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Traditional uses of some wild edible fruits from Palghar district

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ABSTRACT

The present study deals with the identification, documentation and ethno-botanical exploration with respect to food value of wild edible fruits from Palghar district. Total 5o wild edible fruits were surveyed. Edible wild fruits play significant role in the rural economy of the Palghar district providing nutrient food supplement and also by generating side income to the poor people. Fruits collected by local people from natural forests are often seen for sell in the market. Many valuable fruits which are familiar to certain areas or to certain communities are unknown to others. The cattle grazers, wood cutter, poachers and forest trekkers generally use these fruits in the forests. The villagers, as they have constant association and dependence on the forests and its products for their daily needs, have developed much knowledge on wild edible fruits. Often pickles, jams, curry and alcohol are prepared from these fruits by local people.

Keywords: Ethnobotany, Wild edible plants, Palghar district

INTRODUCTION

Edible wild fruits play significant role in the rural economy of the Palghar district providing nutrient food supplement and also by generating side income to the poor people [1]. Fruits collected by local people from natural forests are often seen for sell in the market. Many valuable fruits which are familiar to certain areas or to certain communities are unknown to others. The cattle grazers, wood cutter, poachers and forest trekkers generally use these fruits in the forests [2]. The villagers, as they have constant association and dependence on the forests and its products for their daily needs, have developed much knowledge on wild edible fruits. Often pickles, jams, curry and alcohol are prepared from these fruits by local people. Despite maximum potentialities and scope of the use of wild edible fruits, many of the people which know thoroughly only a few species. On the other hand over population, increasing deforestation and over exploitation have created the danger of extinction of some of the valuable species of wild edible fruits [3-6].

Study area

Palghar district is situated in the northern part of Maharashtra State in western India. On the 1st August 2014, the Maharashtra State government announced the formation of the 36th district of Maharashtra when a new Palghar district was carved out of the old Thane district. It comprised 8 taluks, namely, Palghar, Vada, Vikramgad, Jawhar, Mokhada, Dahanu, Talasari, and Vasai-Virar. The district is bounded by Thane and Nashik districts on the east and northeast simultaneously and by Valsad district of Gujarat state and Union Territory of Dadra and Nagar Haveli on the north. The Arabian Sea forms the western boundary while Vasai-Virar is part of Mumbai Metropolitan Region. Main tribal communities present in Palghar district are Warli, Malhar Koli, Koli, Katkari, Kokana etc. [7-9].

RESEARCH METHODS

The ethnobotanical survey was carried out in rural areas of Palghar district from June 2015 to May 2016. The data occurred through discussions and interviews with experienced persons and traditional healers. The data on wild edible plants were collected using the preparation of questionnaire in the local language and group discussions.

Voucher specimens were collected during a walk with informants. The collected plants were identified by standard floras.

Table 1: List of some wild edible plants of Palghar district and their ethnobotanical information.

Sr. no.	Botanical name	Edible value	Medicinal value
1	*Alangium salvifolium* (L.f.)wang, Engl. Family- Alangiaceae Vernacular name- Ankol	Pulp of fruit is edible.	Root bark is rubbed in rice water it is given with little honey in diarrhoea. The fruit powder is applied externally on skin burning.
2	*Ampelocissus latifolia* (Roxb.) Planch. Family- Vitaceae Vernacular name- Dokela, Katulam.	Fruits are edible.	-
3	*Anacardium occidentalae* L. Family- Anacardaceae Vernacular name- Kaju	Nuts are edible.	The oil obtained from pericarp is effective preventive against white ants.
4	*Antidesma acidum* Retz. Family- Euphorbiaceae Vernacular name- Ambuti	Tender leaves and fruits are edible.	-
5	*Antidesma ghaesembilla* Gaertn. Family- Euphorbiaceae Vernacular name- Ambuti	Fruits are edible.	-
6	*Antidesma montanum* Bl. Family- Euphorbiaceae Vernacular name- Ambuti	Fruits are edible.	-
7	*Artocarpus lakoocha* Roxb. Family- Moraceae Vernacular name- Otamb, Lowi	Fruits are edible.	Milk juice of the fruit mixed with vinegar and applied to glandular swelling. The leaves are considered as antidote to snake poison.
8	*Bauhinia purpurea* L. Family- Caesalpiniaceae Vernacular name- Kanchan.	Flower buds and fruits are edible.	Decoction of dried flower buds useful in diarrhoea.
9	*Bauhinia recemosa* Lam. Family- Caesalpiniaceae Vernacular name- Apata.	Flower buds and fruits are edible.	Seed paste is applied externally on wounds inflicted by reptiles.
10	*Bridelia scadens* (Roxb.) Willd. Family- Euphorbiaceae Vernacular name- Asan	Fruits are edible.	Stem bark paste applied externally for skin diseases.
11	*Buchanania cochinchinensis* (Lour.) Almeida Family- Anacardaceae Vernacular name- Char	Fruits are edible.	The fruit is sweet and laxative. The seed is palatable and nutritious when roasted.
12	*Canavalia gladiata (Jacq) Dc.* Family- Papilionaceae Vernacular name- Abai, Ghevada	Fruits are used in chutneys and pickles.	The root is ground in cow urine and administered orally to cure liver diseases.
13	*Canthium coromandelium* (N.Burm.)Alst. Family- Rubiaceae Vernacular name- Karbit	Fruits are edible.	Paste of leaves prepared in water and applied externally on forehead in fevers.
14	*Canthium dicoccum* (Gaertn.) Teys & Binn. Var. *umbellatum* (Wt.) Sant. & Merch. Family- Rubiaceae Vernacular name-Tupa	Ripe fruits are edible.	-
15	*Capparis deciduas* (Forssk.)Edgew. Family- Capparaceae Vernacular name- Nepti karil.	Fruits are edible.	Fruit powder is externally applied to malignant ulcers.
16	*Capparis spinosa* L. Family- Capparaceae Vernacular name- Kalavari.	Fruits are edible.	The juice of fresh fruit is dropped in to the ear to kill worms.
17	*Capparis zeylanica* L. Family- Capparaceae Vernacular name- Wagati	Fruit used as vegetable.	The juice of fresh fruit is dropped into the ear to kill worms.
18	*Carallia brachiata* (Lour) Merr. Family- Rhizophoraceae Vernacular name- Phanashi, Ranphanashi.	Fruits are edible.	-
19	*Careya arborea* Roxb. Family- Lecythidaceae Vernacular name- Kumbha	Seeds are edible. Fruit pickle is edible.	Fruit decoction is used to promote digestion.
20	*Carissa inermis* Vahl. Family- Apocynaceae Vernacular name- Rede- Karvand	Fruits are edible.	-
21	*Carissa carandus* L.Mant. Family- Apocynaceae Vernacular name- Karvand	Fruits are edible.	The juice of ripe fruits, mixed with sugar and cardamoms is a cooling drink in biliousness.

22	*Carissa congesta* Wight. Family- Apocynaceae Vernacular name- Karvand	Fruits edible, unripe fruit used in pickles.	-
23	*Caryota urens* L. Family- Arecaceae. Vernacular name- Surmad, Berlimad.	Fruits are edible.	Nut paste was applied on forehead in hemicrania.
24	*Catunaregum spinosa* (Thunb.) Tirveng. Family- Rubiaceae Vernacular name- Gela, Gelphal	Mature fruits are roosted and eaten.	Fruit is act as a astringent and also used in diarrhoea and dysentery.
25	*Celastrus paniculatus* Willd. Family- Celastraceae Vernacular name- Mal-Kangoni.	Fruits are edible.	Decoction of seeds is given in rheumatism. Mixing of one part of seed oil and 8 parts of butter applied externally on forehead in headache.
26	*Coccinia grandis* (L.) Voigt Family- Cucurbitaceae Vernacular name- Tondali	Fruit used as vegetable.	Young fruit eaten as a raw for mouth diseases.
27	*Cordia dichotoma* Foret.f. Family- Boraginaceae Vernacular name- Bhokar	Fruit is edible, made into pickles.	Fruit mucilage was given orally in cough.
28	*Dillenia pentagyna* Roxb. Family- Dilleniaceae Vernacular name- Chota Karmal	Fruits are edible.	The juice of the fruit mixed with sugar and used as a cooling in fevers and as a cough mixture.
29	*Elaeagnus conferta* Roxb. Family- Elaeagnaceae Vernacular name- Ambgul, Nurgi	Fruits are edible.	Fruit used as astringent.
30	*Embelia basaal* (R.& S.) DC. Family- Myrsinaceae Vernacular name- Ambat, Ambati.	Fruits are edible.	Seed is used as a vermifuge.
31	*Emblica officinalis Gaertn. Fruct.* Family- Euphorbiaceae Vernacular name- Awala	Fruits are edible.	Fresh fruit is used as vermifuge. Fruit powder and red sandal powder is given with honey to stop nausea and vomiting.
32	*Entada rheedei* Spreng. Family- Fabaceae Vernacular name- Garmbi	Young seeds used as vegetable.	Seed paste applied externally on glandular swellings.
33	*Erythrina variegata* L. Family- Papilionaceae Vernacular name- Pangara.	Fruits are edible.	Mixture of leaf juice and castor oil given orally to cure dysentery.
34	*Ficus recemosa* L. Family- Moraceae Vernacular name- Umber	Fruits are edible.	Seed powder mix with honey and gives orally in diabetes and also reduces sugar in the urine.
35	*Flacourtia indica* (Burm.f.) Merr. Family- Flacourtiaceae Vernacular name- Tambat	Fruit pulp is edible.	Juice of fruit is useful in fever.
36	*Flacourtia Montana* Grah. Family- Flacourtiaceae Vernacular name- Talbor.	Berries edible.	-
37	*Garcinia indica* (Thou.) Chois. Family- Clusiaceae Vernacular name- Ratamba.	Fruits and leaves are edible.	One part seed oil mix with four part of milk is good remedy against dysentery and mucus diarrhoea.
38	*Garcinia spicata* (Wight & Arn.) Hook.f. Family- Clusiaceae Vernacular name- Ont	Fruits are edible.	-
39	*Garcinia xanthochymus* Hook.f. Family- Clusiaceae Vernacular name- Vilayati-amba.	Fruits are edible.	-
40	*Garuga pinnata* Roxb. Family- Burseraceae Vernacular name- Kakad, Kudak	Fruits edible used in pickles.	The fruit pickle is eaten as stomachic.
41	*Glycosmis mauritiana* (Lam.) Tanaka. Family- Rutaceae Vernacular name- Kirmira.	Ripe fruit edible.	-
42	*Glycosmis pentaphylla* (Retz.) Dc. Family- Rutaceae Vernacular name- Kirmira	Ripe fruit edible.	Fruit powder is useful to cure fever.
43	*Gmelina arborea* Roxb. Family- Verbenaceae Vernacular name- Shivan	Fruits edible.	Decoction of fruit is used as a cooling and refrigerant.

44	*Grewia asiatica* L. Family- Tiliaceae Vernacular name- Phalsa	Fruits acidic and edible.	Fruit sharbat is having astringent and cooling effect.
45	*Grewia nervosa* (Lour) Panigr. Family- Tiliaceae Vernacular name- Asoli	Fruits are edible.	-
46	*Grewia tiliifolia* Vahl, Symb. Family- Tiliaceae Vernacular name- Dhaman	Fruits are edible.	Bark is rubbed down with water and this mucilage strained from it, is given half glass doses as a remedy for dysentery.
47	*Holoptelea integrifolia* (Roxb.) Planch. Family- Ulmaceae Vernacular name- Vavli	Seeds are edible.	Stem bark juice is applied externally for rheumatic swelling.
48	*Momordica dioeca* Roxb. ex Willd. Family- Cucurbitaceae Vernacular name- Kartoli	Fruit used as vegetables.	Tubers used in treatment of piles. Male tuber powder applied in the form of paste to ulcers caused by snake bite.
49	*Morinda pubescens* J.E.Smith. Family- Rubiaceae Vernacular name- Bartondi.	Green fruits are edible.	-
50	*Mucuna pruriens* (L.) DC. Family- Fabaceae Vernacular name- Khaj Kuhiri.	Young seed used as vegetable.	Seed powder gives orally with powder in leucorrhoea.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Wild edible fruits may be used both as food and medicine so it is often difficult to draw a line between these two groups. In the past decade, the food-medicine has come to the fore front of ethno botanical and nutritional research. Many studies have stressed the ethno botanical and food aspects of wild fruits. Some wild edible fruits also have medicinal properties. Such dual roles of wild edible fruits are common in the rural areas.

The study in the Palghar district revealed that about 50 varieties of fruit species are mainly used for consumption. The total 50 species of wild edible fruit plants are collected and stored with detailed information regarding scientific name, common name, the purpose of uses for future reference and study depicted in Table 1.

CONCLUSION

Above fruits have dual significance; first, they are promising future food; and second, these medicinal plants can have some active constituents for future phytochemical analysis. Present work documented total 50 wild edible fruit plant species and gives us information on food habits of rural people of Palghar district. Out of these, most of the fruit plants have medicinal values. Further investigation on their phytochemical and nutraceutical studies may provide better nutritional and medicinal sources for future.

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