



PLANTS USED FOR ETHNO-VETERINARY PRACTICES BY TRIBES OF RATANGAD OF WESTERN GHATS

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Tribes of Ratangad of western ghats, along with their primary health care needs also cure diseases of their domestic animals. Present paper describes 19 plant species of ethno veterinary importance. Various plant parts are effectively used by the tribes in the treatment of a variety of diseases of their domestic animals.

Key words: Tribes, Ratangad, Ethno veterinary, Domestic animals

Ethno veterinary is the study of sole beliefs, knowledge, ideas and practices among the tribals for treating animal diseases (Jain, 1987). Since time immemorial plants have been used by man to cure cattle's from different diseases. It can be understood that use of plants in the healing of domestic animals started when the animal supremacy was being realized in farming.

Ratangad (1297m) is the second highest peak of Maharashtra state in Akole taluka, a part of Western ghats and rich with plant wealth. Along with its historical importance the area also consists of a popular temple of Lord Shiva known, as Amrutheshwar and it is believed that, the key river Pravara of Akole taluka originates from this temple. Tribals like Mahadevcoli and Thakars inhabit this area. Forest is of moist deciduous type including some semi evergreen patches. Forest has a great impact on tribal life, as they derive food, fodder and medicines from it. The tribals cure various diseases of their domestic animals with the help of large number of medicinal plants.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

Frequent field tours were conducted to

various tribal inhabited localities of Ratangad forest during the year 2005-2007. Plant species used against various animal diseases were observed with the help of tribals having practical and traditional knowledge. A questionnaire was prepared containing the information about the tribals, their life style, source of income, ethno veterinary uses of particular plant species and mode of treatment. Plants were identified with the help of some published floras e.g Cooke (1908), Pradhan (1999) and Singh (2000). Information as ethno-veterinary uses obtained from the tribals was compared with the existing literature i.e. Jain (2003), Tiwari and Pande (2004), Pal (1990) and Mokate & Deokule (2004).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A total of 19 plant species having ethno-veterinary importance are listed below in Table 1. Information as parts used along with mode of application of drug and concerned disease are also mentioned.

Table 1: Plants of ethno-veterinary importance

Along with their own healthcare, tribals also take care of their domestic animals. Many of the plant species are used for curing

Table 1: Plants of ethno-veterinary importance

Sr. No.	Name of the Plant species	Ethno veterinary importance
1.	<i>Aristolochia bracteolata</i> Lam.	Leaf and root juice is applied on wounds of domestic animals to kill the germs
2.	<i>Asparaqus racemosus</i> Wild	Root (100gm) juice increases energy in weak animals. Roots (100gm) are also supplied as food to retain fertility, in dysentery and to increase the secretion of milk in cattle.
3. 4.	<i>Bombax ceiba</i> L. <i>Calotropis gigantea</i> (L.) R. Br.	Bark (100gm) juice is given orally in diarrhea Warm leaves are tied on inflammations and also used to kill the pains. Latex is used to pull out thorns from the body and to remove worms from the wounds.
5.	<i>Carissa congesta</i> L.	Leaf extract is used for expelling worms from the body and for reducing fever.
6.	<i>Catunaregam spinosa</i> (Thumb.) Triveng.	Fruit extract is applied on wounds for pulling out worms. Fruits of Catunaregam and Tamarindus, two each are useful for goats to get relief from diarrhoea.
7.	<i>Curculigo orchioides</i> Gaertn.	Seeds are used for the promoting milk secretion in cattle. About 10 grams of seeds are given to cattle through its feed for two times a day. The tubers of plant are also employed in snakebites of domestic animals.
8.	<i>Datura metel</i> L.	Fruits are given to cattle for retaining fertility. Two fruits, a day each are supplied to cattle or as per the weight of the animal.
9.	<i>Dolichandrone falcata</i> (Wall. ex. DC) Seem.	There is a magico-religious belief among the tribals that if the wood is kept near the animals, it keeps away any kind of diseases.
10.	<i>Eclipta alba</i> Hassk	Leaves are tied on body parts, to reduce inflammation. Leaf (100gm) juice is given to animals to get relief from dysentery, twice for about three days.
11.	<i>Euphorbia ligularia</i> Roxb.	Latex of plant is used in fractures of animals. Cotton cloth is soaked in latex and tied on fractured, which serve as a plaster. The latex is given orally to kill intestinal worms
12.	<i>Grewia tillifolia</i> Vahl. \	Leaves (100gms) are given as food twice a day to cattle for increase of milk production. Bark juice is given in dysentery.
13.	<i>Jatropha curcas</i> L.	Stem (100gms) is referred for the cattle in gastric problems. Leaf (100gms) decoction is given orally to promote milk secretion.
14.	<i>Madhuca longifolia</i> (Koen.) Mac. Bride.	Stem cuttings are tied around animal neck to pull out worm from wounds.

15.	<i>Oroxylum indicum</i> (L.) Vent.	Root-bark powder along with turmeric powder is applied on the sore backs of the horses and bulls.
16.	<i>Terminalia arjuna</i> (Roxb) Wight.	Leaf (100gms) juice is given orally as vermifuge. Bark paste or powder is applied on wounds.
17.	<i>Xanthium strumarium</i> L.	Entire plant is given to domestic animals to promote milk yielding capacity.
18.	<i>Semecarpus anacardium</i> L. F.	The ash of bark is applied for healing of wounds. The seed oil is applied on wounds between hooves of animals.
19.	<i>Vitex negundo</i> Linn	Leaves and dried fruits are helpful for expelling worms from the body. It is also applied on swellings. Leaves are given to cattles to get relief from dysentery.

various animal diseases. About nineteen plant species are used for the treatment of veterinary diseases in Akole and Sangamner talukas. Mokate and Deokule (2004) reported about thirty-six plant species from Ratanagiri district of Maharashtra used in ethno veterinary medicine. Among these only *Jatropha curcas* is a common species. Remaining 18 species would be the new findings. Jain (2003) has reported eight hundred and thirty six plant species used in ethno veterinary medicines. Out of the nineteen species recorded in present study, *Catunaregam spinosa*, *Memecylon umbellatum* and *Merremia gangetica* are new records and reported by Jain (2003).

CONCLUSION

As the medicinal plants are used to cure the human diseases, they are also effectively used against the animal diseases. Traditional knowledge of plants is fast disappearing among the tribals due to modernization and gradual migration of tribal medicine men. There is an urgent need to study

and document the precious ethnoveterinary knowledge of tribals.

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