



ETHNOBOTANICAL SURVEY OF WILD EDIBLE PLANTS OF BAIJNATH REGION HIMACHAL PRADESH

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ABSTRACT: The present study is concerned with the Ethnobotanical evaluation of wild edible plants of Baijnath Region of District Kangra, Himachal Pradesh. The survey was carried out in 2014 and about 32 wild edible plants were identified & documented with their scientific names, common names, family and edible parts. Wild edible plants are rich source of protein, vitamins and minerals. Native of Baijnath Region frequently use wild edible plants, however their popularity has decreased now a days.

Keywords: Ethnobotanical, wild edible plants, traditional use, Baijnath region, native.

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Forest plants are used by local communities for various purposes like medicine, food, fodder fibers, timber etc. Within these, wild edible plants form an important source of food for local & tribal communities. These edible plants are not only having high nutritional value but also act as important substitute during food scarcity.

Jana and Chouhan (1998) reported that India has a tribal population of 42 million of which some 60% live in forest areas and depend on forests for various edible products. Western Himalayas shows the highest diversity (50.96%) of edible plants and Eastern Himalayas the maximum number of endemics (18 taxa) and wild relatives of economic plants (39 taxa) (Samant and Dhar, 1997). The majority of identified, wild edible plants may satisfy the daily human need for elementary nutritional material, particularly those of vitamins C and A, and for some minerals, according to the regulations of World Health Organization (WHO) (Redzic, 2006). There is much scope for improving the growth forms of wild edible plants by using modern agronomic research and experimental cytogenetical studies (Yesodharan and Sujana, 2007).

Wild edible plants can act as promising alternate source of food and nutrition if exploited scientifically. Therefore, an attempt was made in present study to enlist commonly used wild edible plants which add to literature.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Study area

Present study was conducted in Baijnath region of

district Kangra, Himachal Pradesh. It has an elevation of 900- 1800m & situated in the lap of great Himalaya's Dhauladhar range. This region is bestowed with rich natural vegetation & unique plant diversity. Moreover, this area has significant tribal population of Gaddies and Gujjars who used wild plants for various traditional uses including food. Therefore, an attempt was made to enlist common wild edible plants of this area so that identified plants can be conserved and sustainably used in future.

Ethnobotanical survey regarding wild food plants was conducted during April 2014 to April 2015. For this regular field trips were conducted in the area and data was gathered through semi structured questionnaire. The traditional knowledge pertaining to wild food plants and their products was assessed by collecting information from locals especially from tribal community.

Information thus collected during field surveys was recorded noted down in field books along with local name, part used and mode of preparation for further products. Plant specimen were collected & dried to make voucher specimen & proper identification was done through literature (Hooker, 1881; Chowdhery and Wadhwa, 1984; Jain, 1991) and at HFRI, Shimla local identification was done by showing live specimen or by collected voucher specimen.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The data collected was compiled and presented in Table 1. A total of 32 species of wild edible plants belonging to different families were recorded. Out of total plants recorded 12 were trees, 8 were shrubs, 11 were herbs & one was climber (Fig: 1). Thus it was observed that maximally trees were used as wild edible