

MEDICO – BOTANICAL SURVEY OF PLANS IN KANJAMALAI HILLS OF SALEM, TAMIL NADU

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ABSTRACT: *About 35 plants are enumerated for their medicinal uses in curing diseases like anti-inflammatory, antipyretic, asthma, malaria, snake bites, diabetes, etc. Their family, binominal local name and part of the plant used with the ailment for which administered are tabulated.*

INTRODUCTION

Kanjamalai, the Shrine of Lord Siddhesvara Swamy is situated in the north western foothill, 16 kilometers away from the city of Salem and nearer to Salem Steel Plant. It lies between 11⁰30' and 12⁰0' and 78⁰0' to 78⁰30'.

A bare rocky mountain. It derives its name from Kanju (gold) that was reportedly found on it and its streams, Ponni Aru and Kantha Nadhi. The streams are known as Siddhar Aruvi as the mountain is intimately connected with the Tamil siddhars. When it was forested in the past, the mountain reputed for another kind of gold-chemical and medicinal herbs of various kinds. Even now, alchemists from various parts of the country visit the mountain.

Previously there is no specific data on the medicinal plants of this Hills. While

surveying the medicinal plants of Kanjamalai Hills (1992 – 1993) the author could collect a good number of medicinal plants. This is the first time information, reporting very valuable data on 35 species belong to 33 genera of 24 families has been gathered from herbal doctors. The collected plants specimens were deposited in the Bharathidasan University Herbarium. The plants collected were compared with the previous literature and records for their medicinal value. (Enumerated under references).

ENUMERATION

About 35 plants species belongs to 33 genera and 24 families are enumerated in the table with their family, binomial, local or Tamil name plant parts with their medicinal use.

Table showing the list of medicinal plants

| Family | Binomial with local name in bracket | Plant parts used and their medicinal use. |
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| ACANTHACEAE | <i>Andrographis echoides</i> Nees. (Gopuramthangi) <i>Andrographis alata</i> Nees. (Periyanangai) <i>Rhinacanthus naustus</i> (1.) Kurz. (nagamalli) | Plant – fever, wounds and cuts. Leaves – Snake bites, constipation, skin diseases, lung disease, snake repellent, anti-inflammatory and antipyretic. Leaves – Wounds and cuts, skin diseases. |
| AMARANTHACEAE | <i>Aerva lanata</i> (L.) Juss <i>Achyranthes aspera</i> L. (Nayuruvi) | Root – headache. Plant extract – diuretic anthelmintic. Root – antidote for snake bite. Plant extract – piles, skin disease. Leaves-abortifacient, jaundice, rickets. Fruits – piles. Seeds – hydrophobia, asthma. |
| ARISTOLOCHIACEAE | <i>Aristolochia indica</i> L. (Israramuli) | Root-leprosy, Skin diseases, snake bite. |
| MALVACEAE | <i>Abutilon indicum</i> (L.) Sweet. (Truthi) | Root – leprosy, cough. Leaves – bronchitis, gonorrhoea, rheumatism, ulcer, diarrhea. |
| SOLANACEAE | <i>Solanum surattense</i> Burm (Kandankathari) <i>Datura metel</i> L. (Oomathai) | Fruit – paralysis, tuberculosis, breathing troubles. Leaves – cough, asthma, mumps. |
| LABIATAE | <i>Leucas aspera</i> (Willd.) Link (Thumbai) | Leaves – headache, leprosy |
| COMPOSITAE | <i>Tridax procumbens</i> L. (Vettukayapundu) <i>Vernonia cinerea</i> (L.) Less (Mukuttipundu) | Leaves – wounds and cuts, haemorrhages, diarrhea. Plant juice – malaria, piles. Leaf juice – amoebiasis, |

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| | | eczema, ring work skin troubles. |
| MELIACEAE | <i>Azadirachta indica</i> A. Juss. (Vempu) | Leaves – leprosy, skin diseases, insecticide. Seed oil – medicated soap. |
| VITACEAE | <i>Cissus quadrangularis</i> L. (Perandai) | Stem – scurvy, asthma, epilepsy, menstrual disorders, bone fractures. |
| NYCTANGINACEAE | <i>Boerhavia diffusa</i> L. (Mookirattai) | Root – jaundice, snake bite, asthma, laxative. Leaf decoction – abdomen pain, spleen enlargement. |
| MORACEAE | <i>Ficus benghalensis</i> L. (Aal) | Bark – snake bite. Latex – toothache, genital diseases. Flower, fruits – tonic, dysentery, diabetes, antisyphilitic |
| CONVOLVULACEAE | <i>Evolvulus alsinoides</i> (L) L. (Vishnukarandai) | Whole plant – asthma, leprosy, anthelmintic |
| ERYTHROXYLACEAE | <i>Erthroxylum monogynum</i> Roxb. (sempulichan) | Wood and bark – fever, dyspepsia. |
| MENISPERMACEAE | <i>Cocculus hirsutus</i> (L) Diels. (Kattukkodi) | Root – chronic rheumatism, gonorrhoea. Leaves – Venereal diseases, eczema. |
| APOCYNACEAE | <i>Catharanthus roseus</i> (L.) G. Don | Roots- luckemia, high-blood pressure, cancer, diabetes. |
| EUPHORBIACEAE | <i>Euphorbia hirta</i> L. (Ammanpacharichi) <i>Phyllanthus fraternus</i> webst. (Kilanelli) | Plant decoction – cuts, asthma, kidney disorders, bowel complaints. Plant – leprosy, jaundice. |
| PAPILIONACEAE | <i>Abrus preactorius</i> L. | Root – cough, colic complaints Fruits – wounds, leucocerma, fever, asthma, skin diseases. |

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| | <p><i>Tephrosia purpurea</i> pers. (Kolinji)</p> <p><i>Eclipta prostrate</i> (L.) L.</p> | <p>Seeds – nervous disorders, labour pain, emetic purgative, crude abortions.</p> <p>Root – colic, diarrhea, liver diseases, spleen enlargement.</p> <p>Leaves – jaundice, fever. Roots – emetic purgative and ulcers.</p> |
| CEASALPINIACEAE | <p><i>Cassia auriculata</i> L. (Aavarai)</p> <p><i>Cassia occidentalis</i> L. (Thagarai)</p> <p><i>Tamarindus indica</i> L. (Puli)</p> | <p>Root – skin diseases. Leaf – anthelmintic. Seeds – ophthalmia.</p> <p>Root – ringworm, for saliva secretion.</p> <p>Fruit – sore throat, ulcer, wounds, dysentery.</p> |
| ASCLEPIADACEAE | <p><i>Calotropis gigantea</i> (L.) R.Br.</p> <p><i>Hemidesmus indicus</i> (L.) R.Br. (Nannari)</p> | <p>Root paste – scorpion stings. Root bark – dysentery, elephantiasis. Leaves – eye troubles.</p> <p>Root, leaves – fever, skin diseases, venereal diseases.</p> |
| CUSCUTACEAE | <p><i>Cuscuta reflexa</i> Roxb. (Akasavalli)</p> | <p>Whole plant – fever, diarrhoea.</p> |
| VERBENACEAE | <p><i>Vitex negundo</i> L. (Nochi)</p> | <p>Leaf paste – tuberculosis. Leaves – headache, vermifuge.</p> |
| CLEOMACEAE | <p><i>Cleome gynandra</i> L.</p> | <p>Root – fever. Leaves – boils.</p> |
| LILIACEAE | <p><i>Gloriosa superba</i> L. (Kalappaikilangu)</p> <p><i>Asparagus racemosus</i> Willd. (Thannervittan Kilangu)</p> | <p>Tubers – abortions, skin diseases.</p> <p>Root paste – dysentery, rheumatism Tubers – epilepsy, leprosy, body pain.</p> |

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