

**A NOTE ON THE COMMERCIALY EXPLOITED MEDICINAL
PLNTS OF THE VELLIANGIRI HILLS,
COIMBATORE DISTRICT, TAMILNADU.**

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ABSTRACT: Velliangiri hills is inhabited by many indigenous people mostly depending on ethnobotanical resources. Totally 41 species are found to be commercially exploited for medicines by these peoples. The pressure of commercial exploitation is seriously endangering many species.

INTRODUCTION

Velliangiri hills which lie between 76° – 40' and 77° – 10' E longitude and 10° - 55' and 11° -10' N latitude form a portion of the western boundary of the Coimbatore District. According to the divisions made by the forest department Velliangiri hills become the Bolampatty reserve forest No. 2. This hill slope to the east and also to the south. It has a segmented society of indigenous peoples like Irulas, Paniyans etc. They depend on forest resources for livelihood and have a marginal interest in the ethnobotanical resources. Now a days medicinal plants are commercially important due to the assured market in surrounding regions and definite demand of pharmaceutical companies. Unemployment and low labour wage problems lead the local tribal people for the heavy exploitation of

medicinal plants in organized sectors. These medicinal plant resources form the main socio-economic potentials and give some income to the tribals. During festive seasons pilgrims purchase these medicinal plants and hence exploitation is heavy form February to April.

We have identified 41 such heavily exploited plants and also the parts used (Table-1) It is evident that 29 out of 41 species are completely exploited for roots, rhizomes or whole plants. It is needless to emphasize that such exploitation exerts tremendous pressure on these species. To protect this natural resources, suitable strategies and action plans may be developed, thus it will serve the cause of medicinal biodiversity conservation.

Table : 1

Commercially exploited medicinal plants of the Velliangiri Hills.

S. No	Name of the plant	Vernacular Name	Part used	Level of exploitation			Season of Collection
				Heavy	Medium	Low	
1	<i>Aloe vera L.</i>	Sothukatthalai	Whole plant	*			Throughout the year
2	<i>Arisaema tortuosum Schott</i>	Kattuchenai	Tuber	*			April – June
3	<i>A. leschinaulti Bl.</i>	Kattuchenai	Tuber		*		April – June
4	<i>Asparagus racemosus Willd</i>	Thanneervittankizhangu	Tuber	*			Throughout the year
5	<i>Begonia malabarica Lam,</i>	Senthandu, Rathachoori	Whole plant	*			Throughout the year
6	<i>Bridelia retusa Spr,</i>	Mulvengai	Bark		*		Throughout the year
7	<i>Bulbophyllum fusco-purpureum W,</i>	Thiroupathi manjal	Whole plant	*			Throughout the year
8	<i>Caralumma attenuate W.</i>	Kattukathalai	Whole plant		*		Throughout the year
9	<i>Cinnamomum iners Reinw,</i>	Karuvappattai	Leaf		*		Throughout the year
10	<i>Coelogyne nervosa A. Richw,</i>	Seenthaimanjal	Whole plant	*			Throughout the year
11	<i>Commelina salicifolia Roxb,</i>	Vellaragu	Whole plant		*		Throughout the year
12	<i>Dicranopteris sps</i>	Yanaivanangi	Whole plant	*			Throughout the year
13	<i>Gymnema sylvestre R.Br,</i>	Sirukurinjan	Whole plant			*	Throughout the year
14	<i>Habenaria platyphylla spreng.</i>	Pullamanakku	Whole plant	*			Throughout the year
15	<i>Helicteres isora L.,</i>	Valampuri & Idampuri	Fruit	*			January – May
16	<i>Hemidesmus indicus R.Br.</i>	Nannari	Root	*			Throughout the year
17	<i>Litsea deccanensis Gamble,</i>	Kattukathiri	Fruit	*			March – June
18	<i>Lycopodium clavatum</i>	Sivanjadai	Whole plant	*			Throughout the year
19	<i>Lycopodium sps</i>	Sakthijadai	Whole plant			*	Throughout the year
20	<i>Malloxius rheedi Fisch,</i>	Kattuvengayam	Whole plant		*		Throughout the year
21	<i>Myristica dactyloides Gartner,</i>	Kattujathikkai	Fruit	*			March – June
22	<i>Neprolepis sps</i>	Kalthamarai	Tuber	*			Throughout the year
23	<i>Narigi crenulata Roxb,</i>	Mahavilvam	Whole plant	*			Throughout the year
24	<i>Oberonia brunoniana W,</i>	Senkatthalai	Whole plant	*			Throughout the year
25	<i>O.Zeylanica Hook. F.,</i>	Senkatthalai	Whole plant	*			Throughout the year
26	<i>Peperamia tetraphylla L.</i>	Kalporumi	Whole plant		*		Throughout the year
27	<i>Piper hymenophyllum miq.</i>	Vaal thippili	Stem			*	Throughout the year
28	<i>P.longum Miq</i>	Thippili	Seed, stem		*		Jan - June

29	<i>Plumbago zeylancia L.</i>	Kodivaeli	Root bark			*	Throughout the year
30	<i>Pterocarpus marsupium Roaxb.</i>	Vengai	Latex	*			Throughout the year
31	<i>Rauwolfia serpentine Benth.</i>	Sarpakandha	Root	*			Throughout the year
32	<i>R. tetraphylla Hook.F.,</i>	Pambukalachedi	Root			*	Throughout the year
33	<i>Scilla hyacinthine Roth,</i>	Narivengayam	Tuber				April – July
34	<i>Selaginella rubustris</i>	Karudapachai	Whole plant				Throughout the year
35	<i>Semecarpus anacardium L.F,</i>	Senkottai	Fruit	*			Feb- Aug
36	<i>Solena ampleicardium L.F.</i>	Kattuappakkovai	Whole plant	*			Throughout the year
37	<i>Strychnos nux – vomica L.</i>	Ettikkai	Whole plant			*	Aug – Dec.
38	<i>Terminalia arjuna W&A,</i>	Vellamaruthu	Bark	*			Throughout the year
39	<i>T. Bellerica Roxb,</i>	Dhanikkai	Fruit	*	*		March – June
40	<i>T.chebula Retz,</i>	Kadukkai	Fruit	*			March – June
41	<i>Toddalia asiatica pers,</i>	Milakarani	Root	*			Throughout the year
42	<i>Vertriver zizaniosdes Nast</i>	Vetiver	Root	*			Throughout the year

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