceae
Nep. Uneu
Use: Frond is squeezed between thumb and then juice is applied externally to cure scabies.
Habitat: Forests, Matragau, Nuwakot district, Central Development Region.

*Aegle marmelos* (L.) Correa, Rutaceae
Nep. Bel.
Use: Young fruit is crushed with a piece of turmeric which is applied to cure ulcers.
Habitat: Forests, Kakani of Tadi Likhu watershed, Nuwakot district, Central Development Region.

*Ageratum conyzoides* L. Compositae
Nep. Ganaune ghaps, Gandhe.
Use: Fresh leaf paste is applied to cure infections of skin between the toes.
Habitat: Moist and waste places, Mirmi of Kali Gandaki watershed; Matragaun from Thansen of Tadi Likhu watershed, Nuwakot district, Central Development Region; Okharni and Mulakharka of Bagmati watershed, Kathmandu district, Central Development Region.

*Allium wallichii* Kunth., Amaryllidaceae
Nep. Jimbu jhar, Vanlasun
Use: Fresh juice of bulb is applied externally in case of itches and to remove maggots from wounds.
Habitat: Shady places, forests, Chaubas, Kathmandu District, Central Development Region; Syabru, Langtang watershed, Rasuwa district; Kakani, Nuwakot district.

*Amaranthus caudatus* L., Amaranthaceae
Nep. Seto late
Uses: Paste of leaves is applied locally over boils to hasten their bursting.
Habitat: waste land and edges of the cultivated fields, Kakani, Nuwakot district; Okharni and Mulkhadka, Kathmandu District, Central Development Region.

*Amaranthus spinosus* L., Amaranthaceae
Use: Leaves are crushed to paste and applied externally to cure eczema.
Habitat: Mostly occurs on open and sunny places, waste ground, Mirmi of Kali Gandaki watershed; Chaubas, Okharni, and Mulkhadka, of Bagmati watershed, Kathmandu District, Central Development Region; Kakani, Bhadratar and Mahakali of Tadi Likhu watershed, Nuwakot district, Central Development Region.

*Artemisia dubia* Wall. ex Besser, Compositae
Nep. Titepati, Nagadamani
Use: Leaf is crushed with lemon juice and paste obtained applied externally in case of itches.
Habitat: Syabru, Langtang watershed, Rasuwa district

*Artemisia indica* Willd., Compositae
Nep. Titepati, Gandhe jhar
Use: Leaf paste is applied in case of ringworm and eczema.
Habitat: Forest, scrub, cultivated field, Kakani and Thansen of Tadi Likhu Watershed, Nuwakot district,

*Artocarpus lakoocha* Wall. Moraceae
Nep. Badhar
Use: Stem is crushed to paste and applied to cure old ulcers.
Habitat: Forests, Mirmi and Dumrichur of Kali Gandaki watershed.

*Asparagus filicinus* Buch.-Ham. ex D. Don., Liliaceae
Nep. Van kurilo
Use: Root paste is applied on pimples.
Habitat: Forests, Shcrub, Chaubas of Bagmati watershed, Kathmandu district.
Azadirachta indica A. Juss., Meliaceae
   Nep: Neem
   Use: Leaf extract is applied externally on boils and blisters.
   Habitat: Forests, Kakani and Thansen of Tadi Likhu watershed, Nuwakot district.

Bauhinia purpurea L. Leguminosae
   Nep. Koiralo, Kachnar
   Use: Fresh leaves are crushed to paste and warmed slightly and the applied over Boils.
   Habitat: Forests and cultivated field, Mirmi, Kali Gandaki watershed; Kakani and Talakhu of Tadi Likhu watershed, Nuwakot district.

Berberis aristata DC, Berberidaceae
   Nep. Chutro
   Use: Bark is crushed and applied externally in case of pimples, itches and scabies.
   Habitat: Forests, open meadow, sunny trail side, Setiben, Kakani, Nuwakot district; Sundarijal, Okarni, Mulhakada and Chaubas, Kathmandu District, Central Development Region; Syabru, Rasuwa district; Mahangal, Chilaune Thansen, and Mahakali of Tadi Likhu watershed, Nuwakot district.

Berberis asiatica Roxb. ex DC., Berberidaceae
   Nep. Chutro
   Use: Bark is crushed to paste and applied to cure old ulcers.
   Habitat: Forest, open meadow, sunny trail side, Okarni, Mulhakada and Chaubas, Kathmandu District, Central Development Region; Syabru of Langtang watershed, Rasuwa district; Mahangal, Chilaune Thansen, and Mahakali of Tadi Likhu watershed, Nuwakot district.

Boerhavia diffusa L., Nyctaginaceae.
   Nep. Punarva, Sano pate
   Use: Root paste is taken orally, three times a day to cure pimples.
   Habitat: Forests, Ridi, Ramdi, and Balam of Kali Gandaki watershed.

Bombax ceiba L., Bombacaceae
   Nep. Simal, Simar
   Use: Root paste is applied externally in case of pimples
   Habitat: Forest, Thansen of Tadi Likhu watershed, Nuwakot district.

Buddleja asiatica Lour., Loganiaceae
   Nep. Bhimsenpati
Use: Young leaves are crushed with a piece of turmeric which is applied externally to cure scabies.
Habitat: open places, Thansen of Tadi Likhu watershed, Nuwakot district; Chaubas, Kathmandu District, Central Development Region.

*Buddleja paniculata* Wall., Loganaceae
Nep. Narayanpati
Use: Leaf paste is applied one time a day for the treatment of pimples and itches.
Habitat: Syabru of Langtang watershed, Rasuwa district; Chaubas, Kathmandu District, Central Development Region.

*Cannabis sativa* L., Cannabaceae
Nep. Bhang, Ganja
Use: Crushed leaves are rubbed on the affected areas to control scabies.
Habitat: Commonly occurs as weed in open places and scrub, Kakani of Tadi Likhu watershed, Nuwakot district; Burge, Ridi, Ramdi, Balam of Kali Gandaki watershed.

*Cassia tora* L., Leguminosae
Nep. Chukarmandi, Tapre.
Use: Fresh leaves are pounded into a paste and are applied in case of ringworm.
- Crushed leaf are soaked with sugar overnight in half a glass of water. It is filtered and taken in empty stomach in the morning to cure ulcers.
Habitat: Waste lands, sunny places, Mirimi of Kali Gandaki watershed; Thansen of Tadi Likhu watershed, Nuwakot district; Chaubas, Kathmandu District, Central Development Region.

*Centella asiatica* (L.) Urban., Umbelliferae
Nep. Ghortapre
Uses: Crushed leaf and root extract is applied to the affected parts to kill germs from wounds; decoction of leaves is also applied to cure leprotic wound.
Habitat: Sunny or slightly shaded damp places, Okharni, Mulkhadka and Sundarijal, Kathmandu District, Central Development Region; Kakani of Tadi Likhu watershed, Nuwakot district.

*Choerospondias axillaris* (Roxb.) B.L. Burtt. & A.H. Hill, Anacardiaceae
Nep. Lapsi, Amli
Use: Seed is fired and the ash mixed with butter is applied to cure boils
Habitat: Forest, Thansen of Tadi Likhu watershed, Nuwakot district.
Clematis montana  Buch –Ham. ex DC., Ranunculaceae
Nep. Angur jhar, Junge lahara
Use: Root extract is applied externally on pimples.
Habitat: Forest, Sybru, Langtang watershed, Rasuwa district.

Cuscuta reflexa  Roxb. Convolvulaceae
Nep. Akasbeli, Amar lata
Use: Plant is crushed to paste and applied externally to cure urticaria.
Habitat: Waste land edges of cultivated fields, Chaubas, Kathmandu District, and Central Development Region.

Cynodon dactylon  (L) Pers., Gramineae
Nep. Dubo
Use: Root paste is applied externally to cure ulcers and boils.
Habitat: sunny or slightly shaded damp places, Okharni, Mulkhadka and Sundarijal, Kathmandu District, Central Development Region; Kakani of Tadi Likhu watershed, Nuwakot district.

Cyperus rotundus  L. Cyperaceae
Nep. Mothe
Use: the root is pounded and then applied to treat boils and blisters.
Habitat: occurs as weed on the cultivated fields, Mirmi of Kali Gandaki watershed; Kakani.of Tadi Likhu watershed, Nuwakot district.

Datura metel  L. Solanaceae
Nep. Kalo dhaturo
Use: Seeds are crushed and cooked in mustard oil. It is applied to cure scabies.
Habitat: Open sunny places and wastelands, Mirmi, and Harmichur, Kali Gandaki watershed; Thansen, Tadi Likhu watershed, Nuwakot district.

Equisetum debile  Roxb. ex Vaucher, Equisetaceae
Nep. Ankhe jhar
Use: Plants are pounded and paste is then applied to cure old ulcers.
Habitat: Moist areas, Kakani, Tadi Likhu watershed, Nuwakot district.

Euphorbia hirta  L., Euphorbiaceae
Nep. Dudhe, Dhudhya
Use: Latex is applied to cure burn wounds and boils.
Habitat: Common as weeds in roadsides, Mirmi of Kali Gandaki watershed; Syabru of Langtang watershed, Rasuwa district.

Euphorbia longifolia  D. Don., Euphorbiaceae
Nep. Dhurtsi
Use: Fresh juice of root is applied to remove maggots from wounds.
Habitat: Wasteland, shady bank, Talakhu and Kakani, Tadi Likhu watershed, Nuwakot district.

_Eurya acuminata_ DC., Theaceae
Nep. Jhingani, Pate, Tegar
Use: Juice of leaves is used to cure itches and scabies.
Habitat: Forest, Syabru of Langtang Watershed, Rasuwa district.

_Ficus bengaalensis_ L., Moraceae
Nep. Bar
Use: Bark power is used externally to cure scabies.
Habitat: Forest and roadsides, Okarni of Bagmati watershed, Kathmandu district.

_Ficus hispida_ L.f., Moraceae
Nep. Kharseto
Use: Latex with mustard oil is used externally to cure cut, burn wounds and ulcers.
Habitat: Roadsides, bushes and thickets, Thansen of Tadi Likhu watershed, Nuwakot district.

_Ficus recemosa_ L. Moraceae
Nep. Gular
Use: Bark power is used externally in case of pimples, itches and scabies.
Habitat: Forests, Kakani and Thansen, Tadi Likhu watershed, Nuwakot district.

_Ficus religiosa_ L., Moraceae
Nep. Pipal.
Use: Green leaves are pounded in water and the juice applied to treat scabies,
Habitat: Roadsides, open places, villages, Mirmi of Kaligandaki Watershed.

_Glochidion velutinum_ Wight, Euphorbiaceae
Nep. Leti kath
Use: Fruit is crushed and paste is applied for curing pimples.
Habitat: Forest, Kakani of Tadi Likhu watershed, Nuwakot district.

_Grewia hirsuta_ Vahl. Tiliaceae
Nep. Phusre
Use: Root paste is applied on pimples and boils.
Habitat: Forests, Kakani and Thansen, Tadi Likhu watershed, Nuwakot district.

_Hedera nepalensis_ K. Koch., Araliaceae
Nep. Pipal pate, Dudelo
Use: Decoction of leaves is taken twice daily in case of urticaria.
Habitat: Forest and Scrub, Syabru of Langtang watershed, Rasuwa district.

*Hibiscus rosa-sinensis* L., Malvaceae  
Nep. Jappuspi, Barahmase  
Use: Leaf is crushed to paste and applied over boils.  
Habitat: Scrub, Chaubas, Okarni and Mulkhadka, Bagmati watershed,  
Kathmandu district.

*Ipomea carnea* Jacq., Convolvulaceae  
Nep. Jyanti  
Use: Leaf paste is applied to cure infections of skin between the toes.  
Habitat: Forest, Syabru, Lamtang watershed, Rasuwa district.

*Jatropha curcas* L., Euphorbiaceae  
Nep. Sajiwan.  
Use: Latex of stem and leaves with mustard oil is applied to cure scabies and eczema.  
Habitat: Common along roadsides, cultivated fields and wasteland, Mirimi and Beltari of Kaligandaki Watershed; Kakani and Thansen of Tadi Likhu watershed, Nuwakot district.

*Kalanchoe spathulata* DC., Crassulaceae  
Nep. Hathi kane  
Use: Stem and leaf are crushed together and applied over boils for hastening their bursting and healing.  
Habitat: Forest, Syabru of Langtang watershed, Rasuwa district.

*Lyonia ovalifolia* (Wall) Drude, Ericaceae  
Nep. Angeri  
Use: Fresh leaf paste is applied externally on wounds and pimples.  
Habitat: Forests, Chaubas, Kathmandu District, Central Development Region; Kakani, Thansen of Tadi Likhu watershed, Nuwakot district.

*Maesa chisia* Buch.-Ham. ex D. Don, Myrsinaceae  
Nep. Bilauni  
Use: Plant juice is applied on the affected part in case of ringworm.  
Habitat: Forests, Okharni and Mulkhadka, Kathmandu District, Central Development Region; Kakani of Tadi Likhu watershed, Nuwakot district.

*Magnifera indica* L., Anacardaceae  
Nep. Aamp.
Use: Latex is applied to cure ulcers.  
Habitat: Forests, and edges of cultivated fields of Mirmi, Manawa, and Beltari of Kali Gandaki watershed.

*Melia azedarach* L., Meliaceae  
Nep. Bakanu  
Uses: Leaves are pounded and extract is then applied in case of carbuncle; bark and fruit paste is applied to cure leucoderma and wound.  
Habitat: Edges of cultivated fields, Sundarijal, Kathmandu District, Central Development Region; Kakani, Nuwakot district; Forests, Mirmi of Kaligandaki watershed.

*Mallotus philippensis* (Lam.) Muell, Euphorbiaceae  
Nep. Sindhure, Rohini  
Use: Power from fruit is applied externally in case of itches and scabies  
Habitat: Forests and scrub, Talakhu and Thansen of Tadi Likhu watershed, Nuwakot district.

*Mimosa pudica* L., Leguminosae  
Nep. Lajjawati, Lajauni  
Use: Root paste mixed with oil is applied to cure bruises.  
Habitat: Grassy slopes near the Kali Gandaki river and Beitari, Kali Gandaki watershed; forests, Okharni and Mulkhadka, Kathmandu District, Central Development Region.

*Mimosa rubicaulis* Lam., Leguminosae  
Nep. Bokshi ghans  
Use: Leaves are pounded and the paste is applied over boils for hastening their bursting and healing.  
Habitat: Forests of Beitari, Kali Gandaki watershed.

*Ocimum basilicum* L., Labiatae  
Nep. Tulsi, Bam tulsi  
Use: Leaf paste is applied to cure ulcers. leaf paste (1 teaspoon) is also taken orally twice daily to cure ulcers.  
Habitat: Open places, waste places, edge of cultivated fields, roadsides, Bote gaun, Mirmi and Adhikhola of Kaligandaki Watershed.

*Osbeckia stellata* Buch.-Ham. ex D. Don., Melastomataceae  
Nep. Rato chulsi  
Use: Leaf paste is applied in case of cuts, wounds and scabies.  
Habitat: Open places, Likhu, Tadi Likhu watershed, Nuwakot district.
**Phyllanthus emblica** L., Euphorbiaceae
Nep. Amala
Use: Leaf power and oil mixed together and the paste is applied to cure burn wound.
Habitat: Forests, Kakani, Tadi Likhu watershed, Nuwakot district.

**Pinus roxburghii** Sarg., Pinaceae
Nep. Rani Salla
Use: Resin is applied externally to cure boils.
Habitat: Forests, Chaubas of Bagmati watershed, Kathmandu district; Syabru of Langtang watershed, Rasuwa district; Kakani and Thansen, Tadi Likhu watershed, Nuwakot district.

**Pinus wallichiana** A.B. Jacks, Pinaceae
Nep. Gobre salla
Use: resin is used to cure blisters and boils.
Habitat: Forests, Likhu, Nuwakot district.

**Plumbago zeylanica** L., Plumbaginaceae
Nep. Chitu.
Use: Whole plant is crushed with a pinch of salt and the paste is applied externally in case of ringworm.
Habitat: Sunny or partly shady places, Mirmi, Kali Gandaki watershed.

**Podophyllum hexandrum** Royle, Berberidaceae
Nep. Laghupatra, Ban bhanta
Use: Fruit powder is used externally to cure burn wound.
Habitat: Open and shady places, Chaubas of Bagmati watershed, Kathmandu District.

**Prinsepia utilis** Royal, Rosaceae
Nep..Ghatelo, Bhekali
Use: Fruits are crushed and the paste is applied on warts.
Habitat: Forest, Okharni and Mulkhadka, Kathmandu District, Central Development Region.

**Psidium guajava** L., Myrtaceae
Nep. Amba, Amrood
Use: Leaf past is applied in case of itches
Habitat: Forest, Thansen of Tadi Likhu watershed, Nuwakot district.

**Ricinus communis** L., Euphorbiaceae
Nep. Ander, Andi
Uses: seed paste is applied to treat skin cracks. Paste of leaves and flowers is applied on leprotic wound.
Habitats: Road-side, waste ground, Okharni and Mulkhadka, Kathmandu District, Central Development Region; Kakani and Thansen, Tadi Likhu watershed, Nuwakot district.

**Rumex nepalensis** Spreng., Polygonaceae  
Nep. Halhale.  
Use: Crushed root paste is applied to cure eczema.  
Habitat: Moist and shady places, waste lands, Mirmi of Kaligandaki watershed; Thansen, Tadi Likhu watershed, Nuwakot district.

**Schima wallichii** (DC) Korth., Theaceae  
Nep. Chilaune  
Use: Bark decoction/ bark paste is applied to cure wounds.  
Habitat: Forests, Kakani, Nuwakot district.

**Scurrula elata** (Edgew) Danser, Loranthaceae  
Nep. Anjero  
Use: Fresh leaf paste is applied externally on pimples and wounds.  
Habitat: Likhu, Tadi Likhu watershed, Nuwakot district.

**Shorea robusta** Gaertn., Dipterocarpaceae  
Nep. Sal, Sakhuwa  
Use: Bark paste is used externally to cure cut, wound and ulcers.  
Habitat: Forests, Thansen, Tadi Likhu watershed, Nuwakot district.

**Smilax aspera** L., Liliaceae  
Nep. Chopchini  
Use: Tender vegetative parts are crushed to the paste and applied in case of scabies.  
Habitat: Forests, Syabru, Rasuwa district.

**Tamarindus indica** L., Leguminosae  
Nep. Tate amilo  
Use: Dry bark power mixed with oil is applied on burn wound, seed paste is applied externally to cure scabies.  
Habitat: Forests, Thansen, Tadi Likhu watershed, Nuwakot district.

**Terminalia chebula** Retz., Combretaceae  
Nep. Harro  
Use: The fruit is rubbed on a stone to obtain a paste which is applied over boils and also used to cure wound and ulcer.
Habitat: Roadsides and forests, Mirmi, Syalbas and Beltari of Kaligandaki watershed.

*Tinospora sinensis* (Lour.) Merr., Menispermaceae  
Nep. Gurjo, guruch latti  
Use: Root paste mixed with mustard oil is applied to cure pimple  
Habitat: Forest, Syabru, Langtang watershed, Rasuwa district.

*Woodfordia fruticosa* (L.) Kurz., Lythraceae  
Nep. Dhayaro  
Use: Stems are pounded and mixed with curd and applied to treat scabies.  
Habitat: Dry slopes, forests, Mirmi, Beltari and Setibeni, Kaligandaki Watershed.

**Discussion**

The results of the present study revealed that wild plants and their parts are widely used for skin diseases in the study villages of the Kali Gandaki, Bagmati and Tadi Likhu watersheds. Local people have remarkable detailed knowledge of species identity and characteristics. However, when questioned about the changing status of medicinal plants, the villagers listed some important species such as *Allium wallichii*, *Asparagus filicinus*, *Centella asiatica*, *Melia azaderach*, *Terminalia chebula* and *Zanthoxylum armatum*, which have declined in abundance during the last decade due to land use change, extensive grazing of domestic animals and over-exploitation of useful species. As more than 60 percent of plant species useful for skin diseases treatment appear to be restricted to shaded forest habitats in the forests, the anthropogenic unsustainable activities such as deforestation, habitat destruction, urbanization etc. may pose a serious threat to the species. Hence, priority should be given to the following three measures:

1) Investigation related to taxonomy, chemical screening and documentation of the useful species and their habitats; 2) Initiation of conservation action works with appropriate measures involving local participation; and, 3) Implementation of awareness activities with integrated approach for sustainable development.

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