Pak. J. Bot., 39(7): 2291-2299, 2007.

INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE OF SELECTED MEDICINAL WILD PLANTS OF DISTRICT ATTOCK, PUNJAB, PAKISTAN

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Abstract

The present study includes indigenous knowledge of selected medicinal wild plants of District Attock. This study is mainly focused on traditional uses of plants of the area used by local people. For each species the information is provided regarding scientific names, local name, family name, plant part used and medicinal importance. A total of 49 species belonging to 29 families are reported from the study area. During the course of study 10 Hakims (Specialists) and about 80 local people were interviewed.

Introduction

Indigenous knowledge is as old as human civilization but the term ethnobotany was first coined by an American botanist, John Harshburger (1896), to study the plants used by the primitive and aboriginal people. Since then it has been defined as the traditional knowledge of indigenous community, about surrounding plant diversity and as the study of how the people of particular and region make use of indigenous plant.

The traditional practitioners in many parts of the world define life as the union of body, sense, mind and soul and describe positive health as the blending of physical, mental, social, moral and spiritual welfare. This gives new dimensions to the system of health care. Our Holy Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) used certain herbs for the cure of various diseases (Baquar, 1989).

Herbs are remarkable plants, with a rich and fascinating history that dates back thousands of years. The first official records of medicinal plants were set down on Papyrus (Anna, 1993). Now the herbal medicine is a recognized system of medicine throughout the world. For centuries, plants with medicinal properties have been utilized successfully in the treatment of ailments of varying degrees of severity. The Greek physician, Hippocrates, was quoted as saying in 377 BC," let medicine be your food and food your medicine" (Bartram, 1995).

With the comparatively recent introduction of orthodox medicine, faith in herbal medicine has sadly declined. The convenience, which the pharmaceutical industry offered, along with the fast acting, powerful, man made drugs available, provided an attractive and revered alternative. Unfortunately, the realization that many of these new wonder drugs were actually derived and synthesized from medicinal plants seems to have been ignored. Today many third world countries are very dependent on plant based remedies, while herbs have provided western medicine with the active ingredients of some of its most important drugs. A simple illustration of synthetic drug versus plant extract is from the common foxglove (*Digitalis purpurea*) are derived the heart drugs digoxin and digitoxin. Similarly from opium poppy (*Papaver somniferum*) the valuable painkillers, morphine and codeine are extracted (Chevallier, 1998).

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Pakistan has a varied climate and is quite rich in medicinal herbs, though scattered over a large area. These medicinal plants have been used by Hakims and in folklore medicine where 80% of the population lives in villages and rural areas and are mostly dependent in Unani System of medicine (Ikram & Hussain, 1978).

There is a dire need to carryout phytochemical and pharmacological work of such useful plants and scientifically prove and substantiate the observations of Hakims and rural people. Keeping in view the significance of indigenous knowledge of folk medicine and ethnobotanical studies to discover new and potential sources of drug plants, it is considered necessary to collect information about the uses of medicinal plants by people of District Attock because the purpose of present work is to record this information for wider circulation. This information will give significant contribution, towards the understanding for our plant wealth of the country.

Materials and Methods

Before starting the research work on indigenous use of important medicinal species of the area a general information about the area was collected from the local people. About 80 local informants including both males and females were interviewed. Information on demographic (age, gender) and ethnobotanical information (medicinal plants and their uses) was gathered from each site by using a semi-structured and close ended questionnaire containing questions such as (1) Do you know the medicinal plants in your local area; if yes, name them; (2) What is the use of these medicinal plants? How do you use them (as a spice or a medicine) and for which ailment? (3) Which part of these plants is used for medicinal purposes? (4) When do you collect these plants? and (5) Do you collect them for your personal use or for selling them to pharmaceutical companies?

Plant collection and data recording for traditional / indigenous uses of these plants in various localities was primarily done by carrying the collected specimens to local people. The informants were asked question in Urdu (national language of Pakistan) regarding traditional uses of plants their vernacular names, distribution, morphology and economical importance. Collected plant material has been dried, pressed, preserved (poisoned), accessioned , identified and finally deposited in the herbarium of the department of plant sciences, Quaid-i-Azam University Islamabad, Pakistan. Identification of the field collected medicinal plants was done by confirming them by the respondents and comparing them with those in the various Herbaria of Pakistan. Necessary literature has also been collected from different libraries e.g., Pakistan Museum of Natural History, Islamabad (PMNH), World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF), National Herbarium, National Agricultural Research Centre, (NARC) Islamabad.

Results

The present study includes indigenous knowledge of selected medicinal wild plants of district Attock. A total of 49 species belonging to 29 families are reported from the study area. This study is mainly focused on traditional uses of plants of the area used by the local people. During the study 10 Hakims and about 80 local people were interviewed.

Discussion

In the context of the present day scenario of methods of ailment cures, it is very important to find some alternate medicine system for the treatment of ever changing nature of diseases, especially for those which do not need prolong treatment and may be cured by use of herbal products (Baquar, 1989). In this connection indigenous knowledge play a reasonably good role in the treatment of not only everyday problems but also for the complex diseases to some extent. Ethnobotany is perhaps the most appropriate approach to study natural resources of indigenous people and the system of medicine specific to them although there is no provision anywhere for the protection of knowledge rights of native people (Martin, 1995) and the knowledge gained from some specific areas proved to be of great importance to the world but of little or no benefit to the local people, but still the fact remains as it is, that the indigenous systems of cure do posses a lot of applications and acceptance in masses. In our study area i.e., district Attock, poverty is a major issue, people are usually dependant on agricultural activities which are restricted to some patches or on rain waters. Due to un-availability of better health facilities and higher prices of allopathic medicines people are very much dependent on the locals' herbal medicines (Qureshi et al., 2006). The diversity of medicinally important plants is important in the area as the area of Attock is semiarid but fertile in patches where streams and surface drains through the mountains, run across the fields and waste lands giving appropriate conditions for growth of wild and cultivated plants. These wet patches are having xerophytic indigenous flora (Anon., 1989).

Edible wild food plants often helps in preventing starvation during drought, while economically important species provide a buffer against unemployment during cyclical economic depressions. Despite the immense importance of these plant resources, their value is rarely taken into account specially; in land use planning, but in fact they are destroyed and lost forever from the area. Same is the case in our area and many parts of the country that the medicinally and economically important species are harvested unsustainably and hence destroying the biodiversity and loss of species from the area (Anthony, 2001).

There are many medicinal plants which are growing naturally in different seasons of year in this area. The benefits of about 49 wild medicinal plants were studied and described by local people and habitants. All these species are the main source of medicine and other requirements of the local communities, because of the shortage of trained manpower and resources, health authorities in Pakistan are not able to provide services to greater part of the rural population. Therefore, the wide spread use of folk herbal remedies appears to be not only a case of preference but also a situation without other native choices. Such a system of medical treatment on which the majority of the population has been relying upon for generations with considerable success, should not be overlooked for further medical investigation, specially on those plants which have not been looked at for medical research, although the same have been in use by local inhabitants over hundreds of years. So the indigenous knowledge, accordingly, continue to provide the building blocks for development in rural communities because the medicinal plants are the precious economic resources of the area and wild are used in the crude form locally or collected and transported into the drug markets inside the area and country.

S.No.	S.No. Plant name	Family	Accession No.	Voucher No.	Collection area	Collectors name	Collection date
Ι.	Trianthema portulacastrum L.	Aizoaceae	37452	112	Attock Distt	M. Shah and Ayaz	24-05-1976
¢i	Achyranthes aspera L.	Amaranthaceaee	114464	58	Wah Garden Attock	Zawar, Wali and Saeed	14-06-1979
З.	Amaranthus viridis L.	Amaranthaceaee	75751	456	Wah Garden Attock	Nisar and Afzal	08-01-1978
4	Ageratum houstonianum Mill.	Asteraceae	91942	71	Attock	M. Arif and Nisar	06-07-1975
5.	Calendula arvensis L.	Asteraceae	100941	2252	Attock	Shahzad Iqbal and Nisar	17-03-1978
9.	Cichorium intybus L.	Asteraceae	35927	18	Attock	Ghulam Farooq and Ayaz	28-06-1976
7.	He lianthus annus L.	Asteraceae	16173	231	Hazro Attock	Manzoor and Javed	12-05-1978
8.	Silybum marianum Gaertn	Asteraceae	151288	31	Fateh Jang Attock	Iqbal Dar and MAnzoor	10-04-1975
9.	Xanthium strumarium Patrin.	Asteraceae	75244	458	Wah Garden Attock	Nisar and Afzal	08-01-1978
10.	Anethum graveolens L.	Apiaceae	35082	44	Hazro Attock	Arif and Lal Shah	20-04-1976
11.	Trachyspermum ammi L. Sprague	Apiaceae	17162	426	Dhok Pathan Attock	Javed and Manzoor	11-03-1979
12.	Calortopis procera (Willd.) R. Br.	Asclepiadiaceae	13552	912	Hattian near Attock	Manzoor Hussain and Javed Akhter	13-04-1975
13.	Capsella buasa-pastoris (L.) Medic.	Brassicaceae	11235	81	Attock	M.A. Siddiqui	06-04-1979
14.	Sisymbrium irio L.	Brassicaceae	17883	63	Hazro Attock	Iqbal Dar and Anjum	12-04-1977
15.	Canabis sativa L.	Canabinnaceae	73883	85	Attock	Manzoor and Nisar	08-08-1977
16.	Capparis spinosa L.	Capparidaceae	36411	291	Hattian Attock	M. Shah and Nisar	07-05-1981
17.	Silene conoidea L.	Caryophyllaceae	76571	55	Burhan Attock	M. Shah and Dilawar	10-03-1977
18.	Stellaria media (L.) Cyr.	Caryophyllaceae	17201	07	Attock	Iqbal Dar, M. Arif and Lal Hussain	21-03-1976
19.	Chenopodiun album L.	Chenopodiacese	85440	354	Attock	Shahzad Iqbal and Nisar	31-03-1978
20.	Convolvulus arvensis L.	Convolvulaceae	89768	233	Dhok Patthan Attock	Shahzad Iqbal and Maqsood	30-03-1978
21.	Cuscuta reflexa Roxb.	Cuscutaceae	45769	56	Dhok Gedan near Fateh Jang (Attock)	Shahzad, Shaukat, Mir Ajab abd Saboor	12-02-1977
22.	Cyperus rotundus L.	Cyperaceae	72636	50	Burhan Attock	Ayaz Abbassi and Nisar Ahmad	25-03-1978
23.	Euphorbia helioscopia L.	Euphorbiaceae	46243	232	Maryala Attock	Shahzad and Dilawar	10-03-1977
24.	Euphorbia hirta L.	Euphorbiaceae	68710	161	Attock	Nisar and Ayaz	20-09-1977
25.	Ricinus communis L.	Euphorbiaceae	46242	210	Hattian to Kamra	Shahzad and Dilawar	09-03-1977
26.	Fumaria indica	Fumariaceae	4250	385	Attock	Manzoor Hussain and Javed	25-03-1975
	(Hausskn.) Pugsley					ANHUCI	

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No.	S.No. Plant name	Family	Accession No.	Voucher No.	Collection area	Collectors name	Collection date
7.	27. Mentha piperata L.	Lamiaceae	05370	1218	Hattian Attock	Javed Akhter and Manzoor Hussain	14-05-1975
28.	Mentha longifolia (L.) Huds.	Lamiaceae	05382	92	Attock	M. Arif and Nisar	07-08-1975
29.	Salvia moorcroftiana Wall.ex Benth.	Lamiaceae	51983	921	Hazro Attock	Muqarrab Shah and Ayaz Abbassi	26-04-1977
30.	Acacia milotica (L.) Del.	Mimosaceae	80230	2098	Hazro to Hattian (Attock)	Nisar and Javed Akhter	12-03-1978
31.	Acacia modesta Wall.	Mimosaceae	49124	401	Lawrenspur Attock	M. Shah Na Ayaz	08-04-1977
32.	Ficus palmata Forssk.	Moraceae	83299	1732	Kas grave yard Sarwala (Attcok)	Shahzad Iqbal and Nisar Abbassi	07-03-1978
Ċ.	Mirabilis jalapa L.	Nyctaginaceae	25311	86	Hattian	Iqbal Dar and Javed Akhter	02-05-1976
34.	Oxalis corniculata L.	Oxalidaceae	30712	712	Hazro to Attock	Nisar and Lal Hussain	11-03-1981
35.	Medicago sativa L.	Papilionaceae	06897	430	Campbelpur	Iqbal Dar, Anjum and Amin	23-04-1975
36.	Cynodon dactylon (L.) Pers.	Poaceae	100358	2654	Pindigheb Attock	Shahzad, Iqbal and Nisar	23-03-1978
37.	Avena sativa L.	Poaceae	44437	680	Attock	Mir Ajab and Manzoor	09-03-1977
38.	Polygonum plebijum R.Br.	Polygonaceae	6006	904	Burhan Attock	M. Arif and Mehmood	23-04-1975
39.	Rumex dentatus L.	Polygonaceae	82396	255	Dhok Pathan Attock	Shahzad Iqbal and Maqsood	30-03-1978
40.	Zizyphus numularia (Burm.f.) Wight & Arn.	Rhamnaceae	104076	411	Hattian Attock	M. Shah and Nisar	25-04-1978
41.	Galium aparine L.	Rubiaceae	10757	548	Attock	Anjum Amin, M. Sha and Manzoor	26-06-1975
42.	Verbascum thapsus L.	Scrophulariaceae	18362	735	Havelian Attock	M.N.Chaudhry, M.A Siddiqui, Shahzad, Ashraf and Manzoor	17-04-1976
43.	Solanum surratense Burm.f.	Solanaceae	95050	668	Attock	Shahzad Iqbal and Maqsood	10-04-1978
44.	Solanum miniatum Bernh. ex Willd.	Solanaceae	17376	512	Hazro Attock	M. Shah and Nisar	06-05-1977
45.	Datura innoxia Miller	Solanaceae	11742	431	Attock	Iqbal Dar, Anjum and Amin	23-04-1975
46.	Withania somnifera (L.) Dunal	Solanaceae	11740	420	Attock	Iqbal Dar and Anjum	23-04-1975
	Urtica pilulifera L.	Urticaceae	30193	60	Hattian to Attock	Iqbal Dar and Collectors	15-03-1976
œ.	Peganum harmala L.	Zygophyllaceae	13074	80	Attock	M.N. Chaudhry, Iqbal Dar and Anjum Amin	22-03-1975
49.	Tribulus terestris L.	Zygophyllaceae	81507	788	Attock	Shahzad Iqbal and Maqsood	12-04-1978

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Family	Species/Voucher specimen No	Vernacular name	Plant part used	Uses
Aizoaceae	Trianthema portulacastrum L.	Itsit	Whole plant	Diuretic, laxative, asthma, jaundice, abdominal diseases, cures for pain in bladder.
Amaranthaceaee	Achyranthes aspera L.	Puthkanda	Roots, leaves & stems	Decoction in water used for asthma, cough,
				stomach pain, piles and skin eruptions. Root infusion is used to remove kidney stone.
Amaranthaceaee	Amaranthus viridis L.	Chulai	Leaves	Good emollient properties; as purgative for
Asteraceae	Aceratum houstonianum Mill		Leaves & inflorescence inice	digestive problems. Wounds antidote for snake hite
Asteraceae	Calendula arvensis L.	Zergul	Leaves and flowers	Strengthen far eye site, heart diseases, healing the
		1		skin. It is also used as tonic and is anthelminic
Asteraceae	Cichorium intybus L.	Neeli booti, Kasni	Leaves, roots and flowers	Used as tonic for liver, in fever, diarrhoea and
				enlargement of spleen and also in asthma
Asteraceae	Helianthus amus L.	Suraj Booti	Seed oil	Expectorant, Direct, cold and cough, bronchitis,
			-	malaria fever
Asteraceae	Silybum martanum Gaertn.	Kandiari	Kipe seed	All liver problems such as cirrhosis (Hardening of the liver) faundine Hamatitis Coloniets
				commoder of
Asteraceae	Xanthium strumarium Patrin	Chhota Dhatura	Roots, fruits and seeds	Sedative, and diuretic used in stomach diseases.
			×	demulscent and cooling effect given in small
				pox and dysentery. Also used in malaria
Apiaceae	Anethum graveolens L.	Ajwan, Soai	Fruit and seed	Gastritis, to increase the lactation of the cattle,
Apiaceae	Trachyspermum ammi L.		Seeds	Used in digestive problems. diarrhoea. dysentery.
				gastritis, bones fever, abdomen pain, whooping
				cough and asthma.
Asclepiadiaceae	Calortopis procera (Willd.) R. Br.	Ak	Unripe flowers rarely whole plant	Gastritis, malaria, cholera and asthma. Latex is
Reacencedo	Cansella huasa-nastoris (1-)	Ramhaica	Seeds	Dronev diarrhea healing wounds it is rarely
DI UND ICUCCUC	Medic.	nemolina		used as vegetable.
Brassicaceae	Sisymbrium irio L.	Jangli srron/khun kalan Leaves and seeds	Leaves and seeds	Seeds are exporant, stimulant,& restorative
				properties, leaves externally used as poultice.

		Table 1	Table 1. (Cont [*] d.).	
Family	Species/Voucher specimen No	Vernacular name	Plant part used	Uses
Canabimaceae	Canabis sativa L.	Bhang	Whole plant and seeds	The whole plant is used as tonic, stomachic & anodyne. Domestic birds are given its seeds as feed mixed with other grains for keeping them healthy. Roasted seeds mixed with other dry fruits are used as special serving to guests in winter season. The seeds are used raw as medicine for sour throat
Capparidaceae Caryophyllaceae	Capparis spinosa L. Silene conoidea L.	Kareer Silene gulahi booti	Fruits for prickle & branches Whole plant	Chest pain, general pain and rheumatism Plant is emollient; it is used in bath or as fumiant.
Caryophyllaceae	Stellaria media (L.) Cyr.	Cheridana, khash khashi booti	Green tops and fresh seeds	Healing acts, sorres, inflammation.
Chenopodiaceae	Chenopodiun album L.	Bathu	Whole plant	Cooling effect, liver diseases, jaundice. It is laxative and also used as fodder.
Convolvulaceae Cuscutaceae	Convolvulus arvensis L. Cuscuta reflexa Roxb.	Laili, poli. hiranpadi Akash bail	Leaves especially whole plant Whole plant	Piles, skin disorder.Roots are purgative. Diarrhea & dysentery. It is blood purifier, pugative, diuretic, used in jaundice, paralysis & vomiting.
Cyperaceae Euphorbiaceae	Cyperus rotundus L. Euphorbia helioscopia L.	Deella Chattri dodak	Whole plant specially roots Whole plant	It is used to cure chronic sores, abdomen pain. Cathartic, anthelmintic, purgative. The juice is applied to eruptions.
Euphorbiaceae Euphorbiaceae	Euphorbia hirta L. Ricinus communis L.	Aam dodak Arind	Whole plant Oil of seeds & leaves	Expectorant used in bronchitis, cough. Intestinal selling, injuries, make intestine soft, constination, laundice, rheumatic swelling.
Fumariaceae	<i>Fumaria indica</i> (Hausskn.) Pugsley	Shatera / Papra	Whole plant	Blood purifyier, piles, allergy, diuretic & anthelmintic.
Lamiaceae	Mentha piperata L.	Sawa podina	Whole plant, especially leaves	Indigestion, headache, antispasmodic, vomiting, abdomen pain.
Lamiaceae	Mentha longifolia (L.) Huds.	Jangli podina	Whole plant	Dried leaves are used as stomachache agent also used as carminative, in diarrhoea and dysentery. It is antirheumatic and is also used with boiled egg in tonsillitis
Lamiaceae	<i>Salvia moorcroftiana</i> Wall. ex Benth.	Gulkand	Leaves and roots	For fore head to releave high fever, skin diseases, injuries. Leaf poultice is used for healing wounds
Mimosaceae	Acacia milotica (L.) Del.	Babul, kikar	Leaves, stem bark, fruit gum	Constipation, diarrhoea, dysentery, cough, throat diseases. Gums are used as a tonic & also for diabetes.

Family	Species/Voucher specimen No	Vernacular name	ne Plant part used	Uses
Mimosaceae	Acacia modesta Wall.	Phulahi	Gum	Gum is used as a tonic, for curing dysentery and
:				weakness. Branches are as miswak to clean the teeth.
Moraceae	Ficus palmata Forssk.	Janglı Anjeer	Fruits & latiex	Expectorant, kidney stones, laxative and demulcent.
Nyciagmaceae	Mirabius Jatapa L.	Gui-e-addasi	whole plant	External application for skin, diseases, piles and miled nurgative
Oxalidaceae	Oxalis corniculata 1.	Khatti mithi hooti	Leaves	Used to cure diarrhea. dysentery
Papilionaceae	Medicago sativa L.	Alfalfa	Whole plant	Urinary problems, tonic for general weakness of body.
Poaceae	Cynodon dactylon (L.) Pers.	Khabbal ghaass	Whole plant	Paste applied externally on eyelids for reducing
				the swelling and redness of eye to relieve the eye pain. skin injuries or cutting
Poaceae	Avena sativa L.	Javi	Seeds	Nervous exhaustation & tention, skin allergy.
Polygonaceae	Polygonum plebijum R.Br.	Derank	Whole plant	Dried plant used against pneumonia & cholera.
				Root is used in bowels complaints.
Polygonaceae	Rumex dentatus L.	Jangli palak	Roots	Skin diseases, cough, anemia, diarrhea
Rhannaceae	Zizyphus nummularia (Burm.f.)	Jangli beri	Leaves & fruit	Tonic for urinary bladder, hair cleaner insomnia.
	Wight & Arn.			Leaves are used for scables & boils.
Kublaceae	Gainum aparme L.	Chamuti booti	whole plant	1 onic, blood purifying, diurenc, skin eruption,
				urinary problems
Scrophulariaceae	Verbascum thapsus L.	Gidder tambakoo	Leaves & flower	Expectorants, bronchitis, antispasmodicmodic,
				tuberculoses, repiratory ailments. Leaves smoke
			:	to ease chest complaints, asthma.
Solanaceae	Solanum surratense Burm.f.	Mohakari	Fruits and leaves	Cough, bronchitis, respiratory trouble, abdomen
				pain and blood purification.
Solanaceae	Solanum miniatum Bernh. ex	Kach mach, Makoh	Whole plant	Liver diseases, diabetes, rheumatism, diarrhoea,
	Willd.			constipation, piles, skin diseases, heart diseases, expectorant, sedative.
Solanaceae	Datura innoxia Miller	Aam datuara	Whole plant, seeds	Leaves are applied to sores, fruits are sedative and
			A	intoxicating, seeds are narcotic and antiseptic.
Solanaceae	Withania somnifera (L.) Dunal	Asganth / axaon,	Roots & fruits	Old cough, asthma, gastritis, antispasmodic,
Lutionood	I lution with from I	Diaku haati / Izharish Taawas and waate	Lanuar and mode	abdomen pam Stemethoning & tonis for whole hole onthus
Orneace	Ornea pumijera L.	broti voou / Mausu	LCAVES AILU 10015	expectorant. kidnev & minary problems
Zygophyllaceae	Peganum harmala L.	Harmal	Whole plant	Plants have insecticidal properties brain tonic,
				blood purifier. With olive oil for ear diseases, as
Zvoonhvllaceae	Tribulus terestris L.	Bhakra	Whole plant. fruits	a remedy for tapeworm Cooling effect. diuretic. demulcent. astringent

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(Received for publication 14 February 2006)