

Traditional Phytotherapy of Ghaghret, District Mehsana (North Gujarat)

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SUMMARY

The present study deals with 30 species for phytotherapy purpose which are being traditionally at Ghaghret at Mehsana district in North Gujarat. Literature indicate that phytotherapeutic uses of these species mentioned in present paper have not been reported earlier. In the present work, data were collected from the Tribals and Vaidyas residing in the remote area. The botanical name, local name, habitat, mode of administration are given in present paper.

Key words : Traditional Phytotherapy, tribals, Ghaghret

Traditional knowledge is defined as cumulative body of knowledge and belief handed down through generation by cultural transmission about the relationship of living beings with one another and with their environment Berks, (1999). However, due to changing perception of the user communities, commercialization and socio-economic transformation all over the world, there has been a general observation that the traditional knowledge on resource use has degraded severely Gadgil and Birkers, (1993). Recognizing these facts, of late, efforts have been made by ecologists and sociologists to document such knowledge that has accumulated through a long series of observations transmitted from generation to generation and thus contain important information relevant to sustainable use of resources.

The present paper study, therefore, aim to highlight the traditional phytotherapy of Ghaghret and reports native use of 30 Angiospermic plants.

STUDY AREA

The Ghaghret is located in the eastern part of Visnagar taluka, Mehsana district of Gujarat state. It lies between 71°34' E and 23°42' N, occupying an area of about 21 km². It is situated at the riverbank of Khari. The Ghaghret is situated at 5 km away from Visnagar. The capital of Gujarat state is at 75 km distance from Ghaghret. Starting from north and going in clockwise direction, Kuvasana, Gothava, Rathodipura and Kada villages. There are about 8 places such as Beed, Padatar, Gorwalu, Rathodia, Mithakuva, Gaushala, Bhushima & Dhukaru spread all over the Ghaghret with human population of over the 2900 (at census 2001). The ghaghret forms one of the main tribal and rural belt of Mehsana district, as the total tribal population of the area is 300 (as 2001 census). Which is 10.3% of the total tribal population. Bhil, Tod, Khasa, Mahir, Adivashi, Thakor and Maldhari etc. major tribes of the total population. Some of these historically, the nomadic communities, but of late have least become permanent settlers of the area.

The earlier floristic work was conducted by various experts like Bharathi (1969), Shah (1964), Yogi (1972) in North Gujarat. But no detailed work has been done on the focus of Phytotherapeutic value.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

A total of 14 regular field trips were undertaken during July 2003 – January 2004. Each exploration tour was of 13-15 days duration. Data presented here are based on personal observations and interviews with informant like medicinemen, local healers, village headmen and old, experienced, knowledgeable men and women.

The collected data is believed to be valid when the same use was mentioned by at least three persons belonging to different tribes from far and wide. To ascertain the less known or new uses, the main literature sources referred to were; Agarkar (1953), Jain (1991), Thaker (1910), besides many books and research papers published in different journals.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The villagers have a great knowledge of the medicinal plants used in various ailments. Botanically vegetation condition is dry deciduous type. The site of collection are shown in map. The different places such as Beed, Padatar, Bhushima and Dhukaru exhibited maximum plant diversity.

The botanical and local name, family, locality, plant parts used and mode of administration are given in the following table.

The present study deals with 30 medicinal plants which are being used traditionally in Ghaghret and are not well known to the outside world for 17 medicinal uses claimed for viz cough, tonic, toothache, skin disease, antibiotic, antibacterial, heart attack and ear complaints and etc.

Thus traditional knowledge is wealth for the mankind and has great value in the context of today's trade and patents scenario. Like other botanical aspects, it also offers scope for further research, which may prove to be the base for potential drugs to provide health for all in the new year.