Abstract: Present communication deals with important medicinal plants collected during the field survey from the Bhagirathi valley of Uttaranchal state having ethnomedicinal uses. Specimens were collected and studied during the extensive survey of the area during 2008 to 2010. Information were gathered from local ethnic groups having traditional knowledge of herbal medicines. Information were cross checked for authenticity of investigated results.

Key words: Ethnomedicinal plants, Bhagirathi valley, Herbal, Ailments, Disorder, Indegenous.

INTRODUCTION

The uniqueness and extraordinary natural value of the Himalaya is well known world over. This area is the storehouse of the numerous medicinal and aromatic plants, which are exploited for their utilization in drugs, pharmaceutical and perfume industries (Chopra et al., 1956, Anonymous, 1978). From centuries, indigenous people of Himalayan region had ununiquely perceived and utilized the wild growing plant species as medicine, spices and condiments etc (Jain, 1991). The importance of Himalaya as source of natural wealth and sacred place of learning has been established since ancient time. The importance of Himalayas as cited in Charaka Samhita by Agnivesha and Charaka (1992) “There is excellence among the mountains named Himalayas which is the best habitat of medicinal plants” Ethnobotany of kumaon and Garhwal region was first described by Atkinson (1882). Dr. E.K. Janaki Ammal (1954) of Botanical survey of India initiated first organized study in this field. The use of wild medicinal plants in eastern and central Himalaya was reported by Rao (1981), Gangwar and Rama Krishan (1990), Bhatt and Gaur (1992) and Manandhar (1995). Ethnobotanical studies in western Himalayas were made by Shah & Joshi (1971), Nautiyal (1981), Rajwar (1984), Badoni (1986), Gaur (1999), Sharma (2003), Samant et al. (1998), Dhyani (2007) and Khan et al. (2009).

STUDY AREA

Uttarkashi is one of the thirteen districts of the Uttarakhand state. Areawise it is largest district of the Uttarakhand and its total geographical area measures 8016 Sq. Km. It is situated in the middle and Greater Himalayan range between 30° 26’ to 31° 28’ North latitude and between 77° 37’ and 79° 45’ east longitude approximately.
Spring is the hottest season of the year. Majority of the population is localized in the rural areas lacking modern medicinal facilities. Medicinal herbs flourishing in the valley have been in constant use by local inhabitants who are wholly dependent on local plants around them for treating various ailments by using the plants in their own traditional methods. Indigenous knowledge of Himalayan ethnic groups viz., Bhottias, Byansi, Chawndasis, Jads, Joharis Malchas and Tolchas have played vital role in discovery of novel products on ethnomedicine.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Ethnobotanical data was collected for two years during 2008 to 2010. Medicinal uses of plants were recorded through interviewing local medicine man, head of the families, elders and curers following standard ethanobotanical investigations suggested by Jain (1963, 1995) and Martin (1995). In order to ensure the accuracy, individual statements were double checked with other knowledgeable peoples of the community and detailed information was collected pertaining to indigenous skills and use of wild plants in traditional health care system.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

All the medicinal plants studied are enumerated alphabetically with their family, local names, parts used and ethnomedicinal uses.

Table: Some important ethnomedicinal plants of Bhagirathi Valley of District Uttarkashi.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl N.</th>
<th>Taxa</th>
<th>Family</th>
<th>Local Name</th>
<th>Plant Parts Used</th>
<th>Ethnomedicinal Uses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Aconitum ferox wall.</td>
<td>Ranunculaceae</td>
<td>Bish</td>
<td>Underground Stem and Roots</td>
<td>Useful in sore throat, paralysis, chronic fever, neuralgia, muscular rheumatism.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Ajuga bracteosa Wall ex Benth.</td>
<td>Lamiaceae</td>
<td>Ratpatiya, Laudda, Phul Jadhi</td>
<td>Leaves</td>
<td>Leaves mixed with black pepper used for diabetes and stomach-ache.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Allium humile kunth.</td>
<td>Amaryllidaceae</td>
<td>Laichu</td>
<td>Shoot/ Crushed</td>
<td>Used in indigestion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Angelica glauca Edgew.</td>
<td>Apiaceae</td>
<td>Choru</td>
<td>Roots</td>
<td>Used in stomach-ach, cold and cough.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Arisaema wallichianum Hk.f.</td>
<td>Araceae</td>
<td>Faran, Laddu, Meen</td>
<td>Roots/ Rhizome</td>
<td>Skin boils, extract applied to heal the wounds.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Arnebia benthameen (Don) john.</td>
<td>Boraginaceae</td>
<td>Balchari, Balchaddi</td>
<td>Roots</td>
<td>Used in bronchitis and asthma.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Artemisia maritima L.</td>
<td>Asteraceae</td>
<td>Kunja, Moin</td>
<td>Shoot/ Powder</td>
<td>Laxative, Vermifuge.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Berberis asiatica DC.</td>
<td>Berberidaceae</td>
<td>Chotar</td>
<td>Roots/ Extract</td>
<td>Useful in eyetroubles as pain killer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Bergenia stracheyi Engl.</td>
<td>Saxifragaceae</td>
<td>Silphari</td>
<td>Roots/ Powder</td>
<td>Used in Gall stones and joint pain.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Betula utilis D. Don.</td>
<td>Betulaceae</td>
<td>Bhojpatra</td>
<td>Inner Bark/ Extract</td>
<td>Used in eye diseases.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Cannabis sativa L.</td>
<td>Cannabinaceae</td>
<td>Bhang</td>
<td>Seed, Leaf, Flower/ Powder</td>
<td>Used in Jaundice, fever.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Dactylorhiza hatagirea (D.Don.) Soo.</td>
<td>Orchidaceae</td>
<td>Salempanja, Garurpanja, Hathajadi</td>
<td>Tuber</td>
<td>Used as aphrodisiac. Tuber paste applied on cuts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Geranium wallachianum Don ex. Sw.</td>
<td>Geraniaceae</td>
<td>Saura, Ratijari</td>
<td>Roots/ Leaves</td>
<td>Headache, rheumatic pains, decoction of roots used for dysentery and cold.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### From the study area 21 species of medicinal plants belonging to 20 genera and distributed over 17 families have been collected, out of which 18 species belong to Dicotyledons and 3 to Monocotyledons. Out of 21 species collected, 18 are herbs, 1 shrubs and 2 trees. Seeds, roots, rhizomes, stems, barks, leaves, flowers and fruits form the ingredients of medicines.

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### REFERENCES


