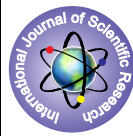


# Medicinal Plants Used for Skin Diseases in Kangra District of Himachal Pradesh



## Forest Research

KEYWORDS : Himachal Pradesh, Kangra, Skin Diseases, Medicinal Plants

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### ABSTRACT

*Kangra is very rich in floral diversity and different communities are highly dependent on medicinal herbs to cure their health related problem which are being used from ancient times. Now a days skin diseases are numerous and a frequently occurring health problem affecting all ages. Some plants and their parts are frequently used by local people to treat these diseases. The use of plants is as old as the mankind. As natural treatment is cheap and claimed to be safe, thus people still reckon more on natural remedies. Beside this, it is also suitable raw material for production of new synthetic agents. In present paper, 37 plant species belonging to 36 genera and 26 families were recorded and identified with scientific name, family name, common name and part used are reported to cure skin diseases in Kangra district of Himachal Pradesh. The information was collected through personal interviews in semi-structured questionnaire*

### Introduction

Himachal Pradesh is a beautiful land, inhabited by people of various cast, creed and religious groups. Himachal literally means "Land of snowy mountains". Himachal Pradesh is a small world in itself, which is entered from the plains of Punjab, or Shivalik hills or through hills of Shimla. Topographically, Himachal's territory from South to North can be divided into three zones- The Shivaliks or outer Himalayas, inner Himalayas or Mid-mountains and Alpine Zone or the greater Himalayas. It is the only state in India whose 89.96% population lives in rural area and thus most of the people depend on their surrounding forests. Kangra is the most populous district of Himachal Pradesh with the area of 5,730 square kilometers which constitutes 10.31% of the state area and ranks fourth among the districts. It is situated between 31°2 to 32°5 N and 75° to 77°45 E and its most of the area lies in Shivalik or outer Himalayan zone. Climate of the Kangra is semi-humid, sub-tropical with annual precipitation of 1000 mm and altitude varies from 500 m to 5000 m. Flora of Kangra is very distinctive and it consists of diverse forests. Medicinal plants in Kangra form an important component of the natural wealth of the district. Local people have traditionally used these plants, as they are natural products, environmentally friendly, easily available, cheap, less hazardous and curative than many sub standard orthodox medicines. These medicines used for the mass benefit of the society. Even today still traditional health care practices hold much potential or most of the people depend upon local flora.

### Material and Methods

Kangra district area is quite large in area, thus a large number of plant collections were made in the duration of 2013-2014. Ethnobotanical information on medicinal plants related to skin disease were collected through personal observations, oral interviews, discussions with the villagers were the bases of collection of data about the uses of the plants. Standard procedures were adopted for collecting, preserving and identifying the plants. At the end of each interview, the plant specimens were collected, dried by using routine botanical collection and herbarium techniques, identified and preserved (Jain & Rao, 1997). Samples of recorded herbs, shrubs and trees were identified in the laboratory with the help of (Polunin and Stainton, 1984 & Stainton, 1988) and local floras (Chowdhery and Wadhwa, 1984; Dhaliwal and Sharma, 1999; Aswal and Mehrotra, 1994; Nair, 1977). Plants species voucher specimens of recorded plants have been kept in Department of Botany Himachal Pradesh University Shimla (H.P.) India.

### Results and Discussions

In the present study, the detailed information thus collected from different region of Kangra and has been presented in Table 1. It provided ethnobotanical information about 37 plants widely used by locals in skin related problems. These plants were distributed in 26 families viz Papilionaceae, Mimosaceae, Alliaceae, Meliaceae, Caesalpiniaceae, Caricaceae, Apiaceae, Cucurbitaceae, Zingiberaceae, Dioscoreaceae, Moraceae, Flacourtiaceae, Asteraceae, Ulmaceae, Oleaceae, Lythraceae, Lamiaceae, Rubiaceae, Apocyanaceae, Oxalidaceae, Urticaceae, Plumbaginaceae, Annonaceae, Polygonaceae, Solanaceae, Combretaceae. Mainly Herbs dominates in the area of Kangra for curing skin diseases followed by tree and then shrubs or undershrubs respectively. It was further found that leaves were the major plant part used for curing various ailments followed by roots, stems, fruits & flowers respectively.

Table-1

S. No.	Name of Plant	Family	Common Name	Habitat	Part used
1.	Abrus precatorius	Papilionaceae	Crabs Eye, Rati	Woody Climber	Leaves
2.	Albizia chinensis	Mimosaceae	Kanujira, Ohi	Tree	Bark
3.	Allium cepa	Alliaceae	Onion, Pyaz	Herb	Bulbs
4.	Azadirachta indica	Meliaceae	Margosa Tree, Neem	Tree	Leaves
5.	Bauhinia variegata	Caesalpiniaceae	Kachnar, Kural	Tree	Bark
6.	Carica papaya	Caricaceae	Papaya, Papita	Tree	Ripe Fruit
7.	Cassia fistula	Caesalpiniaceae	Golden Shower, Amaltas	Tree	Roots and bark
8.	Centella asiatica	Apiaceae	Asiatic Pennywort, Brahmi	Herb	Whole plant
9.	Coccinia grandis	Cucurbitaceae	Pumpkin, Kadu	Climbing Herb	Whole plant
10.	Curcuma domestica	Zingiberaceae	Turmeric, Haldi	Herb	Rhizome
11.	Dalbergia sissoo	Papilionaceae	Indian Redwood, Sisham	Tree	Bark
12.	Dioscorea bulbifera	Dioscoreaceae	Yam, Bhirvolikanda	Herb	Tubers
13.	Ficus religiosa	Moraceae	Peepal	Tree	Leaves and shoots

14.	Flacourtia indica	Flacourtiaceae	Madagascar Plum, Kangu	Tree	Roots
15.	Hedychium spicatum	Zingiberaceae	Spiked Ginger Lily, Banhaldi	Herb	Rhizome
16.	Helianthus annuus	Asteraceae	Sunflower, Surajmukhi	Herb	Flower
17.	Holoptelea integrifolia	Ulmaceae	Indian Elm, Rajain	Tree	Bark and Leaves
18.	Jasminum grandiflorum	Oleaceae	Jasmine, Chameli	Shrub	Flower
19.	Lawsonia inermis	Lythraceae	Henna Plant, Mehndi	Shrub	Bark
20.	Lens culinaris	Papilionaceae	Lentil, Masur	Herb	Seeds
21.	Leucas lanata	Lamiaceae	Gathmal	Herb	Flowers
22.	Luffa cylindrica	Cucurbitaceae	Sponge Gourd, Ghiya	Herb	Seed oil
23.	Mitragyna parvifolia	Rubiaceae	Kaddam	Tree	Leaves
24.	Nerium oleander	Apocynaceae	Oleander, Kaner	Shrub	Whole Plant
25.	Ocimum americanum	Lamiaceae	Hoary Basil, Ban Tulsi	Herb or Bushy shrub-let	Leaves
26.	Oxalis corniculata	Oxalidaceae	Indian Sorrel, Amrul	Herb	Whole Plant
27.	Pilea umbrosa	Urticaceae	--	Herb	Leaves
28.	Pisum sativum	Papilionaceae	Garden Pea, Matar	Climbing Herb	Seed
29.	Plumbago zeylanica	Plumbaginaceae	Ceylon Leadwort, Chitra	Herb or Under-shrub	Root
30.	Polyalthia longifolia	Annonaceae	Indian Fir, Depbari	Tree	Leaves
31.	Rumex hastatus	Polygonaceae	Malora, Katambal	Under-Shrub	Leaves
32.	Senna occidentalis	Caesalpiniaceae	Coffee Senna, Kasundi	Herb or under-shrub	Leaves
33.	Senna tora	Caesalpiniaceae	Fetid Cassia, Panevar	Herb or under-shrub	Leaves
34.	Solanum nigrum	Solanaceae	Common Nightshade, Makoi	Herb or Shrub	Tender shoots and Leaves
35.	Terminalia bellerica	Combretaceae	Bedda Nuts, Behra	Tree	Fruits
36.	Thevatia peruviana	Apocynaceae	Yellow Oleander, Pila-Kaner	Shrub or Small Tree	Whole Plant
37.	Woodfordia fruticosa	Lythraceae	Woodfordia, Dhawi	Shrub	Flower Buds

## Conclusions

The traditional knowledge of the medicinal uses of plants of Kangra district is vast and rural people still dependent on local plants for curing various ailments. During the study about 37 medicinal plants widely used by local people in skin related problems. The result of the study reveals that leaves are most commonly used for the preparation of traditional medicines to cure skin diseases. It is also found that the Traditional knowledge is mainly restricted to voids, elder people but young generation is still ignorant. Moreover, this knowledge is passed orally from generation to generation so there is urgent need for preserving this indigenous traditional knowledge. Beside this, the study also gives us the information about the availability of medicinal plants used mainly for

skin diseases in Kangra region which is very valuable with regard to its uses and history so that traditional and modern knowledge can be confined to yield more medicinal resources for the benefit of mankind.

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