

Ethnomedicinal Plants of Nanded District

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Abstract

Ethnomedicinal plants play an important role in the traditional healthcare practices of rural and tribal communities. Nanded District, located in the Marathwada region of Maharashtra, possesses rich plant diversity and valuable traditional knowledge regarding the medicinal use of local plant species. The present study aims to highlight the ethnomedicinal plants used by local communities for the treatment of various common diseases and health disorders. Traditional knowledge is generally obtained from local healers, elderly people, tribal communities, and individuals having experience in herbal remedies. Different plant parts such as leaves, roots, bark, stems, flowers, fruits, and seeds are used in the preparation of medicines in the form of decoctions, extracts, pastes, powders, and juices. These plants are traditionally used for the treatment of ailments such as fever, cough, cold, diarrhoea, dysentery, skin diseases, wounds, diabetes, digestive disorders, and other health problems. Ethnomedicinal knowledge is important for preserving indigenous traditions, promoting biodiversity conservation, and providing a foundation for future pharmacological and phytochemical research. The study emphasizes the need for, scientific validation, and conservation of ethnomedicinal plants and associated traditional knowledge in Nanded District.

Keywords: Ethnomedicinal plants, Traditional knowledge, Medicinal plants, Nanded District, Tribal communities, Biodiversity conservation.

Introduction

The use of traditional medicine is widely accepted in Maharashtra as our state is rich in medicinal plants. Nanded districts are located in Marathwada region in Maharashtra. In this region more than 70% population lives in villages which are far away from roads and cities. They have their many health problems. Many a times emergency comes due to snakebites, accidents, delay in delivery etc. At such a time people use to go to 'Janatas'.(Kale, 1996) From the ancient time India is rich in traditional knowledge which deals with various aspects and the health problems of the villagers. They get their diseases treated with the help of local healers. Due to lack of modern medical facilities and the richness of medicinal flora have led to strong ethno medicinal practices in this region. During last three decades several tribal localities of India have been explored for ethno medicinal studies, by a number of workers. However a very few of such studies have been conducted in this region Chhetri (1997).

Study Area: Nanded District

Nanded District is situated in the **eastern part of Maharashtra State**, in the Marathwada region of India. The district lies approximately between **17°55' and 19°55' North latitude and 76°56' and 78°19' East longitude**. It covers an area of about **10,500 km²**. The district is surrounded by **Yavatmal and Hingoli districts to the north, Parbhani and Latur to the west, and Telangana and Karnataka states towards the south and east**.

The study was conducted in July 2025 to Dec 2026. The **Godavari River** is an important river of the district and plays a significant role in the agriculture and ecology of the region. The district experiences a **tropical climate**, with hot summers, a monsoon season, and relatively dry winters. The natural vegetation includes dry deciduous forests, scrub vegetation, grasslands, agricultural fields, and vegetation along rivers and other water bodies.

Vegetation and Ethnomedicinal Importance

The forested areas of **Kinwat, Mahur, Hadgaon, Himayatnagar and surrounding regions** support considerable plant diversity. These areas are inhabited by rural and tribal communities who have traditionally depended on locally available plant resources for food, medicine, fuel and other daily needs.

For the present ethnomedicinal study, information can be collected from selected villages and forest regions of Nanded District through **field surveys, plant collection, identification, and interviews with local people and traditional herbal practitioners**. Particular attention can be given to the medicinal uses of different plant parts, methods of preparation, dosage practices traditionally followed, and the ailments for which the plants are used.

The diverse habitats and rich traditional knowledge of the district make Nanded an important area for the **conservation and scientific study of ethnomedicinal plants**.

Material and Methods

Regular field trips were conducted in Nanded Districts, between July 2025- Dec 2026 for collecting ethno botanical data. The tribal people, including local healers, who regularly use the plants, provided important information regarding ethno medicinal uses of the plants. Information obtained from more than one source has been incorporated, we took interviews, noted down and taped their interviews recorded their knowledge of the plants. Collected plants were identified with the help of Indian ancient literature (Flora of Naik, 1998, Maheshwari, 1985 and Hooker, 1897.)

In the enumeration date on ethno medicinal uses of plants presented in the following sequences. Botanical name, family, local name followed by plants parts used and the mode of use (in brief). In the presented report decoction means, solution derived by boiling medicinal herbs. 'Extract' denotes the liquid obtained by grinding the plant parts, with water and filtering through a fine cloth while 'juice signifies' the liquid obtained by crushing and pressing the useful plant parts without adding water. Whenever more than one species belonging to the some genera were used for the same purpose only the more commonly used species furnished for Botanical names followed a Dictionary of Folk medicine & ethno botany –Jain,1991 used. The new ethno medicinal use of the plants has been indicated with asterisk mark preceding the botanical name of the enumeration.

Sr. No.	Botanical Name	Family	Common/Local Name	Plant Part Used	Traditional Use
1	<i>Azadirachta indica</i> A. Juss.	Meliaceae	Neem	Leaves, bark	Skin diseases, fever, wounds
2	<i>Ocimum tenuiflorum</i> L.	Lamiaceae	Tulsi	Leaves	Cough, cold, fever
3	<i>Aloe vera</i> (L.) Burm.f.	Asphodelaceae	Korphad	Leaf gel	Burns, skin problems
4	<i>Tinospora cordifolia</i> (Willd.) Hook.f. & Thomson	Menispermaceae	Gulvel	Stem	Fever, general weakness
5	<i>Withania somnifera</i> (L.) Dunal	Solanaceae	Ashwagandha	Root	General weakness, traditional tonic
6	<i>Phyllanthus amarus</i> Schumach. & Thonn.	Phyllanthaceae	Bhui Amla	Whole plant	Liver-related ailments
7	<i>Calotropis gigantea</i> (L.) Dryand	Apocynaceae	Rui	Leaves, latex	Skin disorders, traditional external remedies
8	<i>Calotropis procera</i> (Aiton) Dryand	Apocynaceae	Rui	Leaves, latex	Wounds and skin problems
9	<i>Achyranthes aspera</i> L.	Amaranthaceae	Aghada	Whole plant/root	Cough, digestive problems
10	<i>Eclipta prostrata</i> (L.) L.	Asteraceae	Bhringraj	Whole plant	Hair and liver-related

					traditional uses
11	<i>Justicia adhatoda</i> L.	Acanthaceae	Adulsa	Leaves	Cough and respiratory problems
12	<i>Moringa oleifera</i> Lam.	Moringaceae	Shevga	Leaves, bark	Nutritional and traditional medicinal uses
13	<i>Boerhavia diffusa</i> L.	Nyctaginaceae	Punarnava	Root, whole plant	Urinary and digestive ailments
14	<i>Carissa carandas</i> L.	Apocynaceae	Karamcha/Karvand	Root, fruits	Digestive disorders, traditional remedies
15	<i>Vitex negundo</i> L.	Lamiaceae	Nirgudi	Leaves	Joint pain, swelling
16	<i>Terminalia arjuna</i> (Roxb. ex DC.) Wight & Arn.	Combretaceae	Arjun	Bark	Traditionally used for cardiovascular health
17	<i>Terminalia chebula</i> Retz.	Combretaceae	Hirda	Fruit	Digestive disorders
18	<i>Terminalia bellirica</i> (Gaertn.) Roxb.	Combretaceae	Behada	Fruit	Cough and digestive ailments
19	<i>Ficus religiosa</i> L.	Moraceae	Pimpal	Bark, leaves	Wounds and traditional remedies
20	<i>Ficus benghalensis</i> L.	Moraceae	Wad	Bark, aerial roots	Wounds and other traditional uses
21	<i>Cassia fistula</i> L.	Fabaceae	Bahava	Fruit pulp	Constipation and digestive problems
22	<i>Butea monosperma</i> (Lam.) Taub.	Fabaceae	Palas	Flowers, bark, seeds	Skin and digestive ailments
23	<i>Pongamia pinnata</i> (L.) Pierre	Fabaceae	Karanj	Seeds, leaves	Skin disorders and wounds
24	<i>Syzygium cumini</i> (L.) Skeels	Myrtaceae	Jambhul	Seeds, bark, fruits	Traditionally used for diabetes
25	<i>Cissus quadrangularis</i> L.	Vitaceae	Hadjod	Stem	Traditionally used for bone and joint problems

Conclusions

The study of ethnomedicinal plants of Nanded District reveals that the region possesses rich plant diversity as well as valuable traditional knowledge associated with the medicinal uses of plants. Local and tribal communities have traditionally depended on naturally available plants for the treatment of various common ailments. Different plant parts, including leaves, roots, stems, bark, flowers, fruits, and seeds, are used in the preparation of traditional remedies.

The documentation of ethnomedicinal plants is important for preserving indigenous knowledge that has been transferred from one generation to another. However, this traditional knowledge is gradually declining due to modernization, deforestation, habitat destruction, and changes in lifestyle. Therefore, systematic documentation and conservation of medicinal plants and their associated traditional knowledge are necessary.

The present study provides useful baseline information for further research in ethnobotany, phytochemistry, pharmacology, and medicinal plant conservation. Scientific investigation and validation of traditionally used plants may help in identifying potentially valuable medicinal compounds. Sustainable utilization, cultivation, and conservation of ethnomedicinal plants should be encouraged to ensure their availability for future generations.

Thus, Nanded District represents an important area for the **documentation, conservation, and scientific study of ethnomedicinal plant resources and traditional healthcare knowledge.**

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