



Herbal Garden (Muligai Vanam)

Avaram



Dr. A. Abirami

Programme Officer

C.P.R. Environmental Education Centre
Chennai

Botanical Name	:	<i>Cassia auriculata</i> Linn.
Tamil Name	:	Avaram
Sanskrit Name	:	Aveeram
English Name	:	Tanner's Cassia

Distribution and Habitat

Cassia auriculata L. is a shrub which belongs to the family Fabaceae and is found in India, Myanmar and Sri Lanka. It grows in the wild in the states of Rajasthan, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh. It is also extensively cultivated in dry and warm places. It can thrive on dry stony hills, on black soils, along the road side, in degraded forests, waste land, railway embankments (Kheem and Singh, 2016). It is a perennial plant growing to a height of about 2 to 4m. The stem is strong, brown in colour with several branches. Leaves alternate, 6-8 cm long, leaflets 6-8 pairs, oblong to elliptic-oblong, each 1.5-3 x 0.5-2 cm, stipulate, flowers yellowish, 5 cm across. The fruit is a pod, long and dehiscent.



Parts used

Whole plant

Uses

The bark produces high quality tannin and is used in leather industries. The leaf is used as green manure. Local people use the leaves as a substitute for soap.

Medicinal uses

It is an ancient medicinal plant used widely in the traditional Ayurvedic system of medicine for its diabetes, liver toxicity, fungal infection, microbial infection, inflammation, pyrexia etc. It is also useful in the treatment of ulcers, leprosy and liver diseases (Joy et al. 2012). Generally

Cassia species are well known for their laxative and purgative constituents and are also used for the cure of skin diseases. The different parts of the plant are used by the tribal people in India for the treatment of body heat and cuts, asthma and cough, dysentery, rheumatism and toothache and skin infections (Sandhya et al. 2006). The decoction of the dried petals is used to cure diabetes. The tea prepared from the leaves of *C. auriculata* is used in chronic fever



and the fruits are anti-helminthic. A mixture called “*aavarai panchaga choornam*” is prepared from the dried powder of the plant (equal amount of leaves, roots, flowers, barks and unripe fruits) and is used to treat diabetes (Latha and Pari, 2003). The traditional and ethno-medicinal literature shows that the plant is very effective and safe for medicinal uses. However, it is not recommended to use Cassia as an herbal medicine during pregnancy, breast feeding and at least two weeks before a planned surgery.

Conclusion

Cassia auriculata is considered as a versatile medicinal plant in both the Ayurvedic and modern drug development areas for its valuable medicinal uses. Based on various research reports, the plant or its individual parts can be used as an anti-diabetic, anti-helminthic, hepatoprotective, anti-fungal and anti-microbial, anti-inflammatory, anti-pyretic, antioxidant, anti-hyper-lipidemic activity. Cultivation of *Cassia auriculata* is now being taken up on a large scale to meet the demand for its medicinal properties.

