

## Traditional herbal remedies in Buldhana District (Maharashtra, India)

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**Abstract:** The paper documents traditional herbal remedies from Buldhana district of Maharashtra (India). The plant parts most commonly used are bark, leaves, flowers, fruits and seeds, apart from plant products like latex and gum. The medicaments include recipes like decoction, infusion, paste, ash, extract, juice, besides gum and latex. There are mainly used afresh. Occasionally, these are supplemented by domestic edible substances of plant-origin. The reliance on herbal medicines for healthcare is associated with traditional belief of effectiveness as well as poor economic status. Role of homestead gardens in native phytotherapy is being focused for the first time from this region. The first-hand information adduced is desired to divulge new lead molecules or will add new sources of herbal medicine.

**Keywords:** Traditional herbs, Homestead gardens.

### Introduction

Buldhana is one of the northern districts in the state of Maharashtra (India). The use of traditional medicine is widely accepted by the rural and tribal people of the district. Ethnobotany of this district is studied intensively by the present investigators. The district is fairly rich from the biodiversity point of view. Despite these studies, the author felt that the area especially the homestead gardens still await proper documentation from viewpoint of medicinal plant resources. The home gardens in the district has been thoroughly scanned to obtain traditional medicine, the result of which is presented in this paper.

### Methodology

The various home gardens maintained by the rural and tribal people of the district are visited in different seasons. Enquiries pertaining particularly to traditional medicinal utilities were made. Elder men and women, head of families

tribal and rural were interviewed. Actual observations were also made during this investigation. Information regarding parts used, local plant names, diseases, treated, recipes, doses and methods of administration etc. was carefully documented. Scientific determination was completed using local floras (cf. Patil, 2003; Kshirsagar and Patil, 2008; Naik, 1998) and state floras. The useful species are enumerated in the following alphabetically. The plant name is followed by family name (in parenthesis) and local plant name. Medicinal use is separately given.

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### Enumeration

1	<i>Aegle marmelos</i> (L.) Corr. (Rutaceae) Bel : Pulp of ripe fruits, about 15-20 gm, is consumed daily once to control dysentery till cure.
2	<i>Aloe vera</i> L. (Liliaceae) Korphad : Leaf latex warmed slightly and few drops of it are added into ears to avoid pus formation during ear-ache.

3	<i>Annona squamosa</i> L. (Annonaceae) Sitafal : Seed powder is homogenized with jaggery. A spoonful of it is consumed before meal for seven days to kill intestinal worms.
4	<i>Barleria prionitis</i> L. (Acanthaceae) Kate-Koranti : Few leaves are chewed and then gargled with whey to cure mouth ulcer. It is practiced 2-3 times daily till cure.
5	<i>Carica papaya</i> L. (Caricaceae) Papai : Infusion of few seeds, about spoonful, is administered to a kid suffering from intestinal worms.
6	<i>Citrus aurantifolia</i> (Christm.) Sw. (Rutaceae) Limbu : Leaf extract is applied in case of itching.
7	<i>Emblica officinalis</i> Gaertn. (Euphorbiaceae) Awala : Dried leaves are roasted, powdered and made into paste using coconut oil. It is applied on burns, blisters and injuries daily till cure.
8	<i>Hibiscus rosa-sinensis</i> L. (Malvaceae) Jaswand : A spoonful of leaf juice is drunk twice daily to treat dysentery till cure.
9	<i>Jasminum officinale</i> L. (Oleaceae) Chameli : Fresh young leaves are chewed, saliva however is spat after chewing. This cures mouth ulcer.
10	<i>Kalanchoe pinnata</i> (Lamk.) Pers. (Crassulaceae) Panphuti : Half cup of leaf juice is administered for few days to regularizes menstrual cycle.
11	<i>Lawsonia inermis</i> L. (Lythraceae) Mendhi : Leaf paste is applied daily on foot-hill to heal cracks for 5-6 days.
12	<i>Mangifera indica</i> L. (Anacardiaceae) Amba : Gum is diluted in water. It is applied daily to cure deformations on foot sole.
13	<i>Momordica charantia</i> L. (Cucurbitaceae) Karle : A cup of leaf juice is administered daily for few days as intestinal wormicide.
14	<i>Moringa oleifera</i> Lamk. (Moringaceae) Shewga : Bark powder and leaves are made into paste. It is applied on joints for a week to treat rheumatic pains.
15	<i>Murraya koenigii</i> (L.) Spreng. (Rutaceae) Kadhi-patta : Decoction of inner bark, about a cup, is drunk daily once to treat fever till cure.
16	<i>Nerium indicum</i> Mill. (Apocynaceae) Kanher : Leaf ash is homogenized with coconut oil. It is applied on burns daily till cure.
17	<i>Ocimum basilicum</i> L. (Lamiaceae) Sabja : Few drops of leaf extract are added into ears to check ear-ache.

18	<i>Ocimum tenuiflorum</i> L. (Lamiaceae) Tulsi : (i) Few drops of leaf extract are poured into ears to check ear-ache. (ii) Leaf powder and clove powder are made into paste. It is filled in tooth cavities to reduce tooth-ache.
19	<i>Plumeria alba</i> L. (Apocynaceae) Chapha : Flower paste prepared in coconut oil is applied daily for treating scabies till cure.
20	<i>Psidium guajava</i> L. (Myrtaceae) Jam, Peru : Leaf decoction is gargled to check tooth-ache.
21	<i>Punica granatum</i> L. (Punicaceae) Dalimb : Leaf decoction is gargled against mouth ulcer.
22	<i>Sapindus emarginatus</i> Vahl (Sapindaceae) Ritha : Fruit paste is applied after scorpion sting to reduce pains.
23	<i>Sesbania grandiflora</i> (L.) Poir (Fabaceae) Hadga : A cup of flower extract is administered to a patient suffering from hepatitis. It is followed daily once till cure.
24	<i>Syzygium cumini</i> (L.) Skeels (Myrtaceae) Jambhul : A spoonful of seed powder consumed daily once with milk to treat diabetes till cure.
25	<i>Targetes patula</i> L. (Asteraceae) Zendu : Few receptacles of inflorescence are eaten to lessen nausea.
26	<i>Terminalia catappa</i> L. (Combretaceae) Deshi Badam : Leaves are warmed and wrapped around joints to check joint-ache.

### Discussion

The homestead gardens in this district have remained nearly unexplored up till now from utility point of view. The native people maintain some species in and around their dwellings for various purposes. These plants are herbs, shrubs, climbers or trees which are usually exploited mostly for food, ornamental and religious purposes. Obviously, these provide shade and cool environment. Although so, their intimate association with these species, trial and errors, experimentation of their precedent generations yielded fairly rich medicinal experiences. Their traditional knowledge is being used by the native people. This investigation provides sufficient ground to believe that traditional medicinal practices using garden species is alive and well functioning in this district. These species are preferred since they are free of cost or cost

effective, easily available and are without side effects. Their employment in medicine does not affect the local flora and thereby serve the purpose of conserving local biodiversity. This paper reports only those species which are commonly employed in the study area. As many as 26 species belonging to 22 angiospermic families are in use for combating common ailments e.g. dysentery, burns, foot-hill cracks, tooth-ache, mouth ulcer, nausea, intestinal worms, ear-ache, blisters, injuries, irregular menstrual cycle, itching, scabies, hepatitis, joint-ache/rheumatic pains, fever, scorpion-sting and diabetes etc. Common forms of recipes are extract, juice, decoction, infusion, paste, ash, gum, latex etc. derived from fresh bark, leaves, flowers, inflorescences, fruits and seeds. The recipes are sometimes supplemented by coconut oil and jaggery.

### **Conclusion**

A glimpse of plant species enumerated reveals that these are not planted for medicinal purpose. They are useful to the local communities for edible fruits, vegetables, religious, ornamental purposes, and even for shade. It is the native people's experimentation and experiences. It is, therefore, suggested that the current medicinal practices be integrated and scientifically followed by antibacterial screening, phytochemical, toxicological and pharmaceutical investigations by a multidisciplinary team approach for appropriate clinical trials.

### **References**

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