



Herbal Garden (Muligai Vanam)



Sirukanpeelai

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Botanical Name	:	<i>Aervalanata</i> (L.).
Tamil Name	:	Sirukanpeelai
Sanskrit Name	:	Ashmahabhedah
English Name	:	Mountain knotgrass

Distribution and Habitat

Aervalanata (L.) belongs to the family Amaranthaceae. The plant is distributed throughout the plains of India as common weed infields, wastelands, ascending up to 3000 feet in the hills. It is also found in Arabia, Sri Lanka, Egypt, Tropical Africa, Java and Philippines. In India, it is enormously seen in the states of Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka.



It is a perennial herb, erect or prostrate with many branches, 30 – 60 cms in height, camphoraceous odorous, woolly, tomentose throughout. Leaves are simple, alternate, short petiole, densely tomentose, usually smaller in flowering branches. Flowers are very small, sessile, bisexual, hoary white often clustered in spikes. Fruits are greenish, round, compressed utricle with shining black and kidney bean like seed. It is one of the plants included in *Dasapushpam*, the ten sacred flowers of Kerala.

Parts used: Whole plant

Phyto-chemical constituents

Alkaloids, steroids, poly-phenolics, flavonoids, tannins, amino acids, saponins, terpenoids, proteins, carbohydrates, cardiac glycosides

Uses

The leaves of *A. lanata* are cooked and eaten as spinach or as a vegetable. The young shoots are used in curries. The whole plant is used in religious rituals, especially during the festival of Pongal in Tamil Nadu.

Medicinal uses

A. lanata is commonly described in Ayurveda as a diuretic with anti-inflammatory, anti-helminthic, anti-bacterial and mild analgesic effects. It is used in the treatment of lithiasis, cough, asthma, and headache and as an antidote for rat poisoning. This herb is described as one of the best known remedies for bladder and kidney stones. Ayurvedic practitioners recommend a decoction of the plant to be taken internally for a few days to dissolve the stone and to clear the urinary path. The flowers are used for the removal of kidney stones and also to treat gonorrhoea, dysentery, and bronchitis. The seeds are also used in the treatment of rheumatism and diarrhoea. The leaves are used as anti-malarial, in fever and to expel stones from kidney and also as an antidote for scorpion sting. The roots are used in treating headache, scabies, cough, jaundice, cholera, dysentery and in snake bite (Rajesh et al. 2011). Paste of the leaves and roots are applied to treat severe body pain (Kosalge and Fursule, 2009). Decoction of the root is given as tonic to pregnant women and also used for the treatment of gonorrhoea and kidney disorders, cutaneous affections and sugar in urine. In folk medication, the leaves and flowers of the plant are used as wound healing and anti-inflammatory for injuries from falls, rheumatic arthritis and muscle pain. Tender shoot of the plant is used as decoction form for galactagogue to nursing mother and decoction of whole plant is taken twice a day to expel intestinal worms.



Conclusion

A. lanata, an indigenous crop grows as a weed along roadsides, wastelands and other degraded areas. The whole plant and its parts (leaf, flower, fruit, seed and root) are widely used in traditional and folkloric systems of medicine. It is also used for its remarkable nutritional, antioxidant and free radical scavenging properties. *A. lanata* has been ethno-medicinally used as a therapeutic agent for a variety of diseases especially for the treatment of kidney stones.

Photo link

<https://www.arogyaniketan.in/om/medicine/>; <https://plantingman.com/aerva-lanata-mountain-knotgrass-herb-garden/>

