



Herbal Garden (Muligai Vanam)

Nerinjil



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Botanical Name	:	<i>Tribulus terrestris</i> L.
Tamil Name	:	Palleru-mullu, Nerinjil
Sanskrit Name	:	Gokshura
English Name	:	Land caltrops

Distribution and Habitat

Tribulus terrestris L. is a dicotyledonous herbal plant of the *Zygophyllaceae* family. It is found all over India up to 11,000 ft in Kashmir, Ceylon, and all warm regions of both hemispheres. *T. terrestris* is a common weed plant with divaricate spines found in sandy soil and waste lands. It is a trailing perennial, hairy, and branched herb. Leaves are stipulate, opposite usually unequal and abruptly pinnate. Leaflets are 5-8 in pairs with



length 0.5 - 1.3 cm. Flowers are yellow, solitary, axillary, 8-12 mm in diameter and appear during July-August. Fruits are globose and spinous produced during autumn. It consists of 5-12 woody cocci, each with two pairs of hard sharp spines, one pair longer than the other. Each coccus contains several seeds with transverse partition between them.

Parts used

Leaves, fruit, roots and seeds.

Phyto-chemical constituents

Steroidal saponins, flavonoids, glycosides, phytosterols, tannins, terpenoids, amide derivatives, amino acids, and proteins.

Uses

T. terrestris has been cultivated in India to reduce soil erosion by wind and water and loss of soil moisture. It has also been used to improve soil texture and water holding capacity in wastelands (Brajeshwar, 2002).

Medicinal uses

Ancient records describe various medicinal properties of *T. terrestris* as a popular source to cure different disease conditions in China, India, and Greece. The plant is used directly as an herb or as a main component for production of a number of medicines and food supplements for physical rejuvenation, therapy for the conditions affecting liver, kidney, cardiovascular system and immune systems. It is used in folk medicine for increased muscle strength, sexual potency and in treatments of urinary infections, heart diseases and cough. It is considered invigorating stimulant, aphrodisiac, and nutritive. In India, the fruits have been used in the treatment of infertility, impotence, and low libido in Ayurveda (Sultan and Rubab, 2017). In addition, the roots and fruits are considered to have cardiogenic properties. In Chinese Pharmacopoeia the fruits of *T. terrestris* have been used for tonifying the kidneys and as a diuretic and cough expectorant that improves eyesight and for the treatment of headache and vertigo, and mammary duct blockage (Williamson, 2002).

Conclusion

T. terrestris L. is one of the popular and important medicinal plants of tropical and moderate areas of the world. The whole plant of *T. terrestris* has been reported for its biochemical and pharmacological properties.

