



Herbal Garden (Muligai Vanam)



Thanneer-vittan Kizhangu

Dr. A. Abirami

Programme Officer

C.P.R. Environmental Education Centre
Chennai

Botanical Name	:	<i>Asparagus racemosus</i> Willd.
Tamil Name	:	Thanneer-vittan Kizhangu
Sanskrit Name	:	Shatavari
English Name	:	Shatawari; Buttermilk root

Distribution and Habitat

Asparagus racemosus is a widely occurring medicinal plant belonging to the family Asparagaceae. This species is found abundantly in subtropical and tropical regions of India, Asia, Australia and Africa. It is also found up to an altitude of 1500 m in the subtropical Himalayas.



Satavari is a scandent, much-branched, spinous under-shrub with tuberous roots (rhizome), fleshy, spindle-shaped, light ash-coloured externally and white internally, more or less smooth when fresh, but on drying, develop longitudinal wrinkles and lack any well-marked odour. Leaves are just modified stems, called cladodes. Branches contain spines on them. Inflorescences develop after cladodes, axillary, each a many-flowered raceme or panicle 1-4 cm. Flowers are white, fragrant, and minute, about 3 mm long, solitary, 2.5–5 cm long. Fruit is three-lobed, berry, red, up to 6 mm in diameter, with mottled seeds and oily endosperm. Flowering and fruiting occur in December–January.

Parts used: Whole plant, rhizome

Phyto-chemical constituents

Saponin (Shatavarin – I to VI), carboxylic acid, is flavones, polycyclic hydrocarbons, furan compound, flavonoids, carbohydrates, essential fatty acids, vitamin A, B1, B2, C, E, folic acid and essential amino acids.

Medicinal uses

A. racemosus is an important medicinal plant of tropical and subtropical India. Its medicinal usage has been reported in the Indian and British Pharmacopoeias and in traditional systems of medicine such as Ayurveda, Siddha and Unani. Shatavari root possesses aphrodisiac, demulcent, general tonic, diuretic, anti-inflammatory, antiseptic, antioxidant and antispasmodic properties. Regular use of root treats infertility, impotence, leucorrhoea, menopause syndromes, hyperacidity, and certain infectious diseases such as herpes and syphilis (Sharma et al. 2011). The roots are suggested in nervous disorders, dyspepsia, diarrhoea, dysentery, tumours, inflammations, cardiac debility, hyperdipsia, neuropathy, hepatopathy, cough, bronchitis, tumour, hyperacidity and certain infectious diseases. The plant considered as the most potent female health tonic which cleanses, nourishes, and strengthens the female reproductive organs and so, it is traditionally used for premenstrual syndrome, amenorrhea, dysmenorrhoea, menopause and pelvic inflammatory disease like endometriosis (Shubha et al. 2015). It has been described as a rasayana herb and has been used extensively as an adaptogen to increase the non-specific resistance against a variety of stresses. The whole plant is useful in leprosy, epilepsy, haemorrhoids, tuberculosis, nephropathy, ophthalmopathy, scalding of urine, and vitiated condition of vata and pitta (Alok et al. 2013).



Conclusion

A. racemosus is one of the most vital rejuvenate plants in traditional medicine, having a wide range of pharmacological and medicinal activities. The plant has numerous therapeutic applications such as antioxidant, diuretic, antidepressant, antiepileptic, anti-HIV, immunostimulant, hepato-protective, cardio-protective, antimicrobial, anti-ulcerative, neurodegenerative and anticancer.

Image courtesy: <https://www.cultivatornatural.com/project/asparagus-racemosus-shatawari-roots-tbc/>

