

## ETHNOGYNAECOLOGICAL USES OF PLANTS FROM GUJARAT, INDIA

P.K. PATEL<sup>1</sup> AND M.K. PATEL<sup>2</sup>

*Department of Biology, SPT Arts and Science College, Godhra, Gujarat, India*

*Keywords:* Ethnogaecology; Medicinal plants; Gujarat; India.

Ethnogaecology is emerging as a new branch which deals with the treatment of ailments among tribal women, for example, abortion, menstrual trouble, menopause syndrome, morning sickness, leucorrhoea, antifertility, delivery problems, etc. (Jain, 1991). Tribal women of Gujarat, India depend on the plants for curing various diseases including abortion, anti-fertility, leucorrhoea and menstrual trouble. They do not go to doctor but depend on herbal treatment, suggested by old women or experienced men of the village (Shah *et al.*, 1981; Kirtikar and Basu, 1982; Patel, 2004)

In order to get information regarding plants, we have visited to all parts of Gujarat during 2008-2010. Ethnomedicinal data have been recorded following the standard procedures by interacting with herbal practitioners and elderly women of the village with the knowledge of herbal medicine. Interviews were held in the villages and the derived information was recorded.

In this study 16 plant species under 16 genera and 13 families have been identified. Identifications were confirmed following Cooke (1967). Among the species documented 14 species belong to dicotyledons and 2 species to monocotyledons. The species are arranged alphabetically. The medicinal value of each species is enumerated in Table 1.

**Table 1. List of plants used for gynaecological purposes.**

No.	Botanical name	Family	Local name	Application
1	<i>Annona squamosa</i> L.	Annonaceae	<i>Sitaphal</i>	Paste of seeds is applied into vagina for abortion.
2	<i>Abrus precatorius</i> L.	Fabaceae	<i>Chanothi</i>	Three seeds are ground and mixed with old jiggery and three balls are made, which are given one by one in a day with hot water. It relieves delivery pain.
3	<i>Allium cepa</i> L.	Liliaceae	<i>Dungri</i>	Juice of the bulb is taken. It is warmed and then 4 spoon are given twice a day for menstrual trouble.
4	<i>Anethum graveolens</i> L.	Apiaceae	<i>Sawa</i>	Decoction of seeds is used in abortion.
5	<i>Carica papaya</i> L.	Caricaceae	<i>Papaya</i>	Pulp of fruit and seeds are given orally for abortion.
6	<i>Cissus quadrangularis</i> L.	Vitaceae	<i>Hadsankal</i>	Infusion of crushed plant is used as vaginal douche to increase menses.
7	<i>Citrullus colocynthis</i> (L.) Schrad.	Cucurbitaceae	<i>Kadva indravarna</i>	Cotton dipped in fruit juice is placed over the mouth of the uterus for timely and easy delivery.

(Contd.)

<sup>1</sup>Corresponding author. Email: drpkpatel.7711@gmail.com

<sup>2</sup>Department of Biology, R.R.Mehta Science College, Palanpur, Gujarat, India.

**Table 1. Contd.**

No.	Botanical name	Family	Local name	Application
8	<i>Cynodon dactylon</i> (L.) Pers.	Poaceae	<i>Dharo</i>	The grass is pounded and filtered to obtain juice. Half cup of juice with sugar is taken daily for a week to stop excessive bleeding during menstruation.
9	<i>Daucus carota</i> L.	Apiaceae	<i>Gajar</i>	Paste of seeds is applied to vagina for abortion and to increase menses. Seeds given internally to pregnant women for abortion.
10	<i>Embelica officinalis</i> Gaertn.	Euphorbiaceae	<i>Amla</i>	Dry fruit is made into powder. One spoon of the powder mixed with honey (1:1) is given twice daily for leucorrhoea.
11	<i>Lagenaria siceraria</i> (Molina) Standley	Cucurbitaceae	<i>Duthi</i>	Fresh fruit is taken with cow's milk twice daily to cure leucorrhoea.
12	<i>Manilkara hexandra</i> (Roxb.) Dub.	Sapotaceae	<i>Rayan</i>	Seed paste put in vagina to increase menses.
13	<i>Mentha arvensis</i> L.	Lamiaceae	<i>Pudina</i>	Young vegetative parts are dried in shade and then made into powder. Ten grams of the powder with water is taken before the meeting for anti-fertility.
14	<i>Plumbago zeylanica</i> L.	Plumbaginaceae	<i>Chitrak</i>	Paste of root is applied in vagina for abortion and increase menses.
15	<i>Raphanus sativus</i> L.	Brassicaceae	<i>Mula</i>	Seeds are given orally to increase menses to purify womb and for abortion.
16	<i>Ricinus communis</i> L.	Euphorbiaceae	<i>Erandi</i>	After removing seed coats seeds are given for anti-fertility.

### Acknowledgment

We are thankful to Dr. D.C. Bhatt, Head of the Department of Marine Science, Bhavnagar University, Bhavnagar for providing valuable information and help.

### References

- Cooke, T. 1967. Flora of Bombay Presidency, Vols. 1-3. Botanical Survey of India, Calcutta.
- Jain, S.K. 1991. Dictionary of Indian Folk Medicine and Ethnobotany. Deep Publication, New Delhi.
- Kirtikar, K.R. and Basu, B.D. 1982. Indian Medicinal Plants, Vols. 1-5. Bishen Singh Mahendra Pal Singh, Dehra Dun, India.
- Patel, P.K. 2004. Studies on flora along the riverbank of the Saraswati river from Mukteshwar to Patan district with ethnobotanical aspect. Ph.D. thesis, N.G. University, Patan.
- Shah, G.L., Menon, A.R. and Gopal, G.V. 1981. An account of the ethnobotany of Saurashtra in Gujarat state. J. Eco. Tax. Bot. 2: 173-182.

(Manuscript received on 11 March, 2011; revised on 7 January, 2012)