



Herbal Garden (Muligai Vanam)

Siria Amanakku



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Botanical Name	:	<i>Jatropha gossypifolia</i> L.
Tamil Name	:	Siria Amanakku
Sanskrit Name	:	Dravanti
English Name	:	Bellyache Bush, Cotton-leaf physic nut

Distribution and Habitat

Jatropha gossypifolia L. belongs to the family *Euphorbiaceae* and is a perennial herb distributed throughout the tropics of the world and the plains of India. It is a weed of degraded pastures, open woodlands, grasslands, riparian vegetation, coastal foreshores, roadsides, wastelands and old or abandoned gardens. It forms a small, spreading shrub with a sparse, open canopy reaching to 1m in height. The plant releases a sticky, yellow, translucent latex when injured. The leaves are alternate, 10cm wide with hairy margins and are



deeply divided into 3 to 5 pointed lobes and may have strong red to purple tinge. The flowers are 5-petaled in small, terminal clusters and are deep rich maroon in colour. The fruits are 3-lobed, mature; the dry fruit is seldom seen because it splits open explosively when dry, scattering the 3 enclosed seed in all direction.

Parts used

Leaves, stems, roots, seeds, and latex.

Phytochemical constituents

Alkaloids, coumarins, flavonoids, lignoids, phenols, saponnins, steroids, tannins and terpenoids.

Uses

Biodiesel production, pesticide, insecticide, and vermifuge.

Medicinal uses

The plant is usually used as a local / traditional medicine to treat diarrhoea and dysentery. The leaves are blood purifier, febrifuge, purgative and stomachic. The leaf decoction is used to treat fever in the form of a bath, while the juice is given to treat sores on the tongue of infants. Teas from the leaves are popularly used as an antithrombotic agent and the branches are frequently employed as a "thick blood" agent. The seeds are used as a purgative and to expel internal parasites. Oil obtained from the seeds is a powerful purgative and emetic. The oil has been used externally as a rubefacient to treat rheumatic conditions and a variety of skin conditions, including leprosy, although its use on the skin may also cause an irrelative rash. The latex, in turn, is bactericidal and molluscicidal. The young stem is chewed as mouth cleanser. The decoction of aerial parts is used as anti-infective and alopecia, the pounded leaves are applied locally for boils and burns. The latex/sap from the plant has been used to stop bleeding and the fluid is applied directly to bleeding nose, gums, or skin. The roots are recommended for leprosy and as an antidote for snake bite (Juliana et al., 2014; Apu *et al.*, 2013). The whole plant has wound healing and anticancer property. Species of *Jatropha* are notably known for their toxic potential, and their toxicity is primarily related to the latex and seed contents.



Conclusion



J. gossypifolia L. is an annual herbaceous medicinal weed along roadsides, wastelands and other degraded areas in various warmer parts of the world. The whole plant is widely used in traditional and folkloric systems of medicine. It is an important medicinal herb that can be used as an anti-inflammatory, antineoplastic, antimicrobial, antioxidant, anticholinesterase, antihypertensive, antidiarrheal, anticancer, analgesic, antiseptic agent, and is a laxative. It also can be used for the preparation of Bio-diesel.

