



Herbal Garden (Muligai Vanam)

Kolinghi



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Botanical Name	:	Tephrosia purpurea L.
Tamil Name	:	Kolinghi
Sanskrit Name	:	Sharpunkha
English Name	:	Wild indigo

Distribution and Habitat

Tephrosia purpurea L. belongs to family *Fabaceae* distributed throughout the plains of India, Ceylon, Mauritius, Tropical Africa and subtropical regions. It grows ubiquitously in all soils, sandy, rocky and loamy. It is a perennial erect herb or sub shrub, up to 50 cm tall. Leaves pinnate with a single leaflet at the apex; Flowers are red or purple in leaf opposed racemes, flower 4-8.5 mm long, purplish to white. Seed rectangular to transversely ellipsoid, light to dark brown to black, sometimes mottled. Fruits are large and 2-12 cm long, very densely villous or tomentose. Roots are cylindrical, tapering, posses characteristic odour, brownish yellow in colour and has a complex bitter taste.



Parts used

Whole plant

Phytochemical constituents

Glycosides, rotenoids, isoflavones, flavanones, chalcones, flavanols, and sterols.

Uses

The plant is used as green manure. The plant is used as insecticide and pesticide. The leaves yield an orange-brown dye. The seeds are also used as a substitute for coffee in Indo-China.

The roots are used by some tribal people of the Brahmaputra Valley of Assam for flavouring milk.

Medicinal uses

All parts of the plant have tonic and laxative properties. In Ayurvedic system of medicine various parts of this plant are used as remedy for impotency, asthma, diarrhoea, gonorrhoea, rheumatism, ulcer and urinary disorders. The dried plant is diuretic and useful in treating bronchitis, bilious febrile attacks and obstructions of the liver, spleen and kidneys. It is also recommended as a blood purifier, in the treatment of boils and pimples and is considered a cordial treatment (Rajan *et al.* 2011). A decoction of the fruit is given as a treatment against intestinal worms. A fruit extract is used to relieve bodily pains and inflammatory problems. The roots are bitter and anthelmintic. It is also used as a treatment against dyspepsia, colic, and chronic diarrhoea (Park and Ernst, 2005). The pounded leaves are used as a decoction against snake-bite. The leaves and leaf buds are ground and mixed with salt and coconut as a topical treatment for cuts and itchy skin.



Conclusion

Tephrosia purpurea L. has played an important role in the traditional medicine. The pharmacological studies have shown that the plant possess following biological activity such as anti-ulcer, anti-microbial, anti-bacterial, anti-viral, anti-asthmatic, hepato-protective, anti-diabetic, anti-cholesterolemic, anti-oxidant, wound healing property, and anti-allergic activity. A wide variety of phyto-chemicals are isolated from the plant *T. purpurea* which has concerned with their medicinal uses.

