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Ethnomedicinal practices of Asclepiadaceae members in Chitradurga district, Karnataka State, India

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India has one of world's richest medicinal plant heritages. The wealth is not only in terms of the number of unique species documented but also in terms of the tremendous depth of traditional knowledge for the use of human & livestock health and also for agriculture. The medicinal plant species are used by various ethnic communalities for human and veterinary health care, across the various ecosystems from Ladakh in the trans-Himalayas to the southern coastal tip of Kanyakumari and from the deserts of Rajasthan and Kutch to the hills of the North-east. Chitradurga district of Karnataka state at its extreme limits is situated between longitudinal parallels of 76° 01' and 77° 01' east of Greenwich and latitudinal parallels of 13° 34' and 15° 02' north of equator in the leeward side of the Western Ghats. The topographical and climate diversity of the region has resulted in dry deciduous to thorn scrub forest. The plant diversity of the region is facing a severe depletion due to the continuous loss of forest land, uncontrolled grazing, forest fire, landslides and anthropogenic activities. At this juncture, conservation and protection of ethno medicinal plants of the region needs top priority. The present investigation is an attempt to survey of Asclepiadaceae members for their ethno-medicinal uses to cure various ailments by the ethnic groups of the region. The local health healers/tribes are routine use of 08 medicinal plants belonging to Asclepiadaceae for the treatment of diseases, which includes snake bite, diabetes mellitus, asthma, cough, urinary infection, jaundice, piles, rheumatism and venereal diseases. The study reveals that leaves and roots were most frequently used (07 spp), followed by stem (02 spp), Latex (02 spp), fruits/seeds, bark and flowers one species each. The plant species used in the treatment are *Calotropis procera*, *Hemidesmus indicus*, *Gymnema sylvestre*, *Leptodenia reticulate*, *Tylophora asthmatica*, *Sarcostemma secamone*, *Wattakaka volubilis* and *Pergularia daemia*. The study showed that many people of Chitradurga district still depend traditionally on medicinal plants for primary health care. Therefore, the present study is an attempt to explore and conserve ethno-medicinal plants of Asclepiadaceae in the said region.

Biography

Hiremath Visweswaraiah Thippaiah is an Associate Professor of Botany. He has completed his PhD from Karnatak University, Dharwad, India. He has published more than 15 papers in reputed journals and presented research articles at various national and international conferences at Malaysia, Singapore, Sri Lanka and USA. He has been awarded 'Talented Scientist Award' through ICMPPH-2013. He is also serving as an Executive Editorial Member in *Life Sciences Feed of repute*.

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