



Herbal Garden (Muligai Vanam)

Henna



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Botanical Name	:	<i>Lawsonia inermis</i> L.
Tamil Name	:	Maruthani
Sanskrit Name	:	Mendhika
English Name	:	Henna

Distribution and Habitat

Lawsonia inermis (L.) is a shrub or small tree of the family Lythraceae. This plant is cultivated in many regions as an ornamental and commercial dye crop. It is mostly found in the tropic, sub-tropic and semi-arid zones of Africa, south Asia and north Australia.



It is a much branched, slender, evergreen shrub or small tree. It usually grows up to 6-25 feet tall. The stems and other branches can be spiny. The leaves grow opposite each other on the stem. Flowers are heavily scented, ovate with white or red stamens. Fruits are small, brownish capsule, 4-8 mm in diameter.

Parts used

Whole plant

Phyto-chemical constituents

Naphthoquinone, Coumarins, Xanthenes, Tannins, Flavonoids, Aliphatic components, Glucose, Gallic acid, Amino acids, Mannitol, Trace elements and Minerals.

Uses

It is one of the oldest cosmetics in the world and its leaves are used to colour the fingernails, to paint or decorate the palms of the hands and the soles of the feet, and to dye the grey hair. In India, mehendi function is organised before a wedding.

Medicinal uses

Henna leaves, flowers, seeds, stem bark and roots are used in traditional medicine to treat a variety of ailments such as rheumatoid arthritis, headache, ulcers, diarrhoea, leprosy, fever, diabetes, cardiac disease and hepato-protective. Leaves are used for alleviating jaundice, skin diseases, bronchitis, boils, syphilitic, scabies, and smallpox and favour the growth of the hair. Traditionally in India, the leaves are applied to hands and feet because of its cooling effect. The bark is applied in the form of decoction to burns and scalds. Root is considered as a potent medicine for gonorrhoea and herpes infection. Pulped root are applied to the heads of children for boils. Seeds in powdered form are good medicine for liver disorders and associated problems (Gagandeep et al. 2010). Flowers are used as refrigerant and in insomnia.



<https://mtechgardens.com/product/henna-mendhi-tree-lawsonia-inermis-medicinal-live-plant/>

Conclusion

L. inermis (L.) is one of the popular and important medicinal plants of tropical and sub-tropical areas of the world. Phyto-chemical constituents of this plant is responsible for its analgesic, anti-inflammatory, anti-oxidant, anti-malarial, anti-cancer and anti-microbial activity. Presence of these properties in this plant develops it as medicine against various pathogenic organism and diseases.

