

EDIBLE FRUIT YIELDING PLANTS OF SHEVAROY HILLS IN TAMIL NADU

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ABSTRACT: The paper deals with the common edible fruit yielding plants, During the course of medicinal plant survey of shevaroy hills of Eastern ghats. Salem district, Tamil Nadu. Thirty species belonging to 23 genera and 21 families yield edible fruits. They are listed in alphabetical order followed by family, common name and Tamil names.

INTRODUCTION

Fruits are important additional food source for the people of shevaroy hills. The forest wealth of edible fruits are exploited by these people to quench their hunger during adverse environmental conditions. The shevaroy hills is blessed by nature with its diversified and rich flora. The native tribal people are called malaiyali meaning "Mountain Man".

A Malaiyali simply means a hill person an appellation distinguishing them from the people of plains. In physical appearance they scarcely differ from the people of plains. They speak Tamil dialect of their own. They are supposed to be descendants of kanchipuram vellalar. They appear to have migrated from kanchipuram (a town near madras, Tamilnadu) between seventh and eleventh centuries. The tribal are mostly working as casual laborers in coffee estates. They are cultivating food grains, fruits and vegetable.

The shevaroy hill range is situated to the north-east of salem at a distance of 26 km and from a major point of the eastern ghats. The hill range lies between 11o45 and

78o20 E longitude (Dorairaj 1963: Matthew, 1981: sivaraj and Krishnamurthy, 1989) which covers an area of about 8640 Sq km of which shevaroy hills occupy an area of 40 sq km., and population strength is 36,863 (1991, Census). Yercaud is a popular hill station on this range and connected by road from Salem town.

The shevaroy hills are rich in archaic charnockites with a few felsic granite gneiss (Krishnan, 1956). The laterite of this region is rich in hydrated alumina and the estimated bauxite reserves of this region are over 15 million tones, the bauxite deposits vary in thickness from 5 to 20 m all the rocks of the region have a general N 30o E strike and dip steeply towards south east along the slopes of shevaroy hills the soil is red sandy loam. The valleys and shoals, although extremely few and not well formed are however, rich in humus (subramanyam et al., 1960). The river vaniyar with its tributaries and branches traverse almost the entire plateau of the hill range.

CLIMATE AND RAINFALL

Excepting the elevated regions, the whole of the shevaroy hills can be classified as semi-arid. Yercaud and other elevated regions (altitude

of more than 1000m above mean sea level) experience a humid climate. Hence the hill peaks and foot hills experience a contrasting climate, According to the latitude, the area falls in the tropical climate zone south –west and North0east monsoons contribute rain to shevaroys and the average rainfall is 83 mm (foothills) and 135 mm (hill peaks) Most of the precipitation is between the months of may and November.

The humidity recorded at elevated regions ranges between 45.2 percent and 94 percent. The shevaroys enjoy equable temperature. The hottest months are March April and May December and January are considered the coldest. The temperature varies from a minimum of 10.4oC (in December and January) to a maximum of 31.3oC (in April and May).

VEGETATION

Vegetation varies considerably with altitude and therefore shown altitudinal zonation. The base of the hill (400-700m) is composed of entirely scrub vegetation, deciduous forests occur between 800 m and 1200m Semievergreen forests occur between 1300 m and 1600m where the vegetation is fairly undisturbed, especially at sanyasi hills.

METHODOLOGY

The data for the present study forms the collection of fruit yielding plants during our field trips. The essential information comprise of common names, Tamil vernacular names and botanical names Table
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Table 1
EDIBLE FRUIT – YIELDING PLANTS OF SHEVAROY HILLS.

Sl. No.	SPECIES	FAMILY	COMMON NAME	TAMIL VERNACULAR NAME
1.	Achras sapota L.	Sapotaceae	Sapota	Sapotaapalam
2.	Aegle marmelos correa	Rutaceae	Bael	Vilvam
3.	Ananas comosus L.	Bromeliaceae	Pine apple	Anasipalam
4.	Annona squamosa L.	Annonaceae	Custard apple	Sitapalam
5.	Artocarpus heterohylla Lam	Moraceae	Bread fruit (Jack fruit)	Palapalam
6.	Citrus aurantia L.	Rutaceae	Sour orange	Aarajupalam
7.	Citrus limon (L) Burm. F.	Rutaceae	Lemon	Yelumichaipalam
8.	Citrus maxima (Burn) Merrill.	Rutaceae	Forbidden fruit	Pampuilmaspalam
9.	Citrus media L.	Rutaceae	Lemon	Narthankai
10.	Citrus paradise Macf.	Rutaceae	Sweet oranges	Aaranupalam
11.	Citrus reticulate Blanck	Rutaceae	Mandar in orange	Kamalapalam
12.	Carica papaya L.	Caricaceae	Papaya	Papalipalam
13.	Carissa carandas L.	Apocyanaceae	Natalplum	Kelapalm
14.	Emblica officinalis L.	Euphorbiaceae	Myrobalam	Nelli
15.	Eriobotrya japonica Lindl	Rosaceae	Loquat	Ilahotta

Sl. No.	SPECIES	FAMILY	COMMON NAME	TAMIL VERNACULAR NAME
16.	Feronia limonia (Linn) Swingle	Futaceae	Elephant apple	Vilange
17	Mangifera indica L.	Anacardiaceous	Mang	Mampalam
18.	Morus alba L.	Moraceae	Mulberry	Kambalichedipalam
19.	Musa paradise Macf.	Musaceae	Banana	Vazhai palam
20	Passiflora edulis sims.	Passifloraceae	Passion fruit	Tappasupalam
21	Persea Americana Mill	Lauraceae	Butter fruit	Annaikoyapalam
22.	Prunus persica stoches	Rosaceae	Peach	--
23.	Psidium guajava L	Myrtaceae	Guave	Koyya
24.	Punica gramatim L.	Ponicaceae	Pomegranate	Madulai
25.	Pyrus communis L.	Rosaceae	Pears	Baerikkai
26.	Rubus ellipticus L.	Rosaceae	Redraspberry	Velipalam
27.	Syzygium cumini (L) Skeels	Mytaceae	Mountain apple	Navalpalam
28	Ziziphus Jujuba Mill	Rhamnaceae	Ber	Ellandaipalam
29.	Ziziphus mauritiana Lam	Rhamnaceae	Wild Ber	Kattu ellandaipalam
30	Ziziphus rugosa Lam.	Rhamnaceae	Wild Ber	Kattu ellandaipalam