

## About the Author



Dr. Fareena Ruzaik is Senior Lecturer of the Dept. of Geography, University of Colombo, possessing great knowledge and experience in the field of environment. She has a great exposure in teaching multiple courses in relation to medical geography and environmental health management.

At present, she is the Secretary of the Ethics Review Committee for Social Sciences and Humanities (ERCSSH), Faculty of Arts, UoC. and a member of the Board of Directors, Centre for Development Research and Intervention (CDRI).

'Medicinal Plants in Sri Lanka' is the third publication of Dr. Fareena and this book is an exquisite guide for assessing the potential medicinal values of specific medicinal species, available in Sri Lanka. It is a great source of knowledge for learners (undergraduate and postgraduate), traditional medicinal consumers and researchers. This book contains detailed information regarding 294 medicinal plants traditionally used in Sri Lanka together with their distribution, composition and benefits/uses. The descriptions each plant includes with photos, botanical name, synonyms, common name (Sinhala & Tamil), and its benefits.

I appreciate Dr. F. Ruzaik for her valuable effort in this nature.

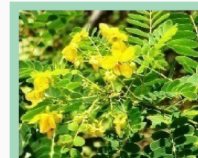
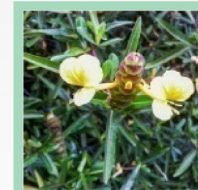
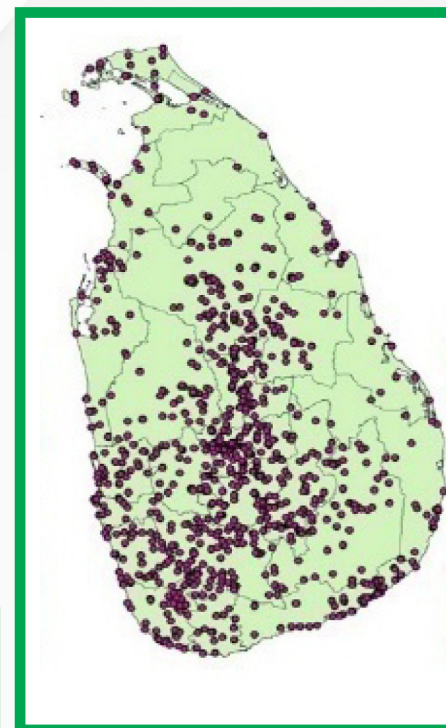
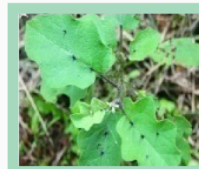
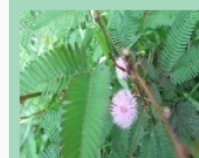
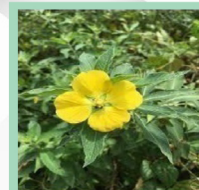
I wish her great success in all her future endeavors!

Senior Prof. Lasantha Manawadu  
Dean, Faculty of Arts  
University of Colombo  
Colombo-03.

15<sup>th</sup> February 2021

# Medicinal Plants in Sri Lanka.

## Geographical Distribution and Its Benefits



Medicinal Plants in Sri Lanka.

Geographical Distribution and Its Benefits



978-624-97677-2-0



GEO Book Publications

Dr. Fareena Ruzaik

## Foreword

It is my pleasure to write a “foreword” for this book on “**Medicinal Plants in Sri Lanka** - Geographical distribution and its benefits”, authored by Dr. Fareena Ruzaik, Department of Geography, University of Colombo. The author has a great exposure and experience in teaching multiple curriculums in relation to medical geography and environmental health management. Her research interest is on environment pollution and human health, environmental health & protection, forestry and ecotourism.

Her social approach on human health provides a platform to write this book on “Medicinal Plants in Sri- Lanka”. This book is an exhaustive guide for assessing the potential medicinal value of particular species and provides a comprehensive overview of the health benefits, along with the geographical distribution. According to WHO, herbal drugs are the best source to obtain a variety of drugs. In developing countries, about 80% of the population depends on traditional medicine. The traditional medicine, which is mainly based on plant sources, consists of significant amounts of bioactive compounds.

I hope that this book will be useful to undergraduate, postgraduate students and the public as well.

I warmly congratulate Dr. Fareena Ruzaik for her tireless effort in undertaking an academic work as such and wish her all the best for her future endeavors-

**Dr. M. I. S. Safeena**

Senior Lecturer

Department of Biological Science

Faculty of Applied Sciences

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31<sup>st</sup> March 2021

## **Preface**

Medicinal plants have been used traditionally to cure diseases. The knowledge and experience on the usage of medicinal plants were shared from generation to generation. Periodically, the usage of medicinal plants for treatment gradually abandoned with the introduction of the western medicine since the 19th century. Once again, usage of medicinal herbs have become prudential after the United Nation's Conference on "Human and Environment" in Stockholm in 1972. Green concept especially in the tourism hospitality services has contributed immensely to boost the usage of medicinal plants for treatments, prophylaxis, physiotherapy and preparing synthetic drugs.

The book on 'Medicinal Plants in Sri Lanka' is a guide for identifying the potential medicinal species available in Sri Lanka. This book contains 294 medicinal plants varieties, its distribution, composition, and benefits, which were organized in the alphabetical order. The descriptions of each plant includes photos, their botanical name and common names (Sinhala & Tamil). This book shall be useful for undergraduate and post-graduate students and consumers, those intend to know about multiple varieties of medicinal plants.

I would like to extend my sincere gratitude to all those who have supported me in various forms to make this publication a success.

**Dr. Fareena Ruzaik (Ph.D.)**  
Department of Geography  
University of Colombo

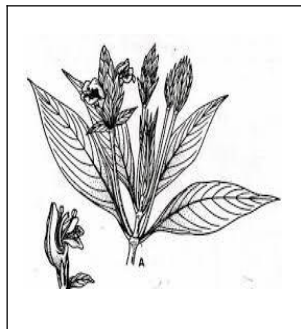
31<sup>st</sup> March 2021

***Justicia adhatoda*, *Adhatoda vasica***

Agaladaia, Adhatoda, Wanepala,  
Wetahera (Sinh.); Adhathoda (Tam.)

**Distribution:** common undershrub in mangrove swamps and ditches, along the sea-coast

**Composition:** The leaves contain the alkaloids vasicine, vasicinone and betaine and an essential oil.



**Uses:** The expressed juice of the leaves of this shrub is used for diarrhea, dysentery phthisis, cough, asthma and other bronchial diseases. According to Roberts, it is useful for pneumonia, typhoid and rheumatic fevers. The leaves dried and made into cigarettes are smoked for asthma. The root bark is used for hemoptysis, heart diseases, catarrh and eye diseases. The fresh flowers are used for ophthalmia, recommended as a snake-bite remedy. The fresh roots, bark and leaves are bruised and applied to wounds. Internally, it acts as a direct cholagogue increasing the flow of and liquefying the bile proving useful in acute and chronic congestion of the liver, jaundice and biliousness.

## **Acanthus ilicifolius**

Ikili, Katu-ikili (Sinh.); Attumulli, Kolimulli, Uppukkaranimulli (Tam.)

**Distribution:** In Ceylon, it is a common undershrub in mangrove swamps and ditches, along the seacoast.

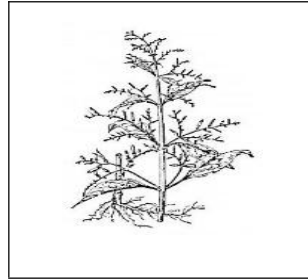
**Composition:** The leaves contain a bitter alkaloid, an organic acid, resin and fatty matter.

**Uses:** The whole plant is used as a nervine tonic, expectorant and stimulant. The root is used for coughs and asthma.



## **Andrographis paniculata**

Hin-binkohomba  
(Sinh.); Pavettai, Vachai, Nilavembu  
(Tam.)



**Distribution:** waste ground

### **Composition:**

**Uses:** The plant is useful for treating general debility, dysentery and certain forms of dyspepsia. The roots and leaves are febrifuge, stomachic, tonic, alterative and anthelmintic.

## **Alaagium salviifolium**

Eepatta, Ruk-anguna (Sinh.); Adigolam, Alangi, Alinjil, An, Angolam, Angolavayiravan, Arulavam, Attigolam, Eginam, Eralinjil, Karikkolam, Karuppuvalinjil, Mul-anninchil, Oru (Tam.)



### **Distribution:**

Jaffna,

Polonnaruwa, Anuradhapura, Kurunegala, Laggala, Hanguranketa, Uma Oya, Dikwella (Uva Prov.), Colombo,

**Composition:** Contains the alkaloid akharkantine, the seed alamarckine, root-bark alangi nine, alangiums A and B and ankoline, and the bark lamarkine and bases.

**Uses:** The leaves are used as a poultice to relieve rheumatic pains while the root bark is used in piles and as an anthelmintic and purgative. The stem bark is bitter and is used for the treatment of skin diseases and pyrexia. It is a suitable substitute for Ipecacuanha. Both bark and root are used as an antidote for cobra-bite poisoning.

## ***Achvrairthes aspera***

Gaskaralheba, Karalsebo (Sinh.); Nayurivi Shiru-kadaladi (Tam.)

**Distribution:** In Ceylon, it is a very common weed in dry places in waste land and among grasses.

**Composition:** Contains an alkaloid. The leaves contain saponin and the fruit a large percentage of alkaline ash containing potash.



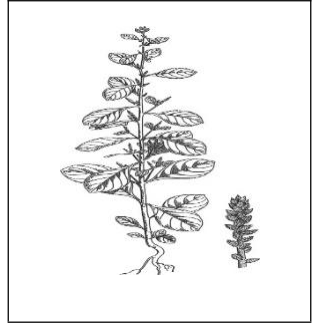
**Uses:** The plant is used in the form of a decoction, as a diuretic in dropsical affections and as a laxative. The juice of the leaves relieves toothache. Internally it is taken for dysentery. The root is used for preparations in the treatment of bleeding piles and for retention of memory. The root bark made into a paste with water is applied to the eye for removing opacities in the cornea and on scorpion stings. The ash of the plant is given with bees' honey for coughs. The seed is used in the treatment of hydrophobia.

## **Aerva lanata**

Polpala, Polkudupala (Sinh.); Sirupulai (Tam.)

**Distribution:** In Ceylon, it is a common weed in the mid and low-country especially in the Dry Zone both in waste and cultivated ground.

**Uses:** A decoction of the plant is a reputed diuretic and considered of great value in lithiasis. The plant is also used for coughs and as a vermifuge for children. The roots are used in the treatment of headaches.

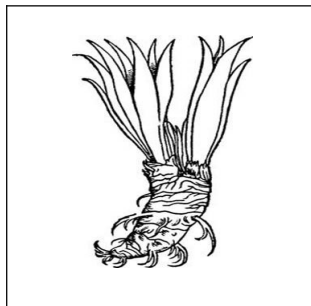


### **Acornus calamus**

Wadakaha (Sinh.); Vashambu (Tam.)

**Distribution:** In Ceylon, it is cultivated locally as a medicinal herb.

**Composition:** The rhizome contains an alkaloid, mainly choline, bitter glucosides acorin and calamine A, an essential oil, calamol, and a resin, gum, starch and tannin. The essential oil is said to contain asarone, palmitic and heptic acids, ester of palmitic acid with some pinene, camphene, asaraldehyde, eugenol, calamene, calamerol and calameon."

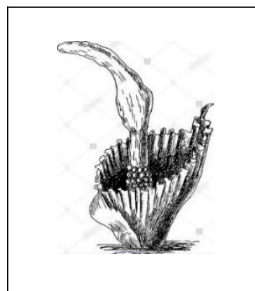


**Uses:** In Ceylon, an infusion of the rhizome is given for dyspepsia, flatulence, choleraic diarrhoea in children, cough, fever, and with other ingredients for abdominal colic, dropsy, piles, asthma and anaemia. It is an antidote for several poisons.

### **Amorphophallus campanulatus**

Kidaran, (Sinh.); Karunaikkalang, Karunaikkilhangu (Tam.)

**Distribution:** In Ceylon, it is found commonly in the moist low-country up to 2000 feet altitude, especially near the coast;



extremely abundant between Galle and Matara

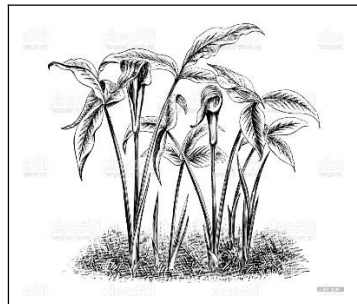
**Composition:** The tuber contains an alkaloid, fat, protein and carbohydrates.

**Uses:** The corm is used externally to relieve pain in acute rheumatism. With other ingredients, it is used for preparations for the treatment of piles, acute dyspepsia, abdominal colic, elephantiasis, skin and blood diseases, fistula, glandular swellings in the neck, urinary diseases and dropsy. The root is used for boils and ophthalmia. The corm, as well as the roots, are useful for haemorrhoids. The crushed seed relieves tooth-ache. The corm is eaten during periods of food scarcity.

### **Arisaema leschenaultii**

Wal-kidaran (Sinh.)

**Distribution:** In Ceylon it is commonly found in shady places in the montane region.

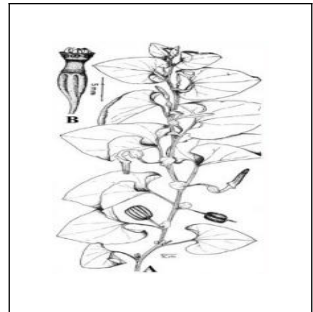


**Uses:** The tubers are used for the same diseases as *Amorphophallus campanulatus* tubers are employed. They are used for piles, haemorrhoids, dyspepsia, abdominal colic, fistula, urinary and skin diseases.

### **Aristolochia brocieolata**

Sapsanda (Sinh.); Aduthinnappalai,  
Adutintappalai (Tam.)

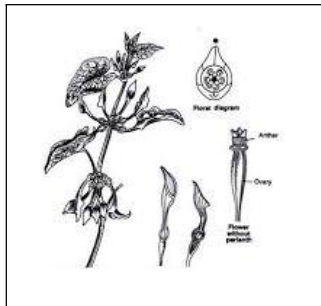
**Distribution:** In Ceylon, it is rather common in the dry sandy regions of Jaffna, Mannar, Puttalam, Trincomalee, Batticaloa, Anuradhapura and Tangalle.



**Uses:** Every part of this plant is very bitter. For the treatment of gripe with purging, two fresh leaves are crushed in water and given once every 24 hours. The leaves are applied to the naval for constipation in children and also given internally with castor oil as a remedy for colic. The root and leaf yield a thick, yellowish juice which is mixed with boiled milk and given for syphilis and combined with opium is used in treating gonorrhoea. The bruised leaf mixed with castor oil is applied for obstinate cases of eczema. A decoction of the root followed by castor oil is given as treatment for roundworms

## **Aristolochia indica**

Sapsanda (Sinh.); Adugam, Isadesatti, Isura, Isuraver, Isuramuli, Iyavari, Karudakkodi, Kirttikodi, Neya, Perumanndu, Perumaruntu, Perunkilangu, Sarsugadi, Taluichuruli (Tam.)



**Distribution:** In Ceylon, it is commonly found in the moist regions up to an altitude of 3000 ft. Jaffna, Matale. Hantane.

**Composition:** The roots of this plant contain the alkaloid aristolochine and isoaristolochic acid.

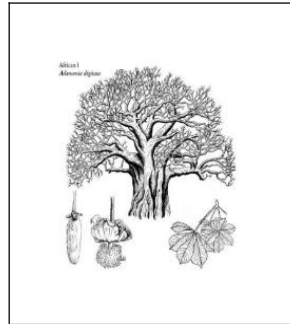
**Uses:** The bitter root of this herb is used as a stimulant, tonic and emmenagoguc and is used for treating intermittent fevers, diarrhoea, dropsy and other affections. The powdered root with honey is given for dropsy, leucoderma, tonsilitis and chronic dyspepsia. The fresh leaves ground with water are applied in acute and chronic rheumatism. The bruised roots are applied to bites of centipedes and scorpion stings. The plant is also used as an antidote for cobra poison.

## **Adansonia digitata**

Aliya gaha (Sinh.); Anaippuli, Pappaiappuli, Pcrukku, Puri (Tam.)

**Distribution:** In Ceylon, it has been planted in Mannar, Batticaloa and Peradeniya.

**Composition:** The bark contains a crystalline bitter principle, adansonin. which has a strophanthus-like action and the fruit, free tartaric acid, potassium bitartrate, pectic substances, proteins, sugars, citric acid and a bitter principle. The fruit pulp has a high ascorbic acid content. The leaf abounds in mucilage and contains sodium chloride, potassium acid tartrate and tannin. The soft, oily kernel of the seed contains a fixed oil.

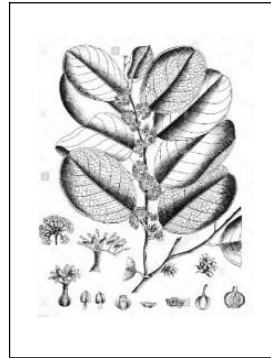


**Uses:** The leaves are considered an emollient, diuretic and a febrifuge. The pulp of the fruit is given for pestilential fevers and as an astringent in diarrhoea and dysentery. The seed is a remedy for dysentery.

## **Anogeissus latifolia**

Dawu (Sinh.); Namai, Vekkali, Vellanagai, Vellainamai (Tam.)

**Distribution:** It is rare in Ceylon growing in open grasslands in the dry country, often gregarious. Haragama, Bintenne, Nilgala

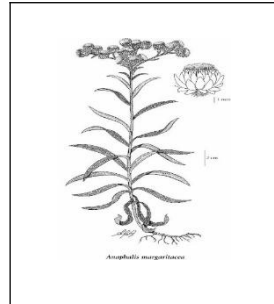


**Uses:** Used in the treatment of snake-bites. The bark is used for the preparation of a remedy against painful expectoration and obstruction of the windpipe by phlegm.

## **Anaphalis subdecurrens**

Mahasudana (Sinh.)

**Distribution:** in Ceylon in the montane zone between 4000—7000 feet altitude. It is abundant in the Uva'patanas.



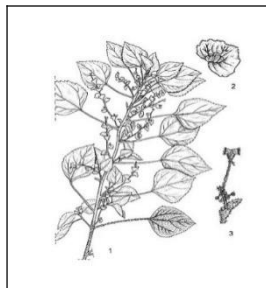
Annual herbs 18-40(-70) cm tall, erect. Stems densely white tomentose. Flowers yellow, female corollas 25-30, 1.5-2 mm long, hermaphrodite corollas 5-10, 1.75-2.25 mm long.

**Uses:** In preparation of medicinal oils for removal of poisonous effects from the body.

## **Acalypha indica**

Kuppameniya (Sinh.); Kuppaimeni, Kuppamani (Tam.)

**Distribution:** In Ceylon.it is a common weed in cultivated and waste ground in the low-country especially, in the dry regions.



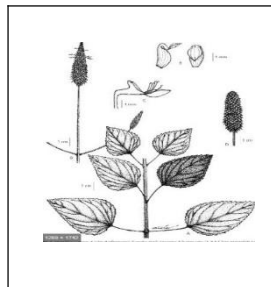
**Composition:** Contains the alkaloids, acalyphine and triacetanamine, resin, tannin, a volatile oil and a cyanogenetic glucoside.

**Uses:** The leaves possess laxative powers A decoction of the leaves and roots is given to children as an expectorant and emetic for bronchitis. The fresh juice of the leaves is given for asthma and bronchitis. A teaspoonful of the juice with a tablespoonful of arrack taken early in the morning on an empty stomach for a fortnight, is said to cure asthma. The root bruised in water is used as a cathartic. Externally, a poultice made with the fresh bruised leaves applied to the lower part of the abdomen is a popular remedy for spasmodic retention of urine. The leaves are an anti- parasiticide. The powdered dry leaves are used for bed sores and a paste of it for ringworm. In chronic constipation in children, a paste of the leaves made into a ball and introduced to the rectum relieves contraction of the sphincter ani. The juice of the leaves mixed with lime is applied for painful rheumatic affections

### **Anisochilus carnosus**

Gal-kapparawalliya (Sinh.); Karppuravalli (Tam.)

**Distribution:** It is rare in Ceylon in the low-country, usually found growing on exposed rocks. Dambulla, Four Korales, etc.



**Composition:** The oil content was 0.13% (v/w), on a fresh weight basis. The oil composition was analysed by GC and GC-MS and 28 compounds were identified, accounting for 94.3% of the oil. Carvacrol (27.9%), camphor (14.1%) and  $\alpha$ -cis-bergamotene (10.2%) were the most abundant components. The oil is active against Gram-positive and Gram-negative bacteria.

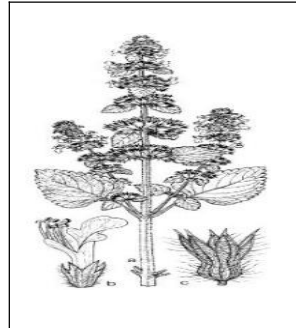
**Uses:** Useful for coughs in children, as a mild stimulant and expectorant.

## **Anisomeles indica**

Yakwanassa(Sinh.); Peyameratti (Tam.)

**Distribution:** It is common in the moist low-country in Ceylon up to 3000 feet altitude.

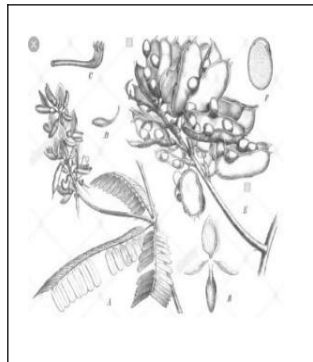
**Composition:** Contains a volatile oil and a bitter alkaloid.



**Uses:** An infusion is useful for stomach and bowels ailments, for catarrh and intermittent fevers. The juice of the leaves is given to children for colic dyspepsia and fever due to teething. A decoction of the plant is an excellent fomentation for rheumatic joints and severe pains.

### **Abrus precatorius**

Olinda (Sinh.); Adisamiyai, Adimaduram, Adingam, Atti, Edalagam, Egunru, Kandam, Kunjam, Kunjuram, Kunri, Kunrimani, Kuruvindam, Maduragam, Singili, Siridam, Sittilai (Tam.)



**Distribution:** It is common in Ceylon, especially in the dry regions.

**Composition:** The leaves and roots contain glycyrrhizin, while the leaves contain abrin in addition. The seeds contain a toxalbumin abrine, a glucoside abralin, poisonous proteins, a fat-splitting enzyme, abrossic acid, haemagglutinin and urease.

**Uses:** In Ceylon, it is used to cure itch and sores and wounds due to bites of dogs, cats and rats and as a specific on leucoderma along with other ingredients. The leaves have anti-suppurative properties. Ground with lime they are applied on acne, boils and abscesses with much benefit. The plant is largely used in the treatment of tetanus and for the prevention of hydrophobia after rabid dog-bites. -The seeds are also used in the treatment of diabetes and chronic Bright's disease.

### **Acacia chundra**

Kihiri, Rat-kihiri (Sinh.), Kodali, Murunkai, Karangaali (Tam.)

**Distribution:** It is rare in Ceylon confined to the dry regions of the Northern Province and Sabaragamuwa Province.

**Composition:** The contain predominant seed protein fractions were globulins and albumins



**Uses:** The heartwood of this tree along with other ingredients is used for preparations of pills for the treatment of fevers accompanied with diarrhoea and worms. It is also used with other drugs for preparations of decoctions in the treatment of biliousness, eczema, insanity and poisoning. It is an astringent and tonic similar to Acacia catechu. Because of the tannic acid and resin, it contains, it is used as an antiseptic and often applied to chronic ulcers and also used as a gargle for bleeding and spongy gums, stomatitis and chronic pharyngitis. Maserated with fresh tamarind leaves and lime juice, it is a favourite remedy on local inflammations of the skin, for inflamed glands and on boils and abscesses. It is said to possess anti-suppurative and antiseptic properties and used for skin diseases such as eczema, psoriasis, acne and dermatitis.

## ***Albizzia odoratissima***

Hurimara, Suriyamara (Sinh.);  
Kalitturinjil, Kaliyunjai, Karuvagai,  
Purusilai (Tam.)

**Distribution:** It is common in the low-country in Ceylon, in both moist and dry regions.



**Composition:** The significant antimicrobial activity against Gram positive bacteria which might be due to the presence of steroids, saponins and phenolics in the bark.

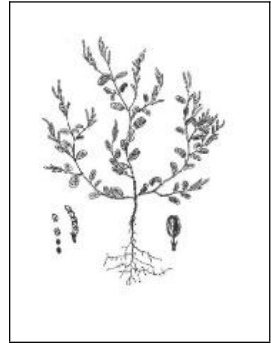
**Uses:** The bark is used externally for leprosy and inveterate ulcers. The leaves boiled in ghee are used as a remedy for coughs. The bark is used as a fish poison.

## ***Alysicarpus vaginalis***

Aswenna (Sinh.); Pullardi (Tam.)

**Distribution:** It is common in the low-country in Ceylon, especially in the dry regions.

**Uses:** In Ceylon it is used specifically for dissolving stones in the bladder. It is an antiperiodic and combined with other antiperiodics used in chronic malarial fevers. It is also a diuretic, diluent and demulcent to the urinary tract and is useful in cardiac, renal and hepatic dropsy, chronic pyelitis, cystitis, gonorrhoea and strangury.



## **Aloe vera**

Komarika (Sinh.); Angani, Angini, kattralai, kodiyan, sifukattalai, sivappusottukkattalai, sottukkattalai, veligam (Tam.)

**Distribution:** It is extremely abundant on the seashore of the north coast of Ceylon and naturalized. Mannar; Kalpitiya, Jaffna, Kanakesanturai



**Composition:** The leaves contain barbaloin, isobarbaloin, emodin, resin, cinnamic acid, darakinose, oxydase and traces of a volatile oil

**Uses:** Aloe is used for constipation, dyspepsia, coughs, asthma, nervous diseases, glandular enlargements of the spleen and various types of dropsies, piles and colics. The fresh juice of the leaves is cathartic and cooling. It is used for various eye diseases. The dried juice is often applied with lime juice for reducing swellings and promoting granulation in ulcers. In the Philippines, the juice is applied to prevent the falling of hair and to cure baldness. It is mixed with milk and given for dysentery and pains in the kidney. A vaseline ointment prepared with it is useful for treating burns and scalds

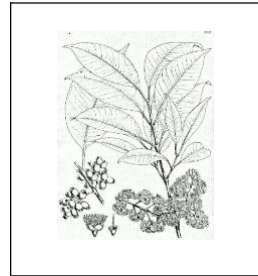
### ***Acronychia pedunculata***

Ankenda (Sinh.); Kattukanni, Muttainari (Tam.)

**Distribution:** Occurs in India, Malaya, Ceylon and Philippine Islands. It is common in Ceylon up to 5,000 feet elevation.

**Composition:** The leaves of this tree contain an aromatic oil

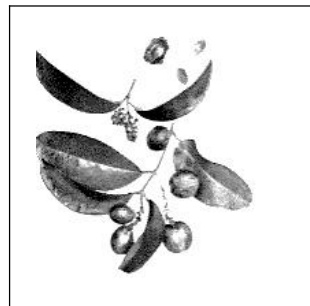
**Uses:** The bark is used externaliy on swellings, fractures, sores and ulcers and taken internally as a purgative. In Indo-China, it is prescribed as a tonic for scabies.



### ***Atalantia missionis***

Yakinaran (Sinh); Pey-kurundhu (Tam.)

**Distribution:** Occurs in India specially in the Madras Presidency and Ceylon. It is rather common in the low-country dry regions in Ceylon. Batticatoa, Jaffna, Panadura, etc



**Composition:** A much branched small tree with grey bark, rugged smooth branchlets armed with short, sharp spines 0.6-1.2 cm long; leaves simple, exstipulate, large, 6.3-10 cm long, broadly oblong or obovate -oval, somewhat tapering at base, obtuse or rounded at apex, entire or shallowly crenate, undulate, glabrous coriaceous, pellucid-punctate, veins very obscure; flowers regular, bisexual, white fragrant, numerous, lobes acute; petals 4 or 5, distinct, imbricate, narrowly oval, spreading or recurved, soon falling; ovary superior, small, glabrous on a short gynophore, 4 or 5-locular with 2 ovules in each loculus, style long stout, thickened upwards; fruit a 4 or 5-chambered, globular berry about 2.5 cm long with a thick rind, each chamber with one or two globose seeds embedded in a glutinous mucilage

**Uses:** The leaves of this tree are used on swellings, fractures, piles and fistula. Internally, a decoction of the leaves is given for phlegm and puerperal diseases.

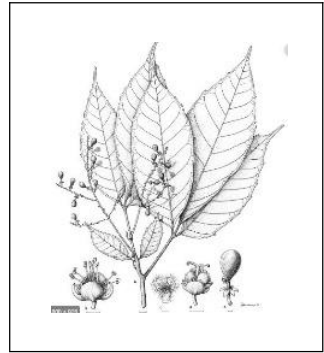
### **Allophylus cobbe**

Bu-kobbe, Kobbe, Kobo (Sinh.); Amlai (Tam.)

**Distribution:** Occurs in India, Ceylon, N Australia and Indian Archipelago. It is very common in the moist low-country in Ceylon

**Composition:** The seed of this plant contains an unidentified alkaloid.

**Uses:** This plant is an emenagogue. The astringent root is employed to check diarrhoea. All parts of the plant are used for preparation of medicinal oils for use on fractures

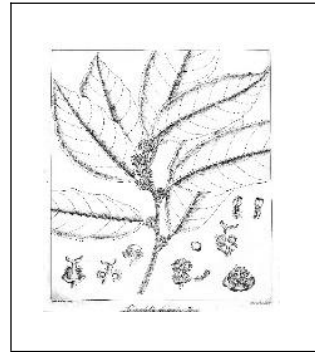


## ***Allophylus zeylanicus***

Walkobo, Wel-kobbe (Sinh.)

**Distribution:** Occurs in India and Ceylon it is rather common in the moist regions in Ceylon. Hunnasgiriya, Hantane, Ambagamuwa, Haputale, Hakgala, Maturata, etc

**Uses:** All parts of this tree are used for preparation of medicinal oils applied on fractures. The leaves and bark are also applied as a poultice.

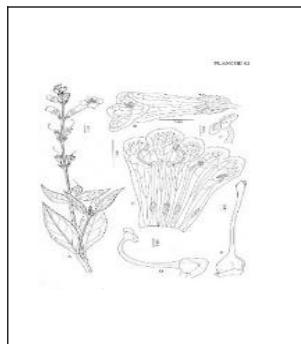


## **Artanema longifolium**

Gaskotala(Sinh.)

**Distribution:** It is rather common in Ceylon in open and waste ground up to 4000 feet altitude.

**Composition:** A stout herb, stem 60—90 cm tall, erect, branched, quadrangular with very acute angles, glabrous, often purple; leaves simple, opposite, exstipulate, sessile, 6.2—12.5 cm long, narrowly ovate-lanceolate, tapering to base, acuminate, very acute at apex, serrate, harsh on both sides and at margin with fine asperities; lowers irregular, bisexual, large, rather dull violet-purple on short pedicels, in long, erect, lax, terminal racemes; sepals 5, strongly imbricate, ovate, acute, nearly glabrous; petals 5, nearly 2.5 cm long, 2-lipped, upper lip erect, lower lip 3-lobed, lobes rounded, obtuse; stamens 4, dilated at base with prominent knobs; ovary superior, 2-locular with numerous ovules in each loculus, style simple, stigma of two blades; fruit a. globose capsule, seeds tabulated.

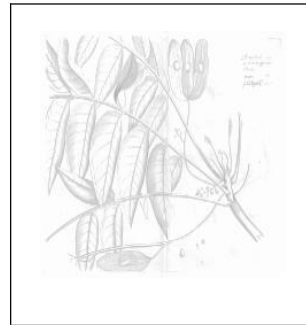


**Uses:** A decoction of the root is given for rheumatism, stones in the bladder, ophthalmia and diarrhoea. Seeds are used to improve vitality, favour conception and cure biliousness.

### **Ailanthus triphysa**

Kambalu, Kumbulu, Maha-kohomba, Wal-bilin (Sinh.); Mattipalai, Peru, Peru-maram Peru vempu, Pongiliyam (Tam.)

**Distribution:** Occurs in India, Ceylon, Burma and Cochin-China. It is rather rare in the moist low-country in Ceylon. Seven Korales, Colombo, Gampaha, etc.

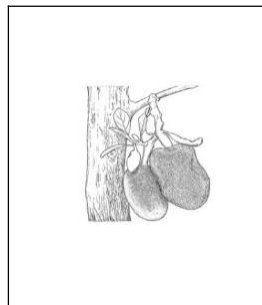


**Composition:** The bark and leaves of this tree contain ailanthic acid

**Uses:** The juice of the fresh bark and the gum resin which exudes from the injured bark are excellent remedies for dyspepsia, diarrhoea, dysentery and bronchitis. The leaves are recommended for cephalalgia and gastralgia. A decoction of the root bark given, internally acts as an antidote against cobra-bite poisoning.

### **Artocarpus heterophyllus**

Herali, Kos, Waraka, Wela (Sinh.); Pala, Palasu, Palavu, Panasam, Pila, Sira, Tagar, Vasukkai, Verphala (Tam.)



**Distribution:** most tropical countries including Ceylon, where it flourishes in the moist mid and low-country.

**Composition:** The fruit of this tree contains a high carbohydrate content but is deficient in calcium and iron. The seeds are rich in starch. The wood contains morin and a crystalline compound, cyanomaclurin which has been found to contain the phloroglucinol group. The pulp of the fruit is rich in vitamin C.

**Uses:** The fruit is eaten in various forms. The rich yellow flesh (aril) surrounding the seeds is sweet and aromatic when ripe and eaten raw. The young fruits are curried or prepared into pickles. The tender leaves minced fine and roasted with scraped coconut is a specific for insomnia, while the juice of the tender fruit with coconut milk and jaggery is a miraculous antidote for narcotic poisoning. The leaves are used in skin diseases and the root for diarrhoea and fever. The roots are also used for skin diseases and as an antiasthmatic.. An infusion of the mature leaves and bark is given for stones in the bladder and for diabetes.

## ***Asteracantha longifolia***

Katu-ikriya-, Neera-mulliya (Sinh.);  
niramalli (Tam.)

**Distribution:** In Ceylon, it is common in the dry zone and in the low-country in ditches and marshy places.

**Composition:** The plant contains the alkaloids lupeol in the roots and hentriacontane in the leaves. The root also contains a trace of a volatile oil, a yellowish-green wax, a sticky gum, maltose, hygrosterol and a crystalline substance. The leaf contains cholesterol and the seeds, a semi-drying oil.



**Uses:** The burnt ashes of the plant with cow urine is given for oedema and dropsy. A decoction of the root is a diuretic and administered for stones in the kidney, hepatic derangements and as an antidiysenteric. The seeds are given for gonorrhoea, jaundice, anasarca and to serve as an aphrodisiac. In the Muslim system of Ayurveda, the plant is used externally as a poultice or embrocation for rheumatism.

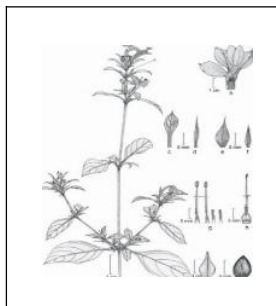
### **Barleria prionitis**

Katukaranda (Sinh.); kodippachalai, Kovindam, Kudan, Kurinji, Manjachemulli, Semmulli, Sengudan, Varalmulli, Vettargutti (Tam.)

**Distribution:** In Ceylon, it is a common weed found in open places in the dry regions of the Island.

**Composition:** Leaf, roots, bark and ashes of the plants use as a component of folk medicines.

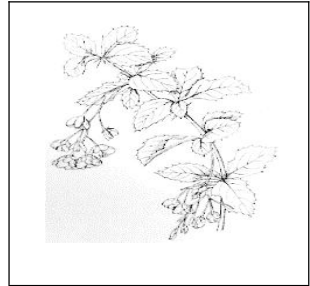
**Uses:** The plant is a cholagogue and diuretic, and useful in acute and chronic congestion of the liver, jaundice, urinary and paralytic affections and in cardiac, renal and hepatic dropsy. It has antirheumatic properties and gives excellent results in both acute and chronic rheumatism. The root is given in decoction form for enlargement of scrotum and rat-bite poisoning. In Konkan, the dried bark is given for whooping cough while in Madras the juice of the leaves is given to children for catarrhal affections. The ashes of the plant with conjee and water is given for dropsy and coughs. In the Philippine Islands the juice of the leaves is applied on bleeding gums and dropped into the ear for otitis. With honey it is given to children with catarrhal affections. In Africa a decoction of the root is used as a mouthwash to relieve toothache. A paste of the root is applied with



## **Berberis arisrata**

Rasandun (Sinh.); Mullukala, Mullukulapattai, Usikkala (Tam.)

**Distribution:** Upper Montane range in Ceylon. It is very common in open bushy places at Nuwara Eliya, Horton Plains and Hakgala.



**Composition:** The bark contains the alkaloids, berberine and palmatine.

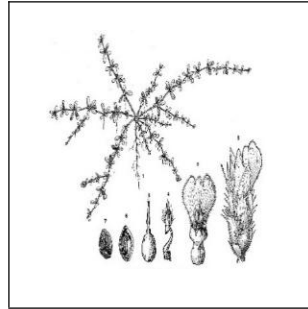
**Uses:** A decoction of the roots and bark is given for jaundice, diarrhoea, malarial fever and painful micturition due to bilious or acrid urine. Externally, it is used in all ailments of the eye, skin diseases and for cleaning ulcers. In Ceylon it is used along with other ingredients for dysentery, abdominal colic, nervous diseases, blood and skin diseases and menorrhagia with copious discharges from the womb.

### **Blepharis repens**

Samadana (Sinh.); Chemprandai (Tam);

**Distribution:** dry zone and in the low-country in ditches and marshy places. Jaffna, Mannar, Trincomalee and Batticaloa Districts

**Uses:** This plant is used as a substitute for *Blepharis edulis* Pers. which is employed as an astringent to the bowels, aphrodisiac, urinary discharges, leucoderma, mental derangements and applied to wounds and ulcers. The seeds are considered attenuant, resolvent, and diuretic aphrodisiac, expectorant and deobstruent. Benefit to boils and glandular swellings. The plant is used as a snake-bite remedy in Thailand.



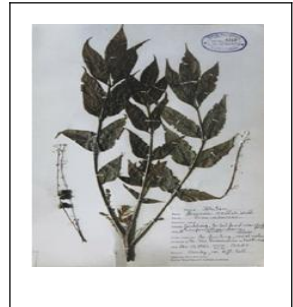
## **Bluraea mollis**

Kukula, Kukuru-duru (Sinh.); Kattumulangi  
Narakkarandai (Tam.)

**Distribution:** In Ceylon, it is a common weed by roadsides, edges of paddy fields upto an altitude of 4000 feet; Batticaloa, Kurunegala, Nalanda, Katugastota, Hantane Haragama, Bandarawela, Ella,

**Composition:** Yields a volatile oil which contains blume camphor. The leaf is rich in carotene and vitamin C

**Uses:** The expressed juice of the leaves is a useful anthelmintic especially for cases of thread-worm. It is given for dysentery and chronic discharges from the uterus. Mixed with black pepper, it is useful for bleeding piles. For renal dropsy, a preparation made by oxidising iron filings in the juice of the plant is given with beneficial results. The plant, is also a diuretic and useful for catarrhal affections.

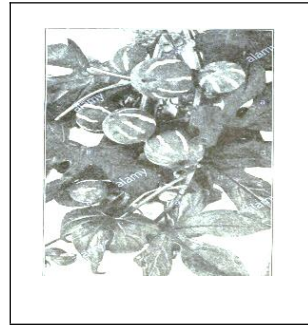


**Bryouopsis laciniosa**

Basuagilli (Sinh.) Ivirali (Tam.);

**Distribution:** In Ceylon it is common in moist and dry country up to 6000 feet altitude.

**Composition:** The fruits and leaves contain an alkaloid.



**Uses:** This plant is bitter and aperient. It possesses tonic properties and used as a cathartic. The leaves are applied topically on inflammations.

## **Bridelia retusa**

Ketakala (Sinh.); Adamarudu, Asuvai, Kadugai, Komanjr, Malai-vengai, Mullumarudu, Mulluvengai, Mulvengai, Mulvenkai, Sem, Singattan, Siruvengai (Tam.)

**Distribution:** It is common in the moist, low-country up to 2000 feet altitude.

**Uses:** The root and bark are valuable astringents; the latter being used as a liniment with gingelly oil for rheumatism

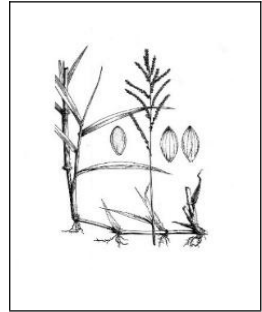


## **Brachiaria mutica**

Diyatanakola (Sinh.); Tanni-pillu (Tam.)

**Distribution:** It was introduced to Ceylon as a fodder grass and now naturalized along water courses in the North Central and Western Provinces. Polonnaruwa, Muthurajawela, Negombo, Colombo, etc.

**Uses:** Used for fomentation of swollen rheumatic joints.



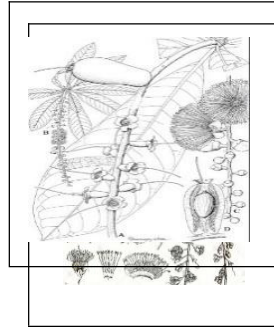
## **Barringtonia acutangula**

Ela-midell (Sinh.); Adambu, Aram, Kadambu Kadappai, Kanatti, Niba, Perungaduppai, Sengadambu (Tam.)

**Distribution:** It is rather common in Ceylon around margins of tanks in the dry regions

**Composition:** The bark contains caoutchouc, alkaline salts and an active principle

**Uses:** The juice of the leaves is used for diarrhoea. The bark and root are employed as a febrifuge for malaria as they are supposed to have the same properties as cinchona bark. The fruit is a remedy for coughs, colds and asthma. The seeds are given to children to reduce enlarged abdomen. They are also used in catarrh, respiratory ailments, colic, headache and diarrhea



## **Barringtonia ceylanica**

Goda-midella (Sinh.)

**Distribution:**

**Uses:** The tender leaves are used for the treatment of dysentery and to arrest bleeding from cuts. The bark and leaves are used for rat-snake bites, rat poisoning and on boils. The seeds along with other ingredients are employed in preparations for treatment of itch, piles, tonsilitis and typhoid fever. The bark is a specific for gastric ulcers.

**Barringtonia racemosa**

Diya-midella (Sinh.); Arattam, Isudaru, Isuvaradaru, Kadambam, Kadambu, Kogali, Kondalai, Kuchidam, Mara, Pitriyagam, Salam, Samuttrakkadambu, Samuthrum, Samuttrappalam, Sugadaru, Sumbal, Vengadambu, Visalam (Tam.)



**Distribution:** It is common in the moist low-country in Ceylon, especially near the coast, shores of back waters, lakes

**Composition:** The plant contains triterpinoid saponin which yields two neutral sapogenins barringtogenin and barringtogentin and an acid sapogenin C. The ripe fruit contains barringtogenol and barringtogenic acid. The seed yields a fixed oil and a saponin.

**Uses:** The root has similar properties as cinchona bark and is used as a deobstruent. The fruit is efficacious on coughs, asthma and diarrhoea. It is powdered and used for skin diseases. The seed are aromatic and helpful in colic and parturition.

**Bauhinia acuminates**

Ela-kobolcela (Sinh.); Kuchanar (Tam.)

**Distribution:** It is commonly cultivated in village gardens in Ceylon in the mid and low-country.

**Composition:**

**Uses:** This plant and *Bauhinia variegata* are used for the same ailments.



### **Bauhinia racemosa**

Mayila (Sinh.); Ar, Arai, Aram, Arikka, Atti Sallagi, Sittacha, Tadagi (Tam.)

**Distribution:** It is very common in the dry regions of Ceylon.

**Uses:** A decoction of the leaves is used to allay headaches due to malarial fever. The dried flowers and bark of the stem are used as decoction for dysentery, diarrhoea, internal haemorrhages, bleeding and threatened abortion and bleeding from haemorrhoids. It is often employed as a substitute for *Woodfordia fruticosa*.

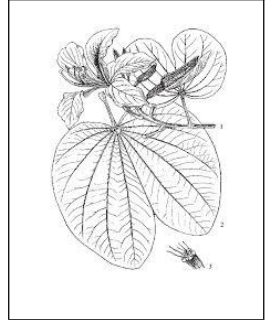


## **Bauhinia tomentosa**

Kaha-petan, Petan (Sinh.); Iruyaji, Kanjani, Kattatti, Kattumandarai, Siruvatti, Tiruvatti (Tam.)

**Distribution:** It is very common in the dry regions in Ceylon.

**Uses:** Useful in acute and chronic diarrhoea and dysentery, internal haemorrhages and bleeding from haemorrhoids. In Malabar, a decoction of the root bark is given for inflammation of the liver and as a vermifuge. Externally, the bruised bark is applied on tumours and wounds. The fruit is a diuretic and seeds are eaten for their aphrodisiacal action. The seeds made into a paste with water, is applied on wounds inflicted by poisonous animals with beneficial results. The flowers, flower buds and dried leaves, too, are used for dysentery



## **Butea monosperma**

Gas-kela, Gaskeliya, Kela (Sinh.); Kali, Kattumurukku, Kinjugam, Kirumusatturu, Marrukan, Murukku, Palasu, Punamurukku, Punamurungai, Pungu, Puppalasu Purasu, Sira, Tikkura, Vadabodam, Vallai, Vallaippurasu (Tam.)



**Distribution:** It is rather rare in Ceylon but locally abundant in the dry, open country. Jaffna, Batticaloa, Bintenne, Polonnaruwa and Bibile.

**Composition:** The tree contains essentially tannic acid, gum, a little gallic acid and a very small quantity of pyrocatechin.

**Uses:** The bark is used in diarrhoea, dysentery, polypus in the nose, diabetes and snake bites. Flowers are diuretic and aphrodisiac. The gum exuded from the incised stem is a good astringent and is applied externally on ulcers and sore throat. The expressed juice of the root bark along with other ingredients is used in the treatment of elephantiasis. The powdered seed is used in treatment for worm on dhoby's itch, ringworm, etc. The dried flowers produce beautiful yellow and orange-red dyes.

## **Crinum buibispermum**

Goda-manel (Sinh.); Vishamungil (Tam.)

**Distribution:** Dry Zone both in waste and cultivated ground.

**Composition:** The bulb contains lycorine and other alkaloids and an organic acid.

**Uses:** crushed and applied on to piles and abscesses to cause suppuration. The juice of the leaf is used for earache.

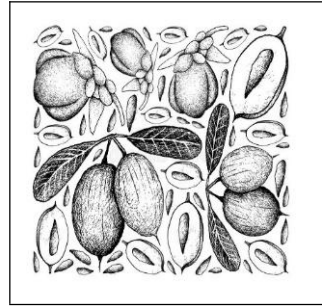


**Carissa carandas**

Mahakaramba (Sinh.); Kala, Kalakkay, Perungala, Perunkila (Tam.)

**Distribution:** Jaffna, Kurunegala and other dry districts

**Composition:** The bark contains an alkaloid. The roots contain traces of a volatile oil, salicylic acid and an alkaloid.



**Uses:** In India, the leaves are used for diarrhoea, earache, soreness of the mouth and throat and syphilitic pains. A decoction of the leaves is often used at the commencement of remittent fevers. The root has a reputation of being a bitter stomachic and used as a remedy for itch along with other ingredients. The ripe fruit possesses antiscorbutic properties.

## **Catharanthus roseus**

Mini-mal, Sohon-mal (Sinh.)

**Distribution:** from Colombo to Matara and also inland usually on waste ground and cemeteries.

**Composition:** The root bark contains lochnerine and sepentine. The leaves contain vinceine which is also found in the roots, a volatile oil which contains aldehydes, sesquiterpenes, furfural, lochnerol and sulphur-containing compounds.



**Uses:** A decoction of the leaves of this plant is given for diabetes and that of the root is an effective emmenagogue and antidyenteric.

## **Calotropis gigantea**

Elawara. Muduwara, Wara (Sinh.); Arkkam, Arukkam. Aruiagam, Ahgaram, Alagar, Aruchunam, Siyam, Suriyam, Suvedagusuman Udumbaram, Urrkovi, Vellerukku (Tam.)

**Distribution:** In Ceylon, it is commonly found often gregarious in waste ground and roadsides, abandoned chenas. etc. the low-country.



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**Composition:** The root bark of this plant contains a yellow bitter resin and two substances resembling alban and fluavil of Gutta-percha. The latex yields a bitter principle, calotropin, (which is identical with mundarinj, proteinase and calosterol.

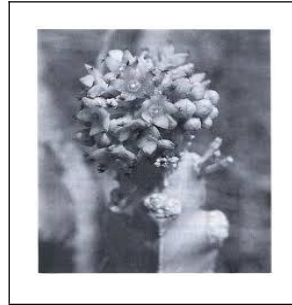
**Uses:** The bark, root and the dried latex of this shrub are used in skin diseases, leprosy and secondary syphilis. The root bark is a good subst'lute for Ipecacuanha in the irtreatment of dysentery. It is also useful in the treatment of enlargement of abdominal viscera, intestinal worms, ascites, anasarca, etc. The pulverized root made into an ointment is used for treatment of ulcers. The milky juice is recommended for ringworm of the scalp, sinus troubles, anal fistula, piles, tooth-ache and with honey for apthaein the mouth. In Ceylon, the powdered root bark of old plants mixed with other ingredients is used in the treatment of jaundice, elephantiasis of the leg and skin diseases.

## **Caralluma umbellata Haw**

Weluk (Sinh.)

**Distribution:** Rare endemic species found growing on rocks in the intermediate regions. Kurunegala, Dambulla,

**Uses:** A poultice prepared by grinding the plant and boiling it with coconut milk is applied to draw out broken pieces of thorns or spikes from the body. It is also used as an ingredient for the preparation of medicinal oils used for treating dislocation of bones.



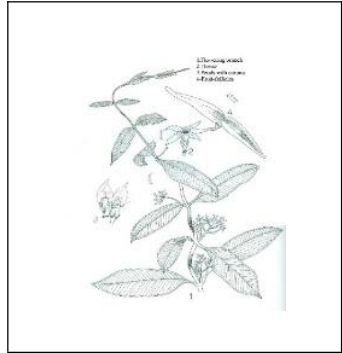
## **Cryptolepis buchananii Roem**

Welrukkattana (Sinh.)

**Distribution:** In Ceylon, it is rather common in the low-country up to 3000 ft. altitude.

**Composition:**

**Uses:** This plant is used to cure rickets in children. Combined with other ingredients, it is given to women to promote the secretion of milk.



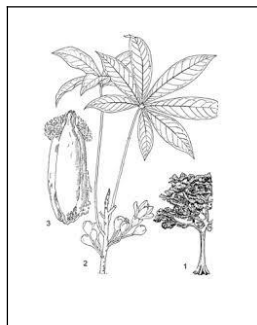
## **Ceiba pentandra**

Imbul, Kottapulung, Pulung, Pulunimbul (Sinh.); Ilavarn, Karukkanam, Panji (Tam.)

**Distribution:** In Ceylon, it is very common in the low-country nearly always planted as fence posts along boundaries.

**Composition:** The oil extracted from the seed consists of a mixture of fatty acids, the root, stem ar. J flowers contain hydrocyanic acid and the bark contains tannin. The young leaves are eaten as a leafy vegetable and are a good source of calcium and iron.

**Uses:** The fibre from the pods is extensively used for stuffing pillows, mattresses and for making life-preservers, etc. The oil extracted from the seeds is used for the manufacture of soap and the fresh oil-cake is a valuable stock feed. Medicinally, the root is used in the form of a decoction for chronic dysentery, diarrhoea, ascites, anasarca and also as the chief ingredient for preparation of aphrodisiac medicines. The taproot of the young plant is useful for gonorrhoea and dysentery. The gum is a useful styptic given for diarrhoea, dysentery, raenon hagia, and incontinence of urine in children.



## **Carmona microphylla**

Hinrambala (Sinh.); Kattuvettilai,  
Kuruvingi (Tam.)

**Distribution:** In Ceylon, it is a common shrub on the borders of jungles in dry and intermediate districts.

**Composition:** The bark of this plant contains a glucoside.

**Uses:** A decoction of the leaves is used to cure diarrhea accompanied with discharge of blood and also for cough.



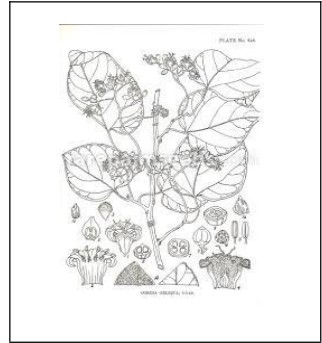
## **Cordis dichotoma**

Lolu, Lotu (Sinh.); Naruvili, Sclu, Sirunaruvili, Vallagu, Vidi, Viri, Virisu, Viriyan (Tam.)

**Distribution:** In Ceylon, it is commonly found in the low country up to 2000 feet altitude chiefly in the dry regions. Kurunegala, Kandy and Polonnaruwa.

**Composition:** The fruit contains sugar and gum and the bark contains, (besides tannin), a principle allied to Cathartin

**Uses:** The juice of the bark with coconut' milk relieves severe colic. The mucilage in the fruit is used for treating coughs and diseases of the chest, uterus, urethra, etc. In larger doses, it is given for bilious ailments as a laxative. It is also used in gonorrhoea. Externally the moistened bark is applied on boils and tumors. An infusion of it is used as a gargle. The kernels of the fruit are powdered, mixed with oil and applied on ringworm.



## ***Cinnarion zeylanicum* Blume**

Kekuna, Dik-kekuna (Sinh.); Pakkilipal (Tam.)

**Distribution:** commonly found growing in the moist low-country Ambagamuwa, Ratnapura and also in the Batticaloa region.

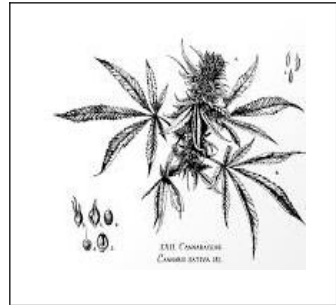
**Uses:** When the bark is injured, an abundance of a beautifully clear, fragrant, balsamic gum-resin exudes from it and this is used for fumigation and lighting in houses. Medicinally, the bark of the tree is astringent and antiseptic. A decoction of it is used as a gargle for bleeding and spongy gums. An ointment prepared by boiling it with coconut oil is used as a dressing for chronic ulcers and fistulae. Internally, it is used as an aromatic stomachic and astringent and is largely used against diabetes. As a febrifuge, it has antiperiodic properties and is useful for infective fevers and malaria. The gum-resin is used as a gargle for pyorrhoea and halitosis with beneficial results.



## **Cannabis sativa**

Ganja, Kansa, Math-kansa (Sinh.);  
Bangli, Ganja, Kslpam, Korkkarmuli  
(Tam.)

**Distribution:** It is cultivated in  
Ceylon, illicitly in chenas in the  
dryzone



**Composition:** The active principle in this plant is an amorphous resin called cannabin which yields a toxic oily substance known as cannabinol. The plant also contains nicotine and the seed, trigonelline.

**Uses:** Medicinally, the leaves are used with other ingredients for preparations in the treatment of coughs, asthma, dropsy, diarrhoea, dysentery, piles, neuralgia, migraine, etc. In Africa, the plant is used in the treatment of malaria, blackwater fever, blood poisoning, anthrax, dysentery and snake bites.

## **Capparis horrida**

Welangiriya (Sinh.) Arthandam (Tam.);

**Distribution:** In Ceylon, it is rather rare and found in the dry, low country: Jaffna, Anuradhapura, Uma Oya, Hanguranketa,

**Uses:** The leaves of this plant are used as a counter-irritant and as a cataplasm for boils, swellings and piles. The root-bark is a sedative, stomachic and anti-hidriotic and useful in relieving gastric irritation, vomiting and pain. It also, improves the appetite.



**Capparis moooil**

Welangiriya (Sinh.)

**Composition:** It is rather rare, confined to the moist low-country, up to an altitude of 3000 feet in Ceylon. Uva Province, Hunnasgiriya, Panwila, Alagaiia, Hantane



**Uses:** The roots of this plant, along with other ingredients are made into pills and given for all ailments and glandular swellings of the throat, bronchitis, tonsillitis, etc. They are often used for removing growths in the throat.

**Capparis zeylanica**

Welangirrya (Sinh.); Adondai, Igudi, Indu, Kagaturatti, Kattoddi, Migupalattam, Tondai, Tulambikkiri, Vennachchi, Viyanicham (Tam.)

**Distribution:** Jaffna, Trincomalee, Kantalai, Weragaritota and Tissamaharama.

**Composition:**

**Uses:** For the same diseases as Capparis horrida is used.

## **Crataevo religiose**

Lunu-warana (Sinh.); Adicharanam, Adimalam, Anjali, Inaivilai, Kattumavilangai, Kuvilam, Maluram, Maralingam, Nilluvam, Nirumahydm, Shuppigam, Shuvedam, Sinnamavilmgam Varanam, Villuvam (Tam.)



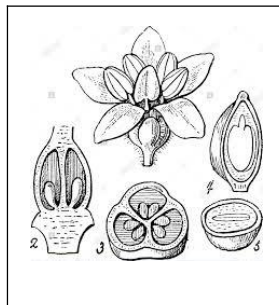
**Distribution:** In Ceylon, it is rather common in the dry districts of Jaffna, Trincomalee, Dambulla, Kekirawa and Hambantota

**Composition:** The plant yields a gum. a saponin and tannin from the bark. It also yields 3 crystalline products including lupeol and B—sitosterol.

**Uses:** The bark is useful for urinary complaints, fever and mild forms of skin diseases. It relieves vomiting and gastric irritation. The fresh leaves are a good substitute for mustard poultice. They are efficacious on gouty swellings, swelling and burning sensation in the soles of feet, etc. In India, the plant is used as a stomachic, purgative, diuretic and as a snake-bite remedy. In Ceylon, a decoction of the powdered bark is given for stones in the kidney or bladder, dropsy and enlargement of abdominal viscera, scrofula and painful micturition.

## **Celastrus paniculatus**

Duhudu, Vatuvai-eta (Sinh.); Adjbaricham, Kalambam, Kagodagi, Kaligam, Kirumikkundram, Kungiligam, Kuvangundal, Malganguni, Mallagam, Siruvaluluvai, Sodiyam, Tanisi, Tipadisam, Valuluvai (Tam.)



**Distribution:** In Ceylon, it is common in the moist low-country up to 2000 feet altitude.

**Composition:** The leaves contain traces of an alkaloid and a glucoside. The seeds yield a fatty oil which contains cholesterol, a colouring matter, chromogen, celastrine and paniculatine.

**Uses:** The juice of the leaves is an antidote for opium poisoning. A decoction of the seeds is given for rheumatism, gout, paralysis and leprosy. The oil extracted from the seeds is a remedy for beri-beri, a nerve stimulant and brain tonic. The pulverised seeds are used as an antirheumatic and in cases of paralysis. In Ceylon the plant is used externally as a parasitic ointment for scabies, ringworm and other skin diseases.

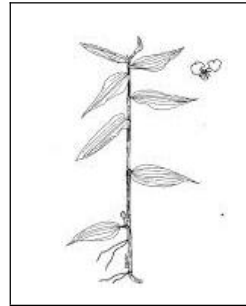
**Commelina diffusa:**

Girapala (Sinh.); Kanshura (Tam.)

**Distribution:** It is a very common herb in shady places amongst grass in the low-country in Ceylon

**Composition:**

**Uses:** The bruised plant is applied to burns, itches and boils with beneficial results.



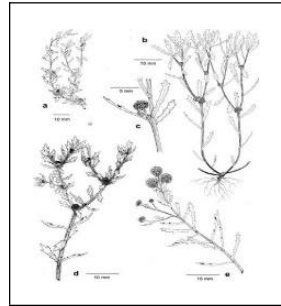
## **Centipeda minima**

Wisaduli (Sinh.)

**Distribution:** In Ceylon, it is rather rare confined to damp places in the lower montane zone, Malurata, Dolosbage, Maskeliya, Peradeniya

**Composition:** Wehmer records that the herb contains an amorphous volatile oil and a bitter principle, myriogynin while Caius reports that it contains an alkaloid, a glucoside and traces of saponin.

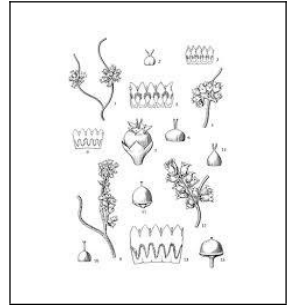
**Uses:** The powdered herb and seeds are used as a sternutatory and administered for ozaena, headaches and colds. It is useful in paralysis and pains in the joints.



## **Cuscuta chinensis**

Agamulanctivel (Sinh.) Manjal karisaali (Tam.)

**Distribution:** In Ceylon, it is rather rare in the moist low-country, parasitic on grass and low herbs and shrubs. Peradeniya, Ratnapura, Colombo



## **Composition:**

**Uses:** The properties of this parasite are the same as those of Cuscuta reflexa. The seeds are said to be tonic, diaphoretic and demulcent

### **Cuscuta rtflexa**

Agamulancti-vel (Sinh.); Kodyiyagundal Sadadori (Tam.)

**Distribution:** In Ceylon, it is rather common in the upper montane zone, parasitic on *Strobilanthes* Sp. Nuwara Eliya, Pidurutalagala,



### **Composition:**

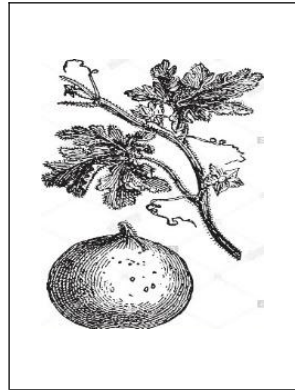
**Uses:** This plant is a purgative. Externally, it is used against itch and internally for protracted fevers, retention of wind, and induration of the liver. The stems are used for bilious disorder. The seeds are carminative and applied as an anodyne.

## **Colocynthis vulgaris**

Yak-Komadu, Tittakomadu (Sinh.);  
Marukkolundu (Tam.)

**Distribution:** In Ceylon, it is rather rare confined to the dry and desert regions such as Batticaloa, Puttalam, Jaffna and Talaimannar.

**Composition:** The fruit contains an alkaloid. The purgative properties of colocynthis is due to a bitter principle colocynthin, a glucoside.



**Uses:** The fruit and the root are made into a paste and applied on boils and pimples. A paste of the root is applied on abdominal swellings in children and a decoction of it is given for cough and asthma. A poultice of the root is applied on inflammation of breasts in women. The root along with other ingredients is used in chronic skin diseases, syphilis, elephantiasis, leprosy, hemiplegia, piles, anaemia, colic, ascites, jaundice, rheumatism and various urinary diseases. The juice of the fruit mixed with sugar is a specific for dropsy.

## **Corallocarpus epigaeus**

Gopalanga (Sinh.); Akashagarudan,  
Gollankovai (Tam.)

**Distribution:** In Ceylon, it is rather common in the dry districts such as Mannar, Anuradhapura, Dambulla



**Uses:** This herb is prescribed in the later stages of dysentery and for chronic venereal complaints. It is considered anthelmintic and sometimes used externally in chronic rheumatism.

The root is usually given for syphilitic rheumatism and possesses laxative properties. It has a reputation as a snake-bite cure in Decca and Mysore.

## **Cyperus rotundus**

Kalanduru (Sinh.); Kora, Korai Kilangu (Tam.)

**Distribution:** In Ceylon, it is a very common and vexatious weed in cultivated ground in the low-country.

**Composition:** The tubers contain an essential oil, fat, sugar, gum, carbohydrates, starch, albuminous matter and an alkaloid.

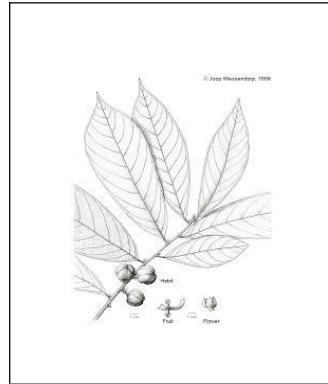
**Uses:** The tubers are astringent and antiseptic. A paste made with lime juice is applied in acne, scorpion stings and ulcers with beneficial effect. Internally, the tubers act as a stomachic, carminative and cholagogue with astringent properties and used in anorexia, acute dyspepsia, diarrhoea, dysentery and congestion of the liver. They are also used in acute laryngitis, bronchitis and pneumonia. In India, they are held in great esteem as a diaphoretic, astringent, stimulant, tonic, diuretic and

## **Cleistanthus collinus**

Madara (Sinh.); Nilaippalai, Odaichi, Odan, Odishi, Odu, Odugu, Oduppai, Oduvan (Tam.)

**Distribution:** It is very rare in Ceylon, found in the lowcountry in Sabaragamuwa Province.

**Uses:** This is a poisonous plant. An extract of the leaves is a violent gastro-intestinal irritant. The bark and fruits are employed as a fish poison. The bark is useful as an application on cutaneous diseases. The flowers are used for various medicinal purposes.



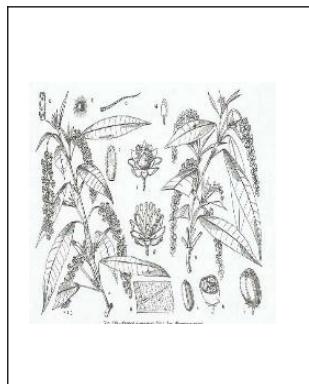
## **Croton lacciferus**

Gas-keppitiya Keppitiya (Sinh.);

Teppaddi (Tam.)

**Distribution:** It is very common, both in the moist and dry regions up to 3000 feet altitude in Ceylon.

**Uses:** A continuous waxy incrustation formed by the secretions of certain species of scale-insects (*Tachardia lacca*) living on the tender branches of the shrub, sucking juice from them, forms the lac of commerce much used for lacquer work in Ceylon. It is used medicinally in the preparation of medicinal oils and pills used in the treatment of fever, colds, dysentery and lung diseases including tuberculosis. The root is used for preparation of pills given for chronic fevers. The juice of the bark and leaves is used as a styptic and on skin diseases. The leaves are used for manuring paddyfields and betel vines as they are supposed to control certain soil-borne pests and diseases



### **Croton tiglium**

Jayapala (Sinh.); Kattukkattai, Naganam, Nagandi, Nervalam, Nigumbam, Nirvalam, Sam bar i, Sayabalam, Sevalangottai, Siduram, Sittudu, Tendi (Tam.)



**Distribution:** In Ceylon, it is found in the dry zone jungles.

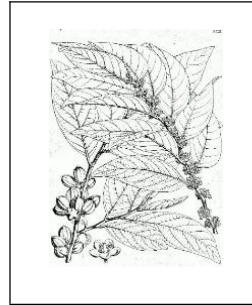
**Composition:** The seeds possess a fixed oil which contains croton globulin and croton albumen, arginine and lysine; alkaloid vicinine; lipase; invertase, amylase, raffinase; proteolytic enzyme, croton resin, tiglic acid, croton oleic acid, stearic, palmitic, myristic, lauric, oenanthallic, capronic, valerianic, butyric, isobutyric, acetic and formic acids; tannin

**Uses:** The oil is a very valuable cathartic and it acts speedily and powerfully on the bowels. In Ceylon, the seed is used along with other drugs in fever, constipation in dropsy and as a drastic purgative for colic, ascites, etc

## **Casearia zeylanica**

Wal-waraka, War-tembili (Sinh.);  
Kakkaippilai, Kilar, Kottargovai, Kolayayili,  
Kutti, Venjanduvar (Tam.)

**Distribution:** In Ceylon, it is found in both moist and dry regions ascending up to 5,000 feet altitude. Hunnasingiriya, Haputale, Mullativu, Batticaloa, Buttala, Ratnapura, Galle, Hewaheta, Puttalam, etc.



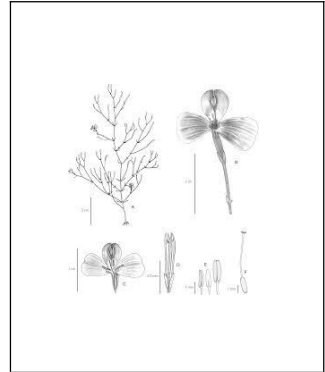
**Uses:** The root of this tree is used as a purgative. It is also a popular remedy for diabetes.

## **Canscora decussata**

Sakmal (Sinh.) Sankhaphuli (Tam.)

**Distribution:** In Ceylon, it is rather rare growing in wet places up to an elevation of 4000 feet. Badulla, Hantane, Trincomalee, etc.

**Uses:** The entire plant is used as a laxative, alterative and a nerve tonic. The fresh juice is given for insanity, epilepsy and applied on enlargement of the scrotum.



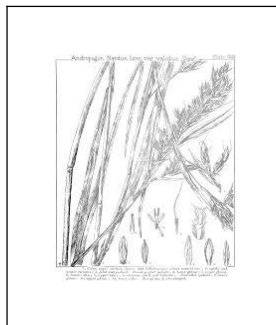
## **Cymbopogon nardus**

Hin-pengiri, Lena-batu-pengiri, (Sinh.);  
Kavatampillu, Kamachipillu,  
Karpurapiilu, Mandappillu, Sunnaripillu  
Vasanapillu (Tam.)

**Distribution:** In Ceylon, it is often cultivated in the southern province and covers a considerable area in the central province up to an elevation of 2000 to 4000 feet.

**Composition:** Leaves on steam distillation yield the citronella oil of commerce. It contains geraniol and citronellal

**Uses:** Citronella oil is used as a rubefacient. It is a stimulant carminative, antispasmodic and diaphoretic. The roots are diuretic, sudorific and antiperiodic. It is a mosquito repellent and is used in perfumery and soap-making.



## **Cymbopogon polyneuros**

Pengiri (Sinh.); Sakanarupillu (Tam.)

**Distribution:** In Ceylon, it grows in the lower montane zone especially in the dry patanas and in the more elevated areas in the Central Province; Uva, Hakgala, Palugama, etc., right down to Colombo.

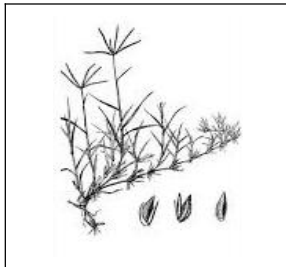
**Uses:** A decoction of this grass is given as a febrifuge. The oil distilled from the plant is applied for rheumatism and neuralgia. It is a very good pasture grass.



**cynodon dactylon**

Durva, Haritali, Hin-etora, Ruha (Sinh.);  
Arugampillu, Hariali (Tam.)

**Distribution:** In Ceylon, it is common in the dry zone, along roadsides and sea coast and other warm parts of the Island. It is drought resistant and soil binding, used in lawns and as a fodder grass.



**Composition:** Contains starch, cynodin and triticine. It develops hydrocyanic acid if allowed to wilt under certain conditions. It is rich in vitamin C.

**Uses:** The expressed juice' is an astringent and is applied to cuts and wounds to stop bleeding. It is a diuretic and used in dropsy and anasarca, chronic diarrhoea and dysentery, epilepsy, hysteria and insanity. Its roots are used for chronic gleet and secondary syphilis.

## **Curcuma domestica**

Ath-kaha (Sinh.); Kaha, Manjal (Tam.)

**Distribution:** A native of Southern Asia and now largely cultivated in India, Ceylon, China, Java and other tropical countries. It is grown in the mid and moist low-country in Ceylon.

**Composition:** The rhizomes of this herb contain fat, starch, camphor, resin, curcumin, a volatile oil, dotpHELLandrene, carvone and cucumone



**Uses:** The dried rhizome is much used as a condiment and a yellow dye is made from it for dyeing robes of Buddhist priests. The fresh rhizome is crushed and applied externally on bruises, sprains, wounds and leech-bites. Internally, it is given as an anthelmintic and in disorders of the blood. It is administered for diarrhoea, dysentery, flatulence, dyspepsia, colic jaundice and amenorrhoea. Inhalation of the fumes of burning dry turmeric relieves colds in the head and catarrh. In Ceylon, a paste of it is applied on prurigo, urticaria, boils, sprains and bruises, and given internally for rheumatism, bronchial ailments and snake-bites. The rhizomes are roasted with *Vernonia zeylanica* and applied on eczema of the legs with beneficial results.

## **Clerodendrum inforrunatam**

Gaspinna (Sinh.); Karukanni, Perugilai, Vellaikkanni (Tam.)

**Distribution:** ccurs in India, Ceylon and Malaya. It is common in the moist regions of Ceylon up to 4,000 feet altitude Negombo, Galle, Kalutara, Bibile etc.

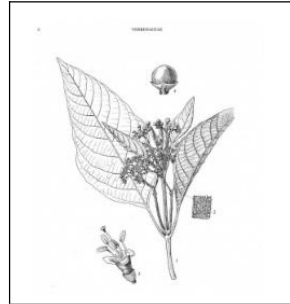


**Uses:** **The** leaves and roots of this plant are used externally for tumours and certain skin diseases. The fresh juice is given internally as a vermifuge and febrifuge in malarial fevers, especially in children.

**Callicarpa tomentosa**

Ilia (Sinh.); Kattukkumil, Vettilaippattai (Tam.)

**Distribution:** Occurs in India, Ceylon and Malaya. It is very common in the moist regions up to 4,000 feet altitude in Ceylon



**Composition:** The bark and root of this tree are given in decoction to remove hepatic obstructions. The root is used for cutaneous ailments.

**Uses:** An extract of the bark is used in the treatment of fevers, liver complaints and skin diseases. This plant is considered a diuretic.

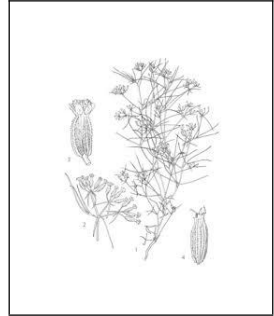
## **Cuminum cyminum**

Sadu-duru, Suduru (Sinh.); Seerugam, Shiragam (Tam.)

**Distribution:** A native of the Mediterranean regions, now widely cultivated in India, China, U.S.A., Malta and Sicily

**Composition:** Cumin seeds contain a volatile oil which is composed of the hydrocarbon cymol, an oxygenated oil called cuminal, acymene and other terpenes. Cymol has a lemonlike odour, while cuminal is typical of cumin

**Uses:** Cumin seed is much used for flavouring curries in India and Ceylon. Medicinally, it is a stomachic, carminative and astringent. It is useful for dyspepsia, chronic diarrhoea and bilious nausea in pregnant women. It increases the secretion of milk when taken soon after childbirth.



**Corchorus capsularis.**

Jaladara (Sinh.); Piratti-kirai (Tam.)

**Distribution:** Occurs in India, Ceylon and Malaya. It is found as a weed in the lowcountry in Ceylon.



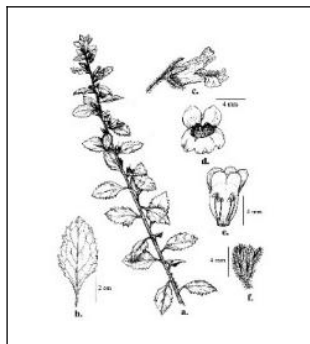
**Composition:** The seeds of this plant contain raffinose and the glucoside, corchorin, while the leaves contain another glucoside, capsularin.

**Uses:** The leaves are demulcent, bitter, tonic, stomachic, laxative, carminative, refrigerant and diuretic. An infusion of the plant is given for fever. An infusion of the leaves with coriander is a popular domestic remedy for colic. The fibre of the stem is used for manufacture of sacking, paper-making and carpetmaking.

## **Centranthera indica**

Dutusatuta (Sinh.) Shudathu (Tam.)

**Distribution:** Occurs in India and Ceylon. It is rather common in damp places in the low-country of the moist regions of Ceylon up to 3000 feet altitude, very rare in the dry regions. Batticaloa, Colombo, Galle, Galagedara, Gannoruwa, etc.



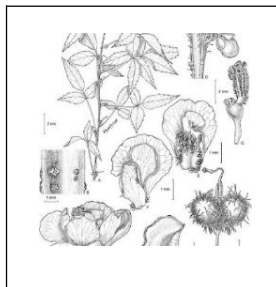
**Composition:** quadrangular or compressed, hispid, often purple stems 7.5—45 cm long covered with spreading white hairs; leaves simple, alternate, exstipulate, sessile, oblong, 1.2—2.5 cm long, obtuse rather thick and stiff, sparsely bristly hairy and ciliate with largesunken glands, veinless; flowers irregular, bisexual, rather large, white usually with a large, brown-pink stain on the upper side of the throat, very shortly stalked, solitary, bractlets small, linear; sepals 5, fused and split down one side, nearly 1.2 cm long, spathaceous and flattened with 5, slightly winged angles, hispidhairy, apex acute; petals 5, fused into a widely tubular, funnel-shaped corolla, 2.5 cm long, lobes spreading, rounded; stamens 4, didynamous, included, anthers not connate in pairs, cells spurred at base, one sometimes empty; ovary superior, 2-locular with numerous ovules in each loculus, style simple, stigma bilobed, dilated, acute; fruit capsule 1 cm long, ovoid, loculicidally 2-valved, valves often split into two, seeds numerous, yellow.

**Uses:** All parts of this plant are considered diuretic and are used in decoctions along with other drugs for fever. It is used externally for sore eyes.

## **Cardiospermum microcarpum**

Penela-wel (Sinh.); Kottavan, Mudakattan, Mudakottan, Periyilai-mudakottan, Samuttiram, Samuttiradoyan, Siliyanai, Soliyan, Sugattan, Tiragamulagam (Tam.)

**Distribution:** Occurs in India, Ceylon and Malacca in wet places. In Ceylon, it grows in the mid and low-country.



**Composition:** This plant contains saponin and quebrachitol and an alkaloid, a glucoside, resins and tannins. The seeds possess an essential oil

**Uses:** The whole plant is used both internally and externally in cases of rheumatism, nervous diseases, dropsy and orchitis. The juice of the plant is used as eardrops for earache and discharge from the meatus. It is also used for piles, bronchitis and phthisis. The root is an emetic and laxative and considered an aperient. The leaves are boiled in castor oil and applied externally on rheumatic pains, swellings and tumours. In China, the plant is considered an anthelmintic and anti-blenorrhagic. In Africa, an infusion of the leaf is given as an enema for dysenteries and diarrhoeas and taken internally for general outbreak of sores in the body. It is used as an anti-rheumatic and in digestive and pulmonary disorders. The root is a laxative, demulcent, diuretic and used in nervous diseases. In East Indies, the leaf and root are used as a diaphoretic, diuretic and as a remedy for dropsy, orchitis, amenorrhoea, rheumatism, nervous complaints and lung diseases.

## **Clausena indica**

Migon-karapincha (Sinh.); Pannai, Purankainari (Tam.)

**Distribution:** Occurs in India and Ceylon. It is rather common in the low-country dry regions. Kurunegala, Jaffna, Anuradhapura, Mannar, etc.



**Composition:** A small tree or shrub with pubescent young parts; leaves compound, alternate, exstipulate, imparipinnate, large, 15—30 cm long, rachis glabrous or puberulous, leaflets 7—13, distant, alternate, shortly stalked, 3.7—8.9 cm long, very unequal at base; ovate or lanceolate, obtusely acuminate, very faintly crenate, wavy, glabrous on both sides and shining; flowers regular, bisexual, small, greenish white, 6—8 mm long, shortly pedicellate in a short strictly terminal panicle; sepals 5, small

**Uses:** An infusion of the stem of this plant is given for colic and diarrhoea. The leaves and roots are used for indigestion and as a diuretic.

**Crotalaria verrucosa**

Nil-andanahiriya (Sinh.); Kilukiuppai, Kilvenla (Tam.)

**Distribution:** It is common in the low-country in Ceylon in open ground

**Composition:** The leaves, stems and fruits contain an alkaloid

**Uses:** The juice of the leaves is used, internally and externally, for cases of scabies and impetigo.



## **Crotalaria juncea**

Hana (Sinh.); Chanai, Kuttiram, Kuttu, Manji, Nanandam, Shanal Imappu, Umadji, Uttirabanni, Vakkunnar (Tam.)

**Distribution:** It is rather common in the low-country in Ceylon principally in the dry regions. Trincomalee, Kurunegala, Kalawana, Badulla



**Composition:** The leaves contain mucilage, a solid fat, a resin and an alkaloid while the seeds contain protein, starch and fat.

**Uses:** The leaves are used internally and externally in the form of an infusion in gastric and bilious fevers accompanied by skin diseases such as impetigo and psoriasis. The root is an astringent and useful in colic and epistaxis. The seed is said to purify the blood and promote the growth of hair.

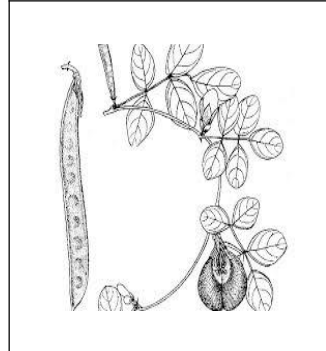
## **Clitoria ternatea**

Elakatarolu, Katarolu, Nilkatarolu (Sinh.)

**Distribution:** It is common in Ceylon, especially in the dry regions but mostly cultivated in the moist regions.

**Composition:** The leaves and seeds contain an alkaloid, while the seed has a fixed oil, tannic acid and glucose in addition. The root bark contains starch, tannin and resins and the cotyledons, granular starch.

**Uses:** Used in large doses as a hydragogue cathartic and useful in anasarca and ascites and other conditions where it is necessary to remove large quantities of fluid from the system. In small doses, it is a cholagogue purgative and used with advantage in acute and chronic congestion of the liver and biliousness. The juice of the root of the white-flowered variety is blown into the nostrils as a remedy for hemicrania. An infusion of the root is given for irritation of the bladder and urethra. The powdered seed with ginger is recommended as a purgative and diuretic for enlargements of abdominal viscera.



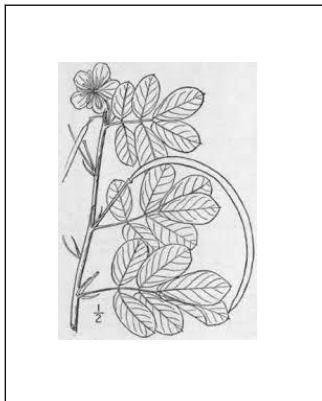
## **Cassia tora**

Peti-tora (Sinh.); Senavu, Sirutagarai, Tagarai, Usittagarai, Vamamavararn, Vaddutakari, Vindu (Tam.)

**Distribution:** It is found in the low - country in Ceylon by road sides and waste ground and is very common in the dry regions.

**Composition:** The seeds contain a glucosidal substance somewhat similar to emodin in composition, phytosterjine and glucosenine. The leaves contain a principle similar to cathartin.

**Uses:** The leaves are laxative and are useful in habitual constipation and haemorrhoids. The seeds have anti-parasitic properties and are applied on ringworm and scabies.



## **Cassia sophera**

Uruthora (Sinh.); Ponnairai, Nalal, Peraviraj, Periadagarai, Sularai (Tam.)

**Distribution:** It is found in the low-country, especially in the dry regions in Ceylon.

**Composition** The leaves, stems and fruits of this plant contain an alkaloid, crysophanic acid and emodin.

**Uses:** The juice of the leaves made into a paste with sandalwood or lime is a cure for ringworm, dhoby's itch and other skin diseases. An infusion or decoction of the leaves is given for asthma, bronchitis, gonorrhoea, rheumatic and inflammatory fevers and jaundice. An infusion of the bark or powdered seed is given with honey for diabetes. A decoction of the whole plant is said to be useful in diminishing the quantity of urine and also acts as an expectorant.



## **Cassia occidental**

Penitora (Sinh.); Nattandagarai,  
Peyavirai, Ponnvirai (Tam.)

**Distribution:** It is very common in the low-country in Ceylon especially in wet places as a weed.

**Composition:** Contains a toxalbumin anoxymethylanthraquinone. The seeds contain fatty matter, tannic acid, sugar, gum, cellulose, calcium sulphate and phosphate, crysophanic and malic acids, sodium chloride, magnesium sulphate, iron, silica and achrosine.



**Uses:** The plant is a purgative, tonic and febrifuge. It is employed in dropsy, rheumatism, fevers and venereal diseases. Externally, it is used in the form of ointments on ringworm, eczema and other skin diseases. The root is used in intermittent fevers and as a tonic and diuretic in dropsy and liver complaints. An infusion of the bark is supposed to be a remedy for diabetes. The seeds act readily as an emeto-cathartic and drunk like coffee for heart disease.

## **Cassia fistula**

Ehela (Sinh.); Appai, Ar, Aragoram, Arakkuvadam, Isandar, Idali, Iragavinnadagam, Iragaviruttam, Irali, Iyagam, Iyyusviyam, Kadukai, Konrai, Madalai, Sarakkondai, Tirrukondai (Tam.)

**Distribution:** It is very common in Ceylon in the forests of the dry zone.

**Composition:** The leaves contain anthraquinones but very little tannin while the seed yields a golden coloured fixed oil and  $\beta$ -sitosterol. The fruit and bark contain oxymethyl anthraquinone while the former contains saccharose, viscient sugar, citric acid and pectin in addition. The fruit pulp yields an unsaturated hydrocarbon, wax, aloin, barbaloin and glucoside.

**Uses:** The bark and roots are used for fever, heart diseases, acute bronchitis, pneumoniae malarial affections and chronic rheumatism. The leaves especially the tender ones are used as a purgative while the older ones together with the bark are ground into a paste and applied on ringworm, insect bites, rheumatism, facial paralysis, leprosy, chronic eczema and psoriasis. A decoction of the flowers is given with cow's milk for ratbite poisoning while the ripe fruits are used to get rid of bed bugs. The pulp of the fruit in small doses is a laxative, while it acts as a purgative in large doses

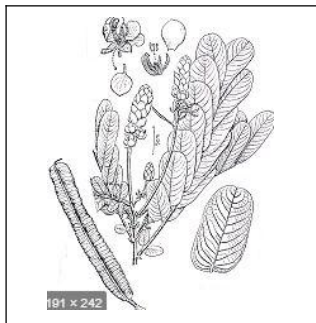


## **Cassia alata**

Et-tora (Sinh.); Anjali, Simaiyagatti, Vandugolli, Panantakarai (Tam.)

**Distribution:** It occurs both in the up-country and low-country in Ceylon.

**Composition:** This plant contains an alkaloid, anthracene glucoside which yields chrysophanic acid and tannin. The fruit contains oxymethylantraquinone."



**Uses:** The leaves are a specific for ringworm and other skin diseases. They are ground with lime and applied on the affected parts. An extract or tincture prepared from the leaves is a purgative. An infusion of the leaves and flowers is effective for bronchitis and asthma. A strong decoction of it is used as a wash for eczema with good results. The seeds are used as a vermifuge. In Ceylon, the plant is also used is a snake-bite remedy. The seed ground into a paste with juice of radish root is applied on eczema with beneficial results. Ground with vinegar and resin of *Shorea oblongifolia* (S. Dummala) it is applied on "Alu-han" on the body with good results.

**Caesalpinia major**

Kalu-vavuletiya (Sinh.); Avil, Gajji, Kachukkai, Kalal, Kalarsi, Kalargodi Mulal, Suriyindu (Tam.)

**Distribution:** In Ceylon, it grows in the dry regions: Puttalam, Jaffna, Anuradhapura



**Composition:** The seeds contain an alkaloid, natin and an active principle bonducin, in addition to a fatty oil.

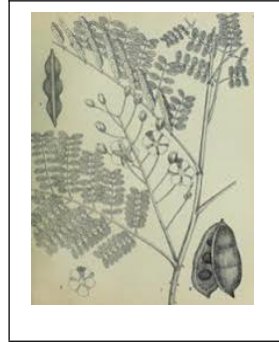
**Uses:** The tender leaves are effective on disorders of the liver, intermittent fevers and for expelling intestinal worms. An ointment prepared with the seed and castor oil is an excellent application on hydrocele, acute orchitis and glandular swellings. The powdered seed is administered internally for hydrocele and leprosy. A decoction of the roasted seeds is used in consumption and asthma

## **Caesalpinia digyna**

Vakirimul (Sinh.); Nonnikuchcha (Tam.)

**Distribution:** It is very rare in Ceylon, confined to the dry zone. Kurunegala, Doluwa Kande

**Composition:** The root is astringent and given internally for phthisis and scrofulous affections. It is also used for diabetes.



**Uses:** The tender leaves are effective on disorders of the liver, intermittent fevers and for expelling intestinal worms. An ointment prepared with the seed and castor oil is an excellent application on hydrocele, acute orchitis and glandular swellings. The powdered seed is administered internally for hydrocele and leprosy. A decoction of the roasted seeds is used in consumption and asthma.

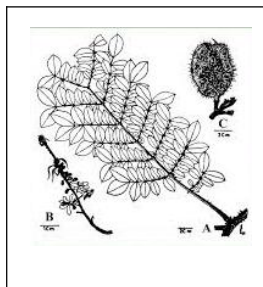
## **Caesalpinia bonduc**

Kumburu-wel (Sinh.); Gech-chakkai (Tam.)

**Distribution:** It is rather common in the low-country in Ceylon, especially near the sea coast.

**Composition:** The seed of this shrub yields a fixed oil known as bonduc nut oil. It contains a bitter principle called bonducin which is a resinous acid, two phytosterolins, sucrose, saponins, some alkaloid, and a mixture of aliphatic acids. The leaf yields a bitter resin, a bitter principle and some alkaloids, while the bark contains a bitter principle guilandinin but no saponin. The wood possesses two dyes, brasilin and brasilien.

**Uses:** This shrub has anti-suppurative properties. The bruised fresh leaves mixed with common salt are heated and applied on local inflammations prior to suppuration. The kernal of the seeds, ground with cow's milk, makes a useful application for acne vulgaris. Internally, the plant acts as an aromatic stomachic, carminative and anti-spasmodic and is valuable in acute dyspepsia, flatulence and colic. The seeds are anthelmintic against roundworms.



## **Careya coccinea**

Kahata (Sinh.); Ayma, Karekku, Kumbi, Pela, Pudattanri (Tam.)

**Distribution:** It is very common in the moist regions of Ceylon especially in exposed patana lands upto 5000 feet altitude.



### **Composition:**

**Uses:** The bark and fruit are astringent. The flowers and juice of the fresh bark are given with honey as a demulcent in coughs and colds.

## **Calophyllum walker**

Keena, Kina (Sinh.); Sirupunnai (Tam.)

**Distribution:** An endemic tree common in the higher elevations of Ceylon from 4000 to 7000 feet altitude. Nuwara Eliya, Adam's Peak, Ambagamuwa, Knuckles hills, etc.

**Uses:** The oil extracted from the seeds of this tree is used as an external application on fractures and contusions



**Calophyllum tomentosum**

Keena (Sinh.); Kina, Kattupinnai, Kine, Pinnai, Pongu, Pungu (Tam.)

**Distribution:** In Ceylon, it is common in the moist up-country from 2000—4000 feet altitude.

**Composition:**

**Uses:** The orange-coloured oil extracted from the seeds of this tree is used as an application on fractures and contusions with beneficial results.

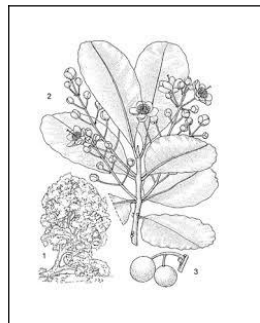


## **Calophyllum inophyllum**

Domba, Dombagaha, Teldomba (Sinh.);  
Nagam, Nameru, Pinmai, Punnagam, Punnai  
(Tam.)

**Distribution:** In Ceylon, it is common along the sea coast in the low-country.

**Composition:** The oil extracted from the seeds contains a poisonous resin. The bark contains tannin and exudes an oleoresin which contains benzoic acids.



**Uses:** The bark acts as an antiseptic and disinfectant. Rubbed with water or lime juice, it makes a useful application on armpits, groins and feet in bromidrosis. The bark taken internally, acts as an expectorant and is useful in chronic bronchitis and phthisis. Externally, the bruised seeds and oil are applied to chronic rheumatism, inflammation of bones and joints and ankylosis. The oleoresin taken internally is supposed to be beneficial for lung ailments and externally applied on chronic ulcers and wounds with beneficial results. The resin mixed with strips of bark and leaves, steeped in water and the oil which rises to the surface is a household application for sore eyes. The astringent juice of the bark is a purgative and given in the form of a decoction for internal.

## **Dillenia indica**

Hondapara, Wampara (Sinh.); Akku, Ugakkay, Uva, Uvav, Uvatleku (Tam.)

**Distributio:** It is commonly planted in the low-country in Ceylon.

### **Composition:**

**Uses:** The leaves and bark are astringent. The juice of the fruit which is slightly laxative is used as a cooling beverage in fevers and as a cough mixture. Externally, it is used for fomentation of swellings in joints recovering from dislocations.

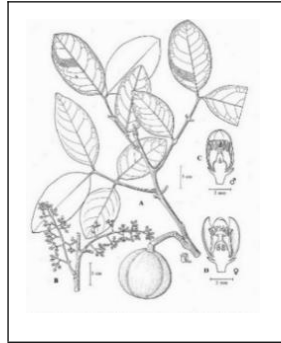


**Dillenia retusa**

Godapara (Sinh.)

**Distribution:** A rather common, endemic species found in the moist low-country.

**Uses:** The fruit is used as an ingredient for poultices applied on fractures and dislocations.

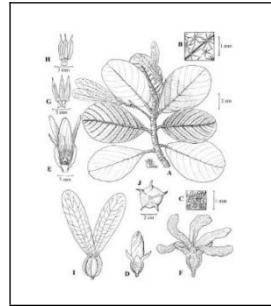


## **Dipterocarpus glandulosus**

Dorana (Sinh.); Yennai (Tam.)

**Distribution:** A rare, endemic tree growing in the moist, low-country mostly in the Sabaragamuwa Province.

**Uses:** The resin which exudes from the stem and collects at the base of the tree, yields an oil which is used externally in the treatment of rheumatic swellings and leprosy. It is a suitable substitute for Gurjun balsam. The oil is also used for varnishing furniture and for dissolving paints.



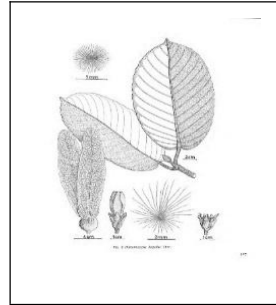
## **Dipterocarpus zeylanicus**

Hora, Sarala, Sora (Sinh.)

**Distribution:** A common, endemic tree, growing in the moist low-country extending into the lower montane zone.

### **Composition:**

**Uses:** The heart-wood of the tree is used along with other ingredients in the treatment of fever. The greenish-grey gum resin is used on chronic ulcers, sinuses and fistulae. Internally, it acts as a diaphoretic and expectorant and useful in the treatment of pharyngitis, tonsillitis, bronchitis and pneumonia.



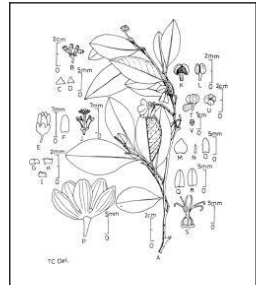
## **Dimorphocalyx glabellus**

Weli-wenna (Sinh.); Tentukki (Tam.)

**Distribution:** the drier parts of Ceylon where it is very common. Anuradhapura, Trincomalee, Jaffna, Bintenne, Galle, Kalutara.

**Composition:**

**Uses:** Used as a diuretic and purgative.



## **Dysophylla auricularia**

Hemanilla (Sinh.)

**Distribution:** In Ceylon, it is common in wet places at the edge of paddyfields in the low-country.

**Composition:** The leaves contain an alkaloid.

**Uses:** Used as a poultice for stomach trouble in children, worms, kidney ailments and diarrhoea.



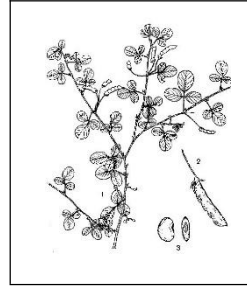
## **Desmodium heterophyllum**

Maha-undupiyali (Sinh.)

**Distribution:** It is very common in Ceylon in the low-country, upto 2000 feet altitude.

**Composition:**

**Uses:** The leaf is used for dysentery and to increase the flow of milk in mothers after child-birth. The roots and leaves are pounded together and applied on sores



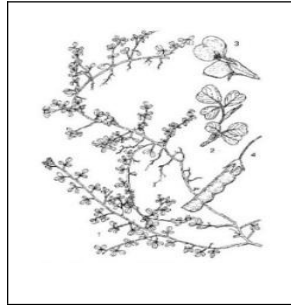
## **Desmodium triflorum**

Hin-undupiyali (Sinh.); Serupillady (Tam.)

**Distribution:** It is very common in the low-country in Ceylon.

### **Composition:**

**Uses:** An aromatic stomachic, cholagogue and laxative, and is useful in anorexia, chronic dyspepsia and congestion of the liver. It is a reputed aphrodisiac. The root is a carminative and diuretic. The leaves ground into a paste with cinnamon bark and roasted in gingely oil, are applied on chronic ulcers to promote healing.



## **Dichrostachys cinerea**

Andara (Sinh.); Anatter, Mavilandam, Vadataram, Varittula, Veduttalam, Vidattalai, Vidatter (Tam.)

**Distribution:** It is very common in the dry regions in Ceylon, mostly in barren places. Jaffna, Trincomalee, Batticaloa, Kurunegala

### **Composition:**

**Uses:** The bark of this tree in decoction is used for washing itches, sores, etc., and applied on boils. The young leaves are bruised and applied to eyes for ophthalmia. In tropical Africa, the leaf is used for indigestion and diarrhoea. In Tanganyika, the root of the plant is used for chest complaints and the branches for gonorrhoea and syphilis. A decoction of the bark is given internally for elephantiasis and the powdered bark applied on skin diseases. The root is also considered as an aphrodisiac.



### **Datura metel Linn**

Ela-attana, Kalu-attana, Sudu-attana (Sinh.)

Ayigam, Emanamam, Karuvumattai, Madumattai, Maiyal, Mattadi, Mattai, Mattam, Ponnunmattai, Samadu, Turam, Umattai, Udavumattai, Vellaiyu mattai, Vellumattai, Vellumattai (Tam.)



**Distribution:** It occurs in India, Cealon, China, Phillipine Islands and in the tropics generally. It is a common weed in waste and cultivated land in Ceylon.

**Composition:** The leaves, flowers, fruits and seeds of this plant contain atropine, hyoscine, hyocyamine, cuscohygrine, norhyocyamine and metaloidine, while the fruits contain scopolamine and the seeds, a fatty oil.

**Uses:** The leaves are used as poultices on inflamed breasts to check excessive secretion of milk, rheumatic swelling of joints, lumbago and painful tumours. It is a suitable substitute for belladonna for treatment of cataract and other diseases of the eye. The dried leaves made into cigarettes are smoked for bronchial asthma at the onset of the attacks, with beneficial results. The powdered root is rubbed on the gums for toothache Internally, it is given as a remedy for preventing hydrophobia. The powdered seed is given in the form of pills for severe colds. It may be stuffed into cavities of teeth for toothache. The dried root is smoked by the Swahili tribes for tuberculosis and the seed used for homicidal purposes.

## **Datura suaveolens**

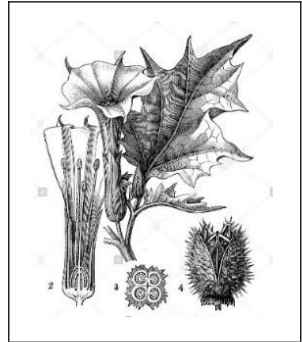
Thunbo-attana (Sinh.)

**Distribution:** A garden plant of Mexican origin and grown in Ceylon as an ornamental plant. In Ceylon: Central Prov., Peradeniya, Bot. Gard., cultivated, Herb. Peradeniya, Oct. 1888.

**Composition:** The leaves of this plant contain the alkaloids, hyoscine,

hyocyamine, scopolamine and daturine which is a mixture of atropine and hyocyamine.

**Uses:** This plant is used as a narcotic. The Indians of the upper and northern Amazon brink it and the intoxicating effect lasts three days.



### **Ervatamia divaricata:**

Wathu-sudda (Sinh.); "Adukkumandiyavattai, Kuruduppalai, Nandiyavarttam, Pattidai, Perunandiyavattam, Valamburi (Tam.)

**Distribution:** In Ceylon, it is a plant commonly found cultivated around houses in the midland low-country. It thrives in the dry zone and along the coast.



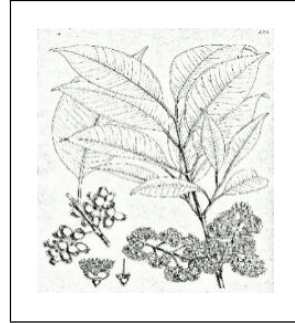
**Composition:** The bark of this plant contains coronarine and tabernaemontanine whilst the stems and leaves too. Contain alkaloids. The milky juice consists of caoutchouc and resin.

**Uses:** The root of this plant is a local anodyne. It is anthelmintic and is commonly chewed for relief from toothache. Made into a paste with water and mixed with lime juice it is applied to remove opacities of the cornea and for other eye diseases. The milky latex is applied to the eye to cure ophthalmia. Mixed with oil and applied on the head it relieves pain in the eyes and the burning sensation in sore eyes. It is also used for skin diseases

### **Elaeodendroa glancom**

Chutaya, Neralu, Pieri, Tamaruja (Sinh.);  
Irgoli, Kannirai, Karrukuva, Karuvali, Kiri,  
Pirai (Tam.)

**Distribution:** In Ceylon, it is common in the dry country especially near the coast. Jaffna, Trincomalee, Kalpitiya, Mannar, Hunnasgiriya, Deltota, Dambulla, Sigiriya, Minipe



**Uses:** The powdered leaf is used as snuff to relieve headaches. The rootbark is madom into a paste with water and applied onto swellings. The root is a specific against snake-bite poisoning. The crushed root soaked in water and the solution strained off is taken as an emetic. This solution is also rubbed on the chest for pneumonia.

### **Eclipta prostrata**

Kikirindi (Sinh.); Kaikeshi, Kaivishiilai, Karippan, Karishlanganni (Tam.)

**Distribution:** In Ceylon, it is very common in wet places almost everywhere.

**Composition:** Contains an alkaloid and nicotine. Nadkarni reports that it contains a large amount of resin and an alkaloid ecliptine.

**Uses:** This plant has different uses in different countries. In India, it is used externally on chronic skin diseases, ulcers, elephantiasis, conjunctivitis and to stimulate the growth of hair, and internally for arthritis, dropsy and as a deobstruent for hepatic and splenic enlargements. The root has emetic properties and is used as a purgative.



## **Elephantopus scaber**

Et-adi (Sinh.); Anashovadi (Tam.)

**Distribution:** In Ceylon, it is very common in open ground up to 7000 feet altitude.

**Composition:** The roots contain a glucoside.

**Uses:** In Ceylon, the leaves are ground into a paste with water and applied with bees' honey on septic nails and on wounds caused by bites of wild animals.



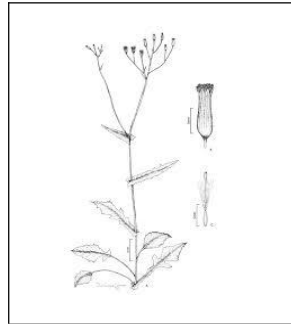
**Emilia sonchifolia**

Kadupara(Sinh.)

**Distribution:** In Ceylon, it is abundant all over the island.

**Composition:** The plant contains an alkaloid.

**Uses:** In Ceylon, the leaves are used as a styptic for cuts and wounds and long-standing superficial ulcers. A decoction of the plant is given as an expectorant, anti-haemostatic and in cases of fever.



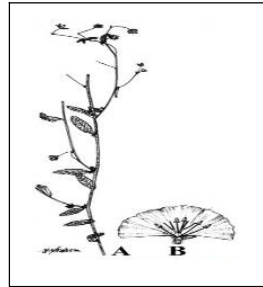
**Evolvulus alsinoides**

Vishnukranthi (Sinh.); Vishnukarundi,  
Vishnukranthi (Tam.)

**Distribution:** In Ceylon, it is very common in dry and sandy ground in the low-country, up to an altitude of 2000 feet.

**Composition:** The stems and leaves of this plant contain an alkaloid, a yellow, neutral fat, an organic acid and a saline substance.

**Uses:** Reputed to be an excellent remedy for bowel complaints and dysentery. It is also used in the form of a decoction as a febrifuge, alterative, vermifuge, and for nervous debility, loss of memory, syphilis, scrofula, etc. With, oil it is used to promote the growth of hair. The roots are used for intermittent fevers in children. The leaves are made into cigarettes and smoked in cases of chronic bronchitis and asthma.



## **Erythroxylum monogynum**

Dasadaram, Devadaram, Devadari,  
Kadavulardaram, Kattusandanam,  
Kurardurumam, Sammanati (Tam.)

**Distribution:** Jaffna, Mihintale, Kirinde

**Composition:** The leaves contain small quantities of alkaloids. The wood yields a creosote-like volatile oil containing pinene, diterpene, diterpene alcohol and a trace of sesquiterpene.

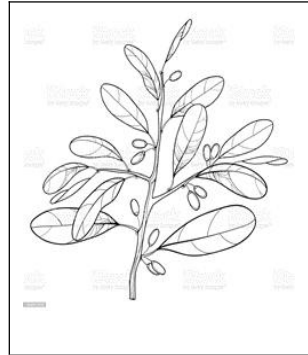
**Uses:** An infusion of the wood and bark is considered a stomachic, diaphoretic and a stimulant diuretic. It is also useful in some slight cases of dyspepsia, fever and dropsy. The leaves are used as an anthelmintic. The resinous tar obtained from distillation of wood is used as a wood preservative for fishing boats.



### **Erythroxylum moonii**

Bata-kirilla (Sinh.); Chiruchemannati, Chiruchenatti (Tam.)

**Distribution:** It is rather common in the low-country in Ceylon. Ratnapura, Kuruwita Korale, Singha Raja Forest, Uma Oya, Nilgai a, Dambulla, Matara (Dick well a)

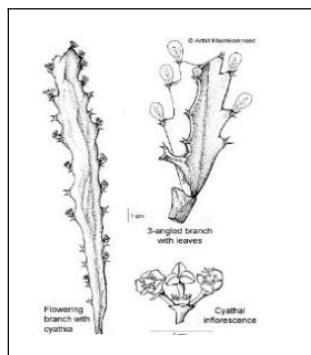


**Composition:** Its leaves (majorly) and stem bark are used in 5 different disease conditions either internally or externally.

**Uses:** The leaves given in various forms (the commonest being a bolus made by mixing the powdered dry leaves with rice flour and honey) are very effective anthelmintic for round worms. Externally the bruised leaves in the form of a poultice hastens suppuration of boils and abscesses.

## ***Euphorbia antiquorum***

Daluk (Sinh.); Amudangam, Chatura-Kalli, Kalli, Kandiravam, Kaniravam, Kodiravam, Mavirukkam, Murittargalli, Sadurakkalli, Saduchi, Sunakkudam, Tiruvargalli, Vachiram, Vachirangam, Velangalli (Tam.)



**Distribution** Grows in the hotter parts of Ceylon. It is common in rocky and dry places, especially in dry regions.

**Uses:** The bark of the root is a purgative and a decoction of the stem is given for gout. The juice from the branches is used as a purgative to relieve pain in the loins. It is an acrid irritant for rheumatism and relieves tooth-ache. It is employed in nervine diseases, dropsy, palsy, deafness and amaurosis. It is a popular application to warts and other cutaneous affections. Externally, mixed with margosa oil, it is applied to limbs which are affected by rheumatism.

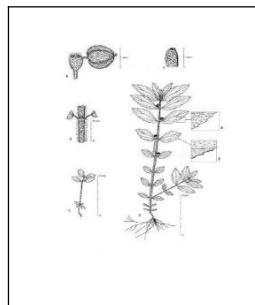
## **Euphorbia hirta**

Budadakiriya, Dadakiriya, Kepunkiriya, Kiritala (Sinh.); Amumpatchaiyarissi, Palavi, Patchaiyarissi (Tam.)

**Distribution:** It is a common weed in Ceylon.

**Composition:** The plant contains the alkaloid xanthorhamnine, gallic acid, quercetin, a phenolic substance, triacontane, euphosterol, phytosterol, a phytosterolin, jambulol, and melissic acid. Both vegetative and reproductive organs yield hydrocyanic acid.

**Uses:** The fluid extract of this plant is used to relieve the difficulty of breathing in asthma, bronchitis and in pulmonary, cardiac disease, angina pectoris. It is also a useful remedy for acute and chronic dysentery. The latex is applied externally on ringworm.



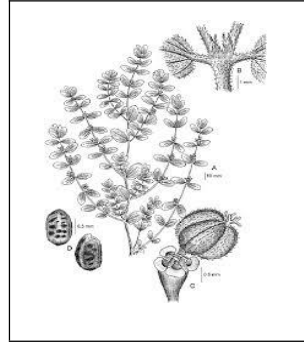
## **Euphorbia indica**

Eladadakiriya (Sinh.)

**Distribution:** It is a common weed in waste and cultivated ground in Ceylon.

**Composition:** Contains a phenolic-like substance, a volatile oil and a small amount of alkaloid and glucoside. The latex contains a resin and euphorbon.

**Uses:** An infusion of the dried leaves is used as a remedy for diarrhoea, dysentery, menorrhagia, and leucorrhoea. It is given with milk to children for colic.



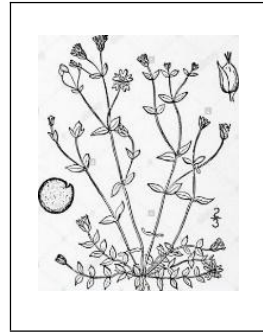
## **Euphorbia thymifolia**

Bindadakiriya (Sinh.); Chinamampatchaiyausi  
Sitrapaladi, Chittirapalavi (Tam.)

**Distribution:** It is a common weed in waste  
and cultivated ground in Ceylon. Kalutara,  
Haragama

**Composition:** Contains a crystalline alkaloid  
principle, allied to quercetin.

**Uses:** The leaves are employed as a poultice to counteract the effects  
of bites of poisonous snakes. The expressed juice of the plant is  
given with wine for the same purpose.



## **Excoecaria agallocha**

Telakiriya (Sinh.); Agadil, Agi, Ambalatti  
Ambalavirukkam, Tillai, Perundillai  
(Tam.)

**Distribution:** In Ceylon, it is common  
along the coast by tidal estuaries and  
backwaters.

**Uses:** The milky latex which exudes from  
the bark of this tree is very caustic and  
poisonous, causing blindness if it touches  
the eyes and blisters the skin.



### **Echinochloa crus-galli**

Wel-marukku, Marathu (Sinh.); Kutiraivalpillu (Tam.)

**Distribution:** In Ceylon, it is a very common weed in rice fields, swamps in the low and mid-country elevations and in the lower montane zone.



**Composition:** This plant contains an alkaloid.

**Uses:** Used to check haemorrhage and is prescribed for diseases of the spleen

## **Elensine indica**

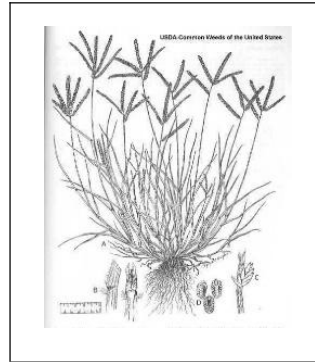
Belathana, Walkurakkan (Sinh.); Tippa-ragi (Tam.)

**Distribution:** It is a very common weed in Ceylon in lawns and by the roadside.

**Composition:** This grass contains an alkaloid.

**Uses** Useful for sprains and dislocations.

It is considered diaphoretic and antipyretic. This grass causes poisoning of livestock by the release of hydrocyanic acid during



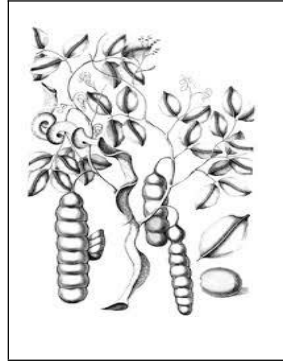
### **Entada phaseoloides**

Maha-puswel (Sinh.); Irikki, Sillu (Tam.)

**Distribution:** It is common in Ceylon in the low-country up to 2000 feet altitude.

**Composition:** The bark and seeds contain saponin and an alkaloid. The seeds also contain a fatty oil.

**Uses** A paste of the seed is applied externally on glandular swellings and pain in the loins and joints due to general debility. The powdered kernel of the seed mixed with spices is given to women after childbirth for allaying body pains and warding off colds.



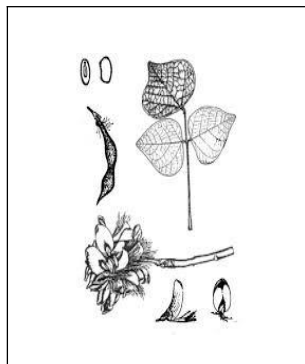
## **Erythrina variegata**

Erabadu, Eramudu (Sinh.);  
Kaliyanamurukku, Kavir, Munchi,  
Mullumurukku, Murukku, Palasam,  
Palasu, Parisadam, Savusayam, Sinsugam,  
Vallai, Venittu (Tam.)

**Distribution:** It is very common in Ceylon in the low-country.

**Composition:** The fruits contain a fatty acid and a saponaceous glucoside, while the seeds contain the alkaloid hypaphorine. The leaves and bark on the other hand contain erythrinine, a poisonous alkaloid which acts on the nervous system. Hydrocyanic acid has also been found in the leaves, stems, roots and fruits.

**Uses** The fresh bark and leaves ground into a paste with water are applied on glandular swellings and local inflammations of the skin. Internally, they act as an expectorant and useful in chronic bronchitis and bronchial asthma. The fresh juice of the leaves is used to relieve earache and as an anodyne in toothache. Mixed with castor oil, it is a cure for acute and chronic dysentery. A conjee prepared from the juice of the leaves is given once a week to infants in order to prevent them getting worms



### **Euodia lunu-ankenda**

Ankenda, Lunu-ankenda, Nebeda (Sinh.)

**Distribution:** Occurs in India, Ceylon, Malay Peninsula, Sumatra and Java. In Ceylon, it is common in lower elevations and rarer higher up between 2,000- and 6,000-feet altitude.

**Composition:** A small tree with opposite branches, bark grey, smooth, young parts finely tomentose



**Uses:** An infusion of the leaves and flowers of this tree is given as a tonic and emmenagogue. The juice of the leaves is administered for fever. A decoction of the root or root bark boiled in oil is taken for improving the complexion. In Indo-China, the plant is used as a bitter tonic and the bark and leaves are given for fever.

### **Elettaria repens**

Ensal (Sinh.); Anji, Elam, Hangi, Iravadi, Kalindam, Korangi, Sukkumam, Sittelam, Taduvairi, Tiraladi, Tudi, Turutti, Vedi (Tam.)

**Distribution:** Occurs in southern India especially near the Malabar coast and frequently cultivated in Ceylon

**Composition:** The seeds of this plant contain a volatile oil and starch

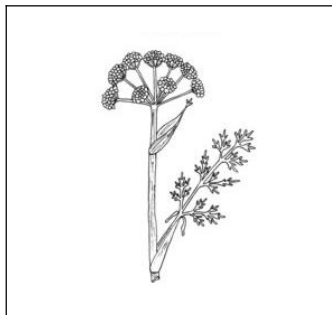


**Uses:** The fruit is an aromatic carminative, stimulant, stomachic, and emmenagogue. It is given internally for diseases of the liver and uterus and applied externally on tumours of the uterus. The seed is diuretic and used to relieve the retention of urine. It is administered to children to prevent excessive vomiting. In Cambodia, the root is used as a laxative and tonic. The seed of *Elettaria ensal* (Gaertn.) Abeywick., a common species growing in the forests of the moist regions of Ceylon, is also used medicinally for the same ailments

## **Ferula asafetida**

Perunkayam (Sinh.); Perungayam  
(Tam.)

**Distribution:** Occurs in India and  
Western Tibet. It is not cultivated in  
Ceylon



**Composition:** Asafoetida is composed  
of a volatile oil, resin and gum together with traces of malic acid, etc.  
The volatile oil is a mixture of sulphur compounds of the  
hydrocarbon  $C_6 H_{12}$ , the resin containing ferulaic acid and  
umbelliferone, the resin and volatile oil are the active constituents of  
the drug.

**Uses:** The gum-resin is used extensively in India as a condiment. It is  
effective in flatulent colic and is used externally on ringworm. It is a  
powerful antispasmodic, expectorant, anthelmintic and a nervine  
stimulant, it is useful for asthma, dysentery, catarrh, hernia,  
whooping cough and angina pectoris. Its effect is remarkable in  
advanced stages of pneumonia and bronchitis in children. It is also  
used as a snake-bite cure. In certain parts of Baluchistan, the leaves  
are given for rheumatism and the seeds to expel worms in children.  
The seeds and leaves possess sudorific and carminative properties

**Gisekia phamacioides**

Etirillapala (Sinh.); Manalikkirai, Manali (Tam.)

**Distribution:** seashore in Jaffna, Mannar, Trincomalee, Mount Lavinia, Chilaw, Hambantota,



**Composition:** The plant contains tannin, while the seeds contain the tannin-like principle and gisekia.

**Uses:** The plant is a powerful anthelmintic in cases of taeniasis. In South Africa and Tanganyika, it is used as a taenicide and for severe diarrhoea. The fruit is poisonous.

## **Glinus oppositifolius**

Hinipala (Sinh.); Kachantarai (Tam.)

**Distribution:** Jaffna, Talaimannar, Anamaduwa, Karativu, Kuruncgala, Batalagoda, Bintenne, Bibile

**Composition:** Rich in iron and a good source of calcium.

**Uses:** The stems and leaves of this plant are eaten as a vegetable but is very bitter if not properly cooked. The plant is considered to be a stomachic, aperient and antiseptic. It is given to children for dyspepsia. The juice of the plant is applied for itch and other skin diseases with beneficial results



### **Gynandropsis gynandra**

Vela (Sinh.); Kadugu, Nayvelai, Velai (Tam.)

**Distribution:** In Ceylon, it is very common in waste and cultivated ground in the low-country

**Composition:** The leaves contain an alkaloid. The plant yields an acrid, volatile oil having the properties of garlic or mustard oil. The seeds, too, contain a greenish, drying oil.

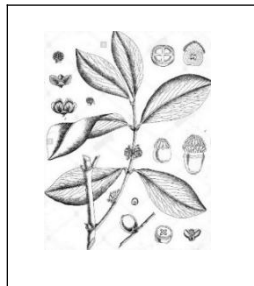


**Uses:** The whole plant made into an ointment with oil. Is effective for pustular eruptions and other cutaneous diseases especially leprosy. The bruised leaves are rubefacient and vesicant and often used as a counter-irritant for rheumatism, neuralgia, headache and stiff neck provided the application is withdrawn before it produces blisters. A decoction of the root is a mild febrifuge. The seeds are antispasmodic, sudorific, anthelmintic and carminative. In Ceylon, it is a reputed snake-bite cure. Taken internally, it is useful in acute dyspepsia, flatulence and colic. It is also used as an aphrodisiac.

## **Garcinia Morella**

Kana-goraka, Kokatiya, Gokatu, Gorak (Sinh.)  
Irevalsinni, Makki, Solaippuli (Tam.)

**Distribution:** It is common in Ceylon in the moist low-country upto 2000 feet altitude

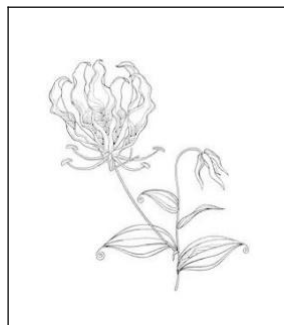


**Composition:** The rind of the fruit contains morellin and the seeds 30% fat.

**Uses:** Gamboge possesses anthelmintic properties and is used for dropsical ailments amenorrhoea, chronic constipation and as a vermifuge. It is a valuable] hydragogue cathartic and useful for anasarca and ascites. The stem when rubbed with water and applied on pimples and boils gives beneficial results. The gum-resin has antilithic properties and is frequently employed for urinary gravel and calculi.

## **Gloriosa superba**

Liyanagala, Niyangala (Sinh.);  
Akkinichilam, Anaravam, Ilangali, Iradi,  
Irumbu, Kandal, Kalappaikkilangu,  
Karttigaikkilangu, Kannovuppundu,  
Kirttigaikkilangu, Kodai, Milangili,  
Nabikkodi, Pattrai, Sengandal,  
Sivappukkandal, Talaichuruli, Tondri,  
Vendondri, Ventonti (Tam.)



**Distribution:** It is common in the low-country in Ceylon.

**Composition:** An alcoholic extract of the tuber of this plant yields various organic acids, choline, dextrose, a hydrocarbon, a fatty alcohol, a mixture of phytosterolins and alkaloids colchicine, demethylcolchicine, N-formyl-desacetylcolchicine, gloriosine, lumicolchicine and another unnamed alkaloid. The flowers contain the alkaloids N-formyl-desacetylcolchicine and lumicolchicine, while the leaves contain chelidonic acid.

**Uses:** The tuber is poisonous and tan

nic acid is an antidote which precipitates the colchicine already present in the gastro-intestinal tract and prevents further absorption. In Ceylon, the tuber is used for the treatment of bruises and sprains, while in India it is used in blood diseases, swellings, wounds, abscesses, leprosy, piles and gonorrhoea. The tuber is ground into a paste and applied on the navel and suprapubic region to promote easy labour.

### **Gnidia eriocephala**

Naha (Sinh.); Malaiviralan, Nachannar (Tam.)

**Distribution:** Occurs in India and Ceylon. It is rather common in open rocky places especially in the Uva Province in Ceylon.



**Composition:** A much branched bush 2—3.3 m high, twigs slender, erect, glabrous; leaves simple alternate, exstipulate, 5—7.5 cm long, linear or lanceolate-oblong, acute at base, acute or obtuse at apex and apiculate, entire, glabrous, thin, petioles very short; flowers regular bisexual, bright yellow, nearly sessile in erect, dense, terminal heads 2.5—3.7 cm wide surrounded at base by an involucre of large, imbricate, oval, acute, silky bracts.

**Uses:** The leaves of this plant are mascerated and applied on contusions, swellings, etc. The bark is used as a fish poison.

### **Glycosmis pentaphylla**

Dodanpana (Sinh.); Anam, Kattukkonji, Konji, Kulapannai (Tam.)



**Distribution:** Occurs in the tropical and sub-tropical regions of India, Ceylon, Malaya, China, Borneo and Australia. It is common as an undergrowth under the shade of trees in dryregions from sea level to 3,000 feet elevation in the low-country in Ceylon. Colombo, Kandy, Galagama, Kalutara, etc.

**Composition:** This plant contains the alkaloids glycosine, glycosmimine, skimmianinc and the leaves kokusaginine and an unnamed alkaloid. In addition, the plant has an active principle glycosmine, a tannin, a phlobaphene, traces of salicin and sugars.

**Uses:** The juice of the leaves is used for fevers, liver complaints and for intestinal worms in children. The leaves are applied externally as a paste on eczema and other skin diseases.

## **Gyrinops walla**

Patta-walla, Walla (Sinh.)

**Distribution:** Occurs in India and Ceylon. It is rather common in the moist regions up to 4,000 feet altitude in Ceylon. / Ceylon. Western Prov., Mirigama, Alston 675, June 1927; Hunuwala, J. M. Silva, April 1928. Southern Prov., Galle, Thwaites CP. 1828.



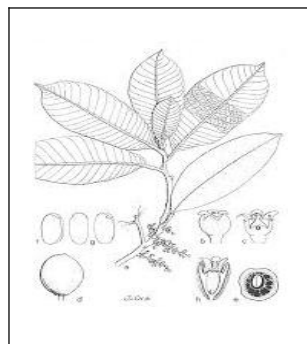
**Composition:** A small tree with a slender erect trunk and a small rounded head, branchlets numerous, slender, erect, bark thin, smooth, reddish brown, buds silky; leaves simple, alternate, exstipulate, 3.7—10 cm long, oblong-lanceolate, acute at base, shortly acuminate, obtuse or subacute, entire with a very narrow hyaline edge, quite glabrous, slightly shining, lateral veins very fine and numerous, midrib prominent beneath, petioles very short;

**Uses:** The tender leaves of this tree are used as a vermifuge. They are applied as a poultice on boils, fistula in ano and snakebites with beneficial results. The mascerated leaves when placed in tooth-cavities loosen the teeth. The plant is also used for preparation of medicinal oils. The bark of the tree is tough and is used for making ropes

## **Gironniera cuspidate**

Wal-munamal (Sinh.); Kodaittani (Tam.)

**Distribution:** Occurs in India, Ceylon, Java, Celebes and Philippine Islands. It is rather rare in the low-country in Ceylon between 1,000- and 3,000-feet altitude. Between Kurunegala and Matale, Gannoruwa, Deltota and Badulla



**Composition:** An unarmed evergreen tree, 10—13 m tall with glabrous, lenticellate branchlets and glabrous or sparsely adpressed hairy young parts; leaves simple, alternate, stipulate, 7.5—12.5 cm long, oblong to ovate-lanceolate, acuminate or caudate, base rounded or acute, smooth, glabrous, shining, finely reticulated above, scaberulous beneath, veins 10—12 pairs, spreading, petioles 0.6—1.2 cm long, stipules connate sheathing the buds, lanceolate, hairy, caducous; flowers regular, unisexual, dioecious, apetalous, males in shortly peduncled cymes and females solitary and axillary; male flowers: minute, globose, sepals 5, obtuse, imbricate; stamens 5, filaments suberect in bud, pistillode woolly; female flowers: sepals narrower than in males, acute, ovary superior, unilocular with a single ovule, glabrous, style central, stigmas 2, filiform, spreading, ovule pendulous; fruit an ovoid drupe, 1.2—1.8 cm long, shortly beaked, glabrous and hardly compressed.

**Uses:** The bark is given internally for cutaneous diseases as it purifies the blood

### **Gmetina arborea**

Et-demata (Sinh.); Arisa, Goomadee, Gumudu-takku, Kalarbadi, Kattanam, Kumil, Kumbal, Perungumil, Pulirgumil, Umitekku (Tam.)

**Distribution:** Occurs in India, Ceylon, Burma and Philippine Islands. It is rather common but often cultivated in the moist regions of Ceylon up to 5000 feet altitude



**Uses:** The juice of the leaves of this tree is used to remove foetid discharges and worms from ulcers. A decoction of the

roots and bark is given for fever and thirst and to increase the secretion of milk in women

## **Holarrhena mitis**

Kirimawara, Kiri-walla, Kelinda (Sinh.)

**Distribution:** The dry regions of the low-country up to 1500 feet altitude above sea-level. Mirigama, Kitulgala, Madulkelle, Habarana, Sigiriya, Negombo, Ratnapura

### **Composition:**

**Uses:** This tree is a suitable substitute for *Holarrhena antidysenterica*. The wood and bark are used for fevers and dysentery. The bark is valued as an antiperiodic.

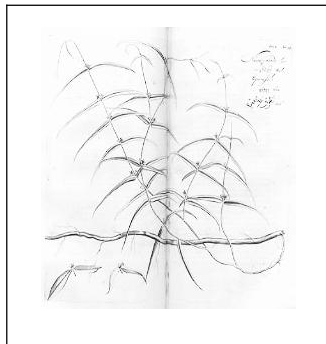


### **Hemidesmus indicus**

Iramusu (Sinh.); Arakkam, Aritinviyachi Aruninam, Kananusari, Kiruttinavalli, Nannari, Pargodi. Sasbam, Saribam, Sirunannari, Urgadam (Tam.)

**Distribution:** In Ceylon it is very common in the low-country up to 2,500 feet or higher, in grassy places.

**Composition:** The root of this plant contains a volatile oil and hemidesmine.



**Uses:** In Ceylon, the root is used along with other ingredients in the treatment of fever, carbuncles, fistula, urinary diseases, blood and skin diseases, blood tumours, syphilis and acute rheumatism. A decoction of the root bark with milk and sugar is a good alterative tonic for cough and diarrhoea in children and for cases of gravel and strangury. The plant is used in the preparation of snake-bite cures.

## **Hoya ovalifolia**

Gonuke (Sinh.)

**Distribution:** low country forests of the Kitulgala and Ambagamuwa districts

**Composition:**

**Uses:** This plant is used as a specific in the treatment of fractures. Since the genuine plant is not readily available, other species of Hoya are used as substitutes.

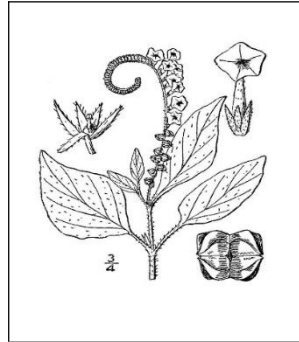


## **HeUorropium indicum**

Et-setiya, Et-honda (Sinh.); Dimbiya, Telkodukku, Telmunai (Tam.)

**Distribution:** In Ceylon, it is a very common roadside weed in the low country. Peradeniya, Ratnapura, Bintenne

**Composition:** Contains an alkaloid, tannin and an organic acid.

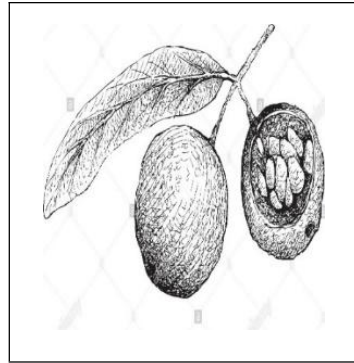


**Uses:** In Ceylon, the plant is used for rheumatism and bronchial diseases.

## **Hydnocarpus venenata**

Makulu (Sinh.)

**Distribution:** A common endemic tree growing on the banks of rivers in the low-country up to 2000 feet altitude. Kurunegala, Hantane, Peradeniya, Eastern and Western Provinces.



**Uses:** The oil extracted from the seeds of this tree is used as an external application for certain cutaneous diseases and is regarded as a remedy for leprosy.

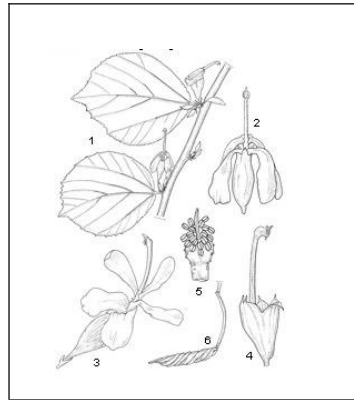
### **Helecteres isora**

Liniya, Zimia (Sinh.); Vadampiri, Valamburi, Valumberi, Valumpuri (Tam.)

**Distribution:** Occurs in India, Ceylon, Burma, Malaya, Java, Australia and West Indies. It is rather common in the low-country in Ceylon up to 2,000 feet altitude. Matara, Colombo, Kurunegala, Yatiyantota, etc./

Mirigama, deSilva, Aug. 1923; Yatiyantota, Bulathkohupitiya Road, Simpson 9986, Aug. 1932; Without locality, Thwaites CP. 1137

**Uses:** The juice of the roots and fruits is administered internally for stomach ailments such as colic, griping and flatulence. The bark is used in diarrhoea and dysentery. In Jamaica, a decoction of the leaves is given for clysters.



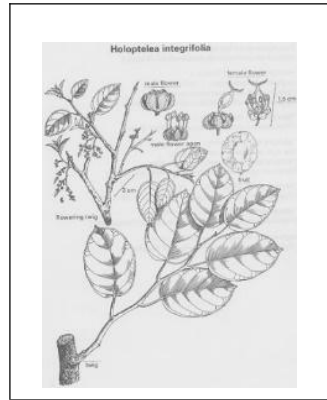
**Holoptelea integrifolia**

Dadakirilla, Godakirilla (Sinh.); Avali, Aya, Kanji, Tabasi, Vellaya (Tam.)

**Distribution:** Occurs in India, Ceylon, Burma and Cochm-China. It is common in the dry regions of Ceylon

**Composition:** Occurs in India, Ceylon, Burma and Cochm-China. It is common in the dry regions of Ceylon

**Uses:** The mucilaginous bark is boiled and the juice applied on rheumatic swellings. The bark is powdered and tied as a poultice.



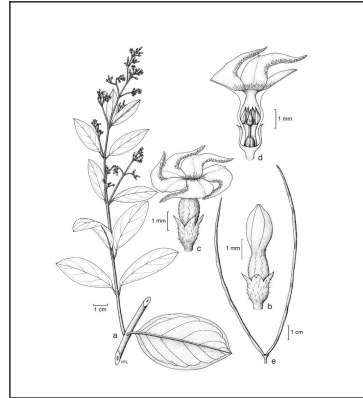
### ***Ichnocarpus frutescens***

Geta-Kiriwel, Kiriwel, Mahairamusuwel (Sinh.); Udargodi (Tam.)

**Distribution:** In Ceylon, it occurs in the low-country below 3000 feet altitude especially in the dry districts. Kekirawa, Kurunegala, Kandy, Hantane, Colombo and Ranna.

**Uses:** The stalks and leaves are used in the form of a decoction for fevers.

It appears to be a good substitute for Sarsaparilla (*Hemidesmus indicus*).



## ***Impatiens repens* Moon**

Gal-demata (Shin.)

**Distribution:** Four Korales, Sitawaka, Ruwanwella, Alagala, Yatiyantota, Ambepussa, Bambarabotuwa,

**Uses:** This plant is used in the treatment of epilepsy. It is eaten as a vegetable for piles and haemorrhoids. It is given both internally and applied on the head, externally for the treatment of insanity.

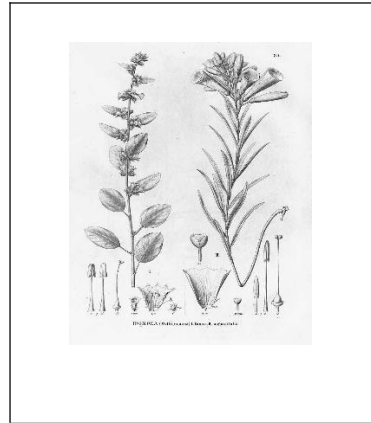


## ***Ipomoea angustifolia***

Hin-madu (Sinh.)

**Distribution:** In Ceylon, it is common in open places in mid and low-country.

**Uses:** Used as an ingredient, along with other drugs, as an application on the scalp for head ailments of people bitten by poisonous snakes. Milch cows fed on this plant are supposed to yield more milk.

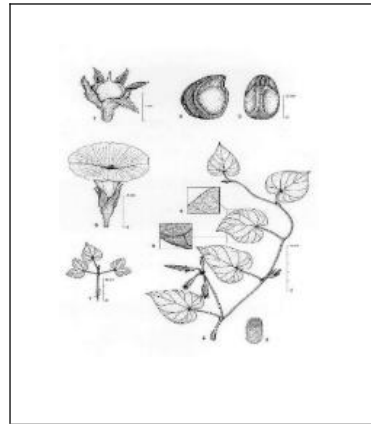


### ***Ipomoea obscura***

Mahamadu, Telkola (Sinh.);  
Chirudali, Chirutali, Kuruguttali,  
Sirudali, Siruttali (Tam.)

**Distribution:** It is common in the low-country in Ceylon, both in the dry and moist regions. Anuradhapura Dambulla, Hantane, Peradeniya, Colombo

**Uses:** The leaves are used as an application on aphthous affections. The latex is used for treatment of gangrenous sores and for the preparation of medicinal oils used for the same purpose. The bruised fresh leaves are often applied to remove pieces of broken needles and to remove foreign bodies from the eye. Internally, they act as a cardiac, stomachic, expectorant, and diuretic and are useful for chronic dyspepsia, bronchitis and renal and hepatic dropsy.



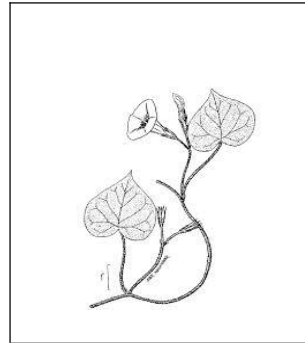
## ***Ipomoea pes-caprae***

Mudu-bintamburu (Sinh.); Adambu, Adappangodi, Attukkal, Musattalai (Tam.)

**Distribution:** In Ceylon, it is very common on the sandy seashore all round the island.

**Composition:** Contains a volatile oil, a complex resin, fat, phytosterol, bitter substances and red colouring matter.

**Uses:** The leaves are applied externally for rheumatism, colic and as a paste on boils and carbuncles. The juice is given as a diuretic in dropsy.

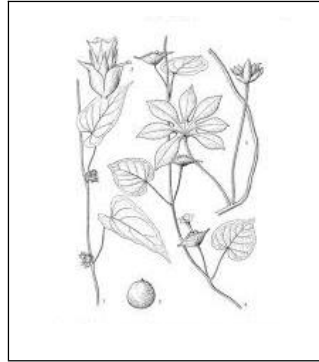


## **Ipomoea pes-tlgridis**

Diviadiya, Divipahuru (Sinh.);  
Pulichovadi, Punaikkirai (Tam.)

**Distribution:** In Ceylon, it is common in the low-country, confined to dry, sandy places.

**Uses:** The root of this plant is a purgative. The leaves are used for poulticing sores, boils and carbuncles. The plant is also used for treatment of rabid dog bites. It is a nervine and muscular tonic and is used in neurasthenia, debility of old age and paralytic conditions. It has some aphrodisiacal properties.



**Imperata cylindrical**

Illuk, Illup, Digupath, Tharana (Sinh.);  
Tappan-pillu (Tam.)

**Distribution:** It occurs all over the island  
in Ceylon, in waste land.

**Uses:** A diuretic and diluent and is useful  
in acute and chronic pyelitis, cystitis,  
gonorrhoea and strangury. The rhizomes are used in decoction to  
relieve retention of urine and passing of blood along with the urine. .  
The leaves are used for thatching and paper making.



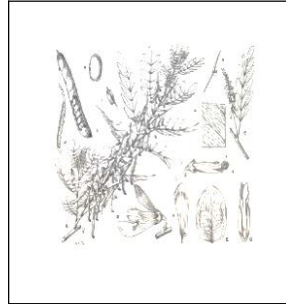
### **Indigofera aspathaloides**

Ratkohomba (Sinh.); Iraivanvembu,  
Shivanarbembu (Tam.)

**Distribution:** It is rare in Ceylon confined to the dry regions especially in the sandy flats of Jaffna, Batticaloa, Talaimannar,

**Uses:** A decoction of the leaves and flowers is given for leprosy and cancerous affections

The root is an instant remedy for toothache. A decoction of the whole plant is given as an alterative in secondary syphilis, psoriasis, etc. The leaves are applied on abscesses and an oil obtained from the roots on skin diseases and to anoint the head for erysipelas.

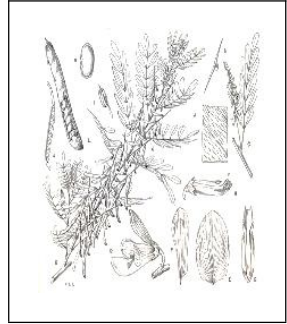


## **Indigofera enneaphylla**

Binawari (Sinh.); Cheppunerunji (Tam.)

**Distribution:** It is common in Ceylon in dry districts and on the seashore.

**Uses:** The juice of the plant is considered an alterative for chronic venereal affections. It is an anti-scorbutic and diuretic.



## **Indigofera tinctoria**

Nilawari (Sinh.); Asidai, Attipurashadam, Avuri, Chamundi, Irasani, Karundoli, Madubarunigai, Nili, Nilakkali, Toli (Tam.)

**Distribution:** It is rather common in Ceylon as a roadside weed, especially in the dry regions of the low-country.

**Composition:** This plant yields a valuable dye, indigo. Indican (a glucoside) is obtained from the fermentation of the fresh, green plant and this is chiefly indigotin or indigo-blue.

**Uses:** The juice of the leaves is administered both internally and externally, for hydrophobia and the bruised leaves applied on the wounds. It is also believed to cure asthma, whooping cough, palpitation of the heart, some lung diseases, kidney complaints, hepatitis, epilepsy and other nervous affections. An infusion of the root is an antidote for arsenic poisoning.

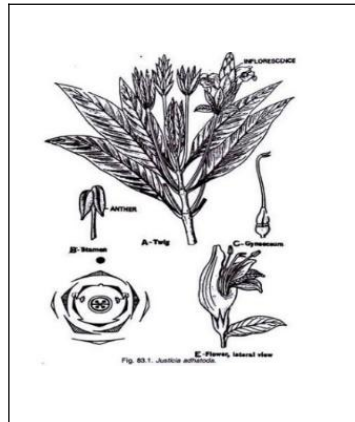


## **Justicia betonica**

Sudu-puruk (Sinh.)

**Distribution:** In Ceylon, it is very common in shrub jungles in the low-country up to 3,000 feet altitude.

**Uses:** The leaves are used as a poultice for boils.



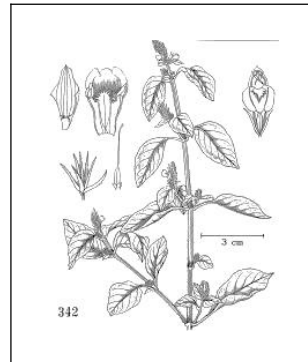
## ***Justicia procumbens***

Mayani (Sinh.); Nereipoottie (Tam.)

**Distribution:** In Ceylon, it grows in moist regions from sea-level to about 7000 feet altitude. It is very common among grass, especially in the Montane Zone.

**Composition:** Contains a bitter alkaloid.

**Uses:** In India, an infusion of the plant is given for asthma, coughs and rheumatism. The juice of the leaves is squeezed into the eye for ophthalmia. It is also used as a laxative and diuretic. In the Philippines, the leaves are used as an astringent externally for certain eruptions of the skin.



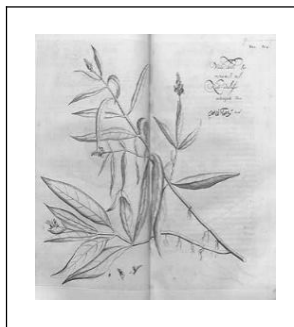
## **Justicia gendarussa**

Kalu-weraniya (Sinh.); Karunochchi (Tam.)

**Distribution:** It is rather common in the lowcountry in Ceylon.

**Composition:** The leaves are rich in potassium salts and contain a bitter alkaloid, justicine.

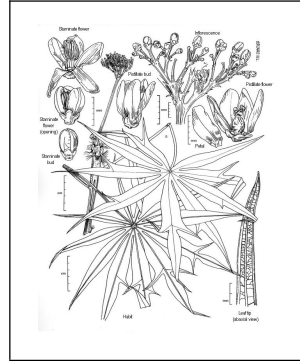
**Uses:** The root of the plant is boiled in milk and given as a remedy for rheumatism, fever, jaundice and diarrhoea. It has diuretic and diaphoretic properties. The bark is a good emetic. An infusion of the leaves is given internally for fever, cephalalgia, hemiplegia and facial paralysis. The juice of the fresh leaves is given for coughs in children, colic and as drops for ear-ache. An oil prepared from the leaves is useful as an application for glandular swellings and for eczema. In Madagascar, the plant is chiefly employed as a remedy for rheumatism. In the Philippines, an extract of the juice of the leaves is given as an emetic for coughs and asthma and the fresh leaves as topicals to cure oedema of beriberi and rheumatism.



## **Jatropha glandulifera**

Detta-ala (Sinh.); Adalai, Atalai, Eliyamenakku, Erikkaraikattamanaku, Kattamanaku. Puliyamanaku (Tam.)

**Distribution:** In Ceylon it is common in the low-country chiefly along the coast, especially in the dry regions. It is abundant in Jaffna. Mannar and Hambantota, where it is a gregarious weed covering large areas of ground.



**Uses:** In Ceylon, the roots are used along with other ingredients for preparing pills given for cough, asthma, anaemia, typhoid fever, bronchitis, indigestion and worms. An'oil prepared with it is an effective application on piles. The underground stem is used for fever and bronchitis. Seeds are also used with other ingredients to prepare pills for treating fever.

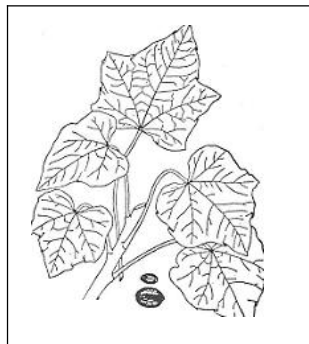
## **Jatropha curcas**

Ratacrandu, Pcla-ini, Weta-erandu (Sinh.)  
Adalai, Kadalamanakku, Kaitta,  
Kattamanakku, Kattukottai, Kuribaravuni,  
Naligadi, Nikkurottam, Tiravadi,  
Vellaiyamanakku (Tam.)

**Distribution:** In Ceylon, it is a very common plant grown along boundaries.

**Composition:** The bark contains a trace of a volatile oil, saponin, tannin and a wax. The leaves and stems contain an alkaloid. The seeds contain a yellow fixed oil which consist of the glycerides of a characteristic acid, curcanoleic acid, and other acids. The toxalbumen, curcurin remains with the seed cake. The root yields a yellow oil, which is strongly anthelmintic.

**Uses:** The oil extracted from the seeds is a drastic purgative and used externally for cutaneous diseases and rheumatism. It is also used as a remedy for dropsy, sciatica, paralysis and worms. Commercially, the oil from the seed is employed in the manufacture of soaps and candles and as an illuminant.

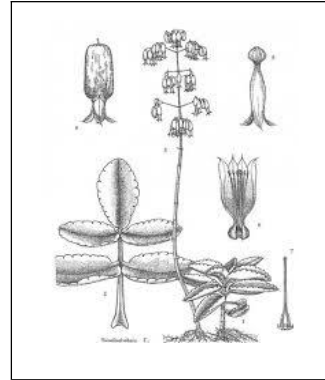


## **Kalanchoe laciniata**

Akkapana (Sinh.); Malakalli (Tam.)

**Distribution:** It is rare in Ceylon, mostly confined to the lower montane zone; Matale East, Kandy

**Composition:** The leaves contain a yellow organic acid, cream pf tartar, sulphate and oxalate of calcium, tartaric acid, fat and malic acid.



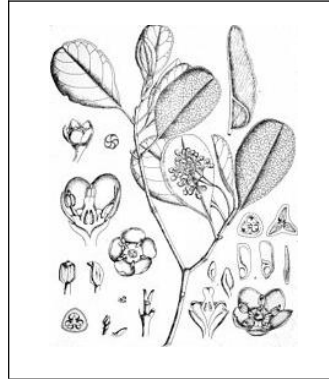
**Uses:** The leaves and roots are used for the treatment of urinary diseases. The juice of the leaves is given for diarrhoea, dysentery, lithiasis, cholera and phthisis. The ground leaves are applied to chronic sores and ulcers. A curry made from the leaves, helps to dissolve stones in the bladder.

## **Kokoona ceylanlca**

Kokun, Pottueta, Wanapotu (Sinh.)

**Distribution:** It is rather rare in Ceylon and found in forests in moist regions between 1000— 4000 feet altitude. Pelawatte, Pasdun Korale; Ratnapura; Ambagamuwa; Udugama and Hiniduma Forests

**Uses:** The inner bark, which is yellow, is used in the treatment of diabetes, snake-bites, swollen joints, eye diseases and headaches. With other drugs, it is used in treating framboesiipimples and diseases of the skin. The bark may also be used to lighten the colour of the skin and for removing marks from the face. It is often used as snuff for severe headaches. The oil from the seeds is used as a leech repellent.

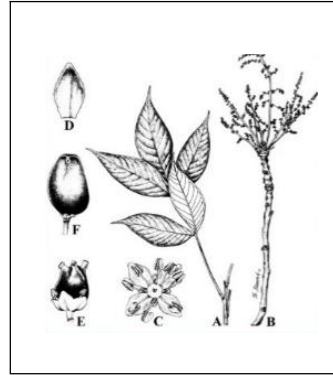


## **Lannea coromandelica**

Hik (Sinh.); Anaikkarai, Appiriya, Odi, Udi (Tam.)

**Distribution:** Jaffna, Trincomalee, Ratnapura

**Uses:** The bark of this tree is used as a lotion for ulcers and impetiginous eruptions. The gum beaten up with coconut milk is applied on sprains and bruises with beneficial results. The inner bark is used as a poultice on festering wounds, sores or boils, while the dried and powdered bark is often used as a tooth powder. The leaves are boiled and applied to local swellings, elephantiasis and pains of the body.



## **Leonotis nepetaefolia**

Maha-yakwanassa (Sinh.); Kasitumpai (Tam.)

**Distribution:** It is common on waste ground in the dry and intermediate regions in Ceylon.

**Composition:** The fresh calyx and flower contain a fixed oil, a brittle substance and resins. The seed yields a fixed oil, sugars, a volatile oil, a phytinlike substance and a proteinlike substance.

**Uses:** The ashes of the flower heads are applied to burns and scalds. Mixed with curd the ash is a cure for ringworm and other itchy skin diseases. The crushed root is used as an application on swollen breasts to allow free flow of milk.



## **Lobelia nicotianifolia**

Rasni, Wal-dunkola (Sinh.);  
Kattuppugaiyilai (Tam.)

**Distribution:** in Ceylon in the montane zone from 4000 feet to 7000 feet altitude.

**Composition:** The leaves contain lelobanidines I, Hand III, lobe line, and nortobelanidine. The flowers contain only lobe line. The seeds contain an acro-narcotic poison.



**Uses:** An infusion of the leaves it's used as an antispasmodic and is a useful remedy for asthma.

**Leucas zeylauica**

Geta-thumbā (Sinh.); Muditumpai (Tam.)

**Distribution:** It is very common in Ceylon, on waste ground.

**Composition:** This plant contains an essential oil and a volatile alkaloid combined with an acid



**Uses:** An aromatic stomachic and carminative useful in anorexia, acute and chronic dyspepsia, flatulence and colic. It has antiperiodic properties and combined with other antiperiodics used in cases of malarial fevers, which are rebellious to treatment with quinine.

## **Leucas marrubioides**

Sudu-thumba (Sinh.)

**Distribution:** It is common in both the moist and dry regions in Ceylon, abundant in rocky banks in Uva country up to 3000 feet altitude.

**Uses:** Regarded as a stimulant diuretic and prescribed for jaundice and to expel phlegm and worms. It is useful for coughs and catarrh in children.



## ***Litsea longifolia***

Ratkeliya (Sinh.)

**Distribution:** An endemic species, common in the moist regions of the Central Province of Ceylon up to an elevation of about 3000 feet.

**Uses:** The bark is used for treating nervous diseases, boils and preparation of an oil.

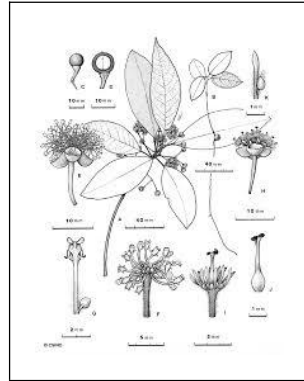


## **Litsea glutinosa**

Bombi, Bomi (Sinh.); Ama, Elambiragi, Elumpurukki, Pisinbatt (Tam.)

**Distribution:** It is very common in the low-country in Ceylon upto 3,000 feet altitu

**Composition:** The leaves and bark contain an alkaloid. The seeds contain an aromatic tallow-like oil which consists of laurostearin and olein



**Uses:** The mucilaginous bark is employed as a demulcent and mild astringent for diarrhoea and dysentery. The roots and leaves are used for poulticing sprains and bruises. The seeds are pounded and applied on boils and the oil extracted from them is used in rheumatism.

## **Leea indica**

Burulla, Gurulla (Sinh.); Nalava, Niyakku, Ottunnalam (Tam.)

**Distribution:** It is very common in the lowcountry in Ceylon.

**Uses:** The leaves are astringent and antiseptic and are a reputed remedy for ringworm. A medicinal oil prepared by boiling the bruised leaves in gingelly oil is used as a dressing for wounds and ulcers. A decoction of the root is given in colic and relieves thirst. The juice of the berries is often applied to warts with good effect. The pith of the stem taken internally acts as a diuretic and diluent and is useful in acute cystitis and strangury.



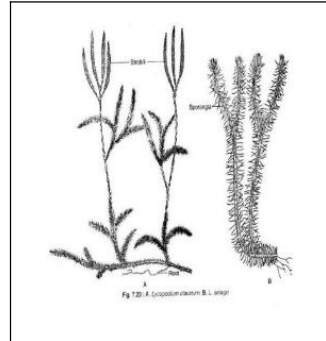
## **Lycopodium cernum**

Badal-wanassa, Wanassa (Sinh.)

**Distribution:** In Ceylon, it is found both in the hill country and moist low-country. It grows on the wet banks of hill cuttings.

**Composition:** The fronds of this herb contain the alkaloids, ceruine and nicotine.

**Uses:** A decoction of the plant is given for coughs and as a diuretic. It is effective for dysentery, gout and rheumatism. An embrocation of the ashes of the plant with vinegar is recommended for eruptions of the skin.

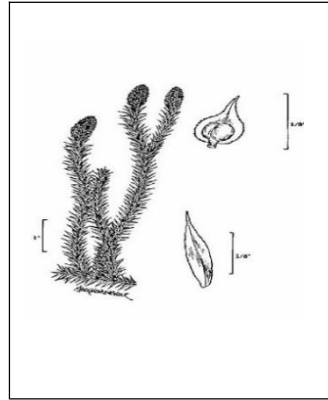


## **Lycopodium phlegmaria**

Maha-hedaya (Sinh.)

**Distribution:** It is common in Ceylon in the mid and up-country rain forests.

A pendulous epiphyte 15—60 cm long, 2—4 dichotomously branched, always stramineous; leaves close, spreading or ascending, ovate or ovate-lanceolate, 1.3—2 cm long, firm in texture, green, rounded or cordate at base, entire, midrib distinct; spikes many, flaccid, 7.5—15 cm long usually forked at and above the base and about 2 mm. diam.; bracts ovate, green, wrinkled at the back, not cuspidate, as long as or a little longer than the sporangia.



**Uses:** Used- in the preparation of medicinal oils for the treatment of snake-bites.

## **Lycopodium pulcherrimum**

Kuda-hedaya (Sinh.)

**Distribution:** It is common in Ceylon in the mid and up-country rain forests.

A pendulous epiphyte, 30—60 cm long, 2—3 times dichotomously branched, branches and branchlets long, 2—2.5 cm diam., including the leaves; leaves lanceolate, crowded, dark green, entire, spreading or ascending, 1—2 cm long, midrib distinct; sporangia in long, simple spikes in the axils of much reduced lanceolate green leaves 3—6 mm long.

**Uses:** Used for the same ailments as *Lycopodium phlegmasia* is employed.

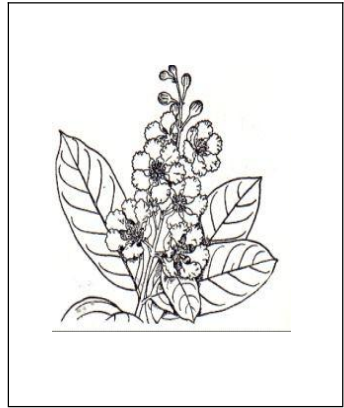


## **Lagerstroemia speciosa**

Murutha (Sinh.); Kadali, Kadalimugai, Kadalippuva, Pumaruda (Tam.)

**Distribution:** It is rather common in Ceylon, on banks of rivers and streams in the low-country up to 2,000 feet altitude.

**Uses:** The mature leaves and ripe fruits are given in decoction to lower the blood sugar in diabetes mellitus. The bark and leaves are purgative and the seeds used for treating aphthae.



## **Lawsonia inermis**

Maritondi (Sinh.); Aivanam, Aivani, Korandam, Kurandagam, Kufinji, Marudondri, Mayilainandi, Pidai, Ponninpuvalamarudondri (Tam.)

**Distribution:** It is rather rare in Ceylon being confined to the dry and desert regions especially near the sea coast. Batticaloa, Chilaw, Mannar, Jaffna,

**Composition:** The leaves of this plant contain a glucoside and tannin, resin lawsone and probably an alkaloid. The flowers contain an essential oil, which suggests the smell of mignonette and the seeds a fixed oil consisting of  $\alpha$ -ionone and  $\beta$ -ionone

**Uses** The roots and leaves are said to be anthelmintic. The roots are used in the treatment of hysteria and nervous disorders.' The bark is given in the form of a decoction for jaundice, enlargement of the spleen and obstinate skin diseases. The root is regarded as a specific for leprosy. The leaves stimulate the growth of hair and the flowers are sudorific. The flowers and fruits are reputed to have emmenagogue properties. Henna is best known on account of the orange-red dye obtained from the leaves and used as a cosmetic. A perfume is extracted from the flowers.

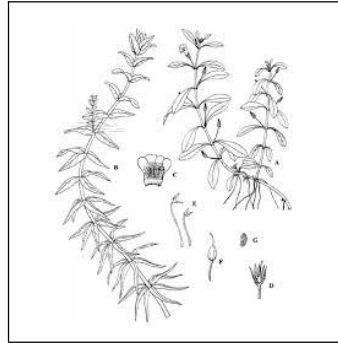


## ***Limnophila conferta***

Ambawila (Sinh.)

**Distribution:** Occurs in India, Ceylon and Burma. It is common in wet places in the low-country in Ceylon.

**Uses:** This herb is chiefly used for poulticing sores on legs. A decoction of the roots and leaves is given for fever and acts as an aperient and expectorant

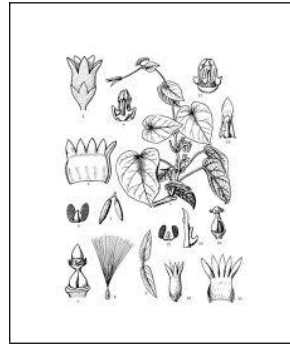


## **Marsdenia tenacissima**

Muruva-dul (Sinh.)

**Distribution:** Kurunegala, Uma Oya, Ekiriyanakumbura

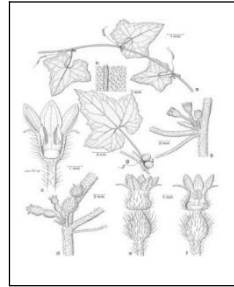
**Uses:** The stem of this plant yields a very strong, silky fibre and a milky juice containing caoutchouc. A decoction of the leaves is given for flatulence and as a remedy for gonorrhoea



## **Melothria maderaspatana**

Hin-kekiri (Sinh.); Mochumochukkai,  
Musimusikkayi, Musumusukkai (Tam.)

**Distribution:** In Ceylon, it is common in the low-country up to 3000 feet altitude. Jaffna, Anuradhapura, Kantalai, Kurunegala, Peradeniya Galle



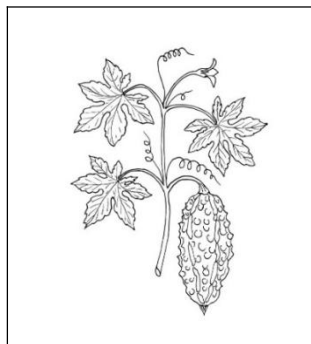
**Uses:** The leaves are used as an expectorant. The roots when masticated fresh relieves toothache. Taken in the form of a decoction it relieves flatulence. The seeds are sudorific. The crushed seeds are applied on strained backs.

## **Momordica charantia**

Kariwila (Sinh.); 1 Pakal, Pavakkachedi, Pavakkayi (Tam.)

**Distribution:** In Ceylon, it is cultivated in the low-country up to 3000 feet altitude

**Composition:** The whole plant, including the unripe fruit, contains probably two alkaloids one of which is momordicine, a glucoside—like substance, an aromatic ethereal oil, a fixed oil, traces of a fatty acid and carotene. The fruit is a good source of iron, calcium, phosphorus and vitamin B. The seeds yield a purgative oil high in saponin content.



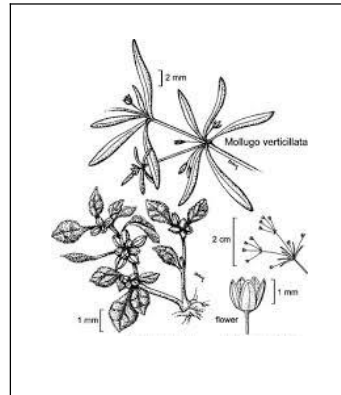
**Uses:** The fruits and leaves are anthelmintic and used as a vermifuge. They are also useful for piles, leprosy and jaundice. The leaves are used in the treatment of colic. The root is an ingredient in aphrodisiacal preparations and used externally for haemorrhoids. The fruit is a tonic and stomachic and useful for rheumatism, gout and diseases of the spleen and liver. In large doses it is a drastic purgative and is considered abortifacient. The green fruit is used as a vegetable in spite of its bitterness.

## **Mollugo cerviana**

Patpadagam, Udetta (Sinh.);  
Parpadagam (Tam.)

**Distribution:** Jaffna, Kalpitiya and along the coast in Eastern and Southern Provinces

**Uses:** The fresh juice of the plant is antiseptic and is supposed to cure itch and other skin diseases. The plant is used in the treatment of fever and gonorrhoea. It is believed to promote the flow of the discharge.



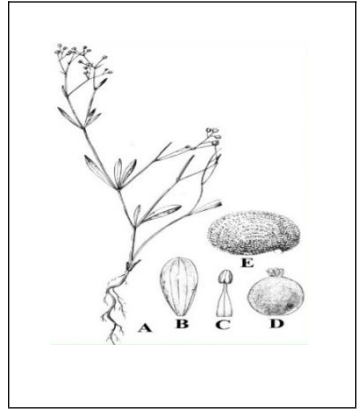
## **Mollugo pentaphylla**

Wal-pathpadagam (Sinh.)

**Distribution:** Elephant Pass, Batticaloa, Kurunegala, Dambulla, Madugoda

**Composition:** Contains saponin and salt-petre.

**Uses:** In India, it is esteemed as a bitter vegetable owing to its stomachic aperient and antiseptic properties. An infusion of the plant is given to women to promote menstrual discharge. In Malaya, it is used for populticing sore legs and in Java for sprue.



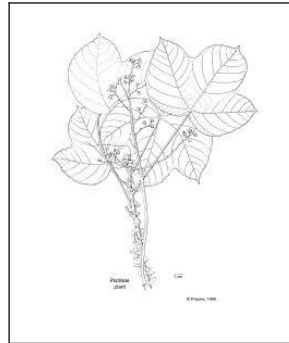
## **Macaranga peltata**

Bukenda, Kenda, Vatta, Vattikanni.  
Vattittutti.

**Distribution:** moist regions of Ceylon up to 3000 feet altitude.

**Composition:** Roots, bark and leaves of *Macaranga* are fairly commonly used internally in traditional medicine in South-East Asia, usually as a decoction, to treat stomach-ache, dysentery, haemoptysis, cough and fever. The leaves, and sometimes resin, are applied externally to wounds, ulcers, sores and boils

**Uses:** The hardened, gummy exudation from this tree is powdered, made into a paste and applied externally on venereal sores.



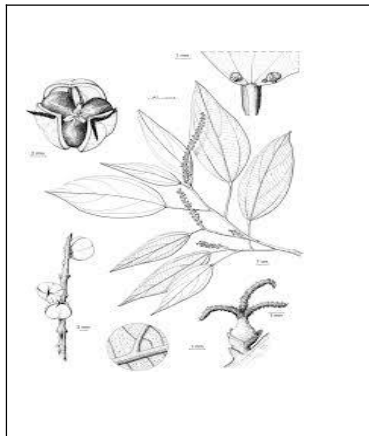
## **Mallotus philippinensis**

Hamparandella, Hamparila,  
Hdmpirila (Sinh.); Avam, Kabilam,  
Kabilappodi, Kamala, Kambosam,  
Kapila, Kopilapodi, Kungu'mam,  
Kurangumanjanatti, Manjanai,  
Suvanagesari, Tavattai, Tiruchalai  
(Tam.)

**Distribution:** In Ceylon, it is rather common in both the moist and dry low-country up to 2,500 feet altitude.

**Composition:** The leaves contain an alkaloid. The red powder obtained from the glands and hairs which cover the fruit contains rottlerin, mallotoxin and kamalin. The seeds contain a fixed oil, camul oil and a bitter glucoside. The bark has tannin.

**Uses:** This red powder is used as an anthelmintic for expulsion of tape-worm and other intestinal worms and to remove leprous eruptions. The leaves and bark are used as poultices on cutaneous diseases. The powdered seeds are also taken internally as an anthelmintic and a cure for itch. The root is ground into a paste and applied on regions affected by painful articular rheumatism. The capsule yields a dye which gives a permanent, rich, flame colour.



## **Mentha arvensis**

Odutalan, Pudina, Yechakkirai (Tam.)

**Distribution:** Ceylon, where it is found bordering paddy fields in the Central Province.

**Composition:** This plant yields a volatile oil which contains pulegone, menthol, menthene, menthenone and limonene.



**Uses:** The dried plant is a stomachic, diuretic and stimulant. It is used for jaundice and is frequently given to stop vomiting.

## **Mesua ferrea**

Diyana, Na, Nagaha, Irul, Karunangu (Sinh.); Malainangu, Mannainangu, Naganchambagan, Nagappu, Nagesuram, Naka, Nangu, Nirnangu, Patai, Pudangoli, Sirunagappu, Tadinangu (Tam.)

**Distribution:** It is common in Ceylon in the moist low-country forests.

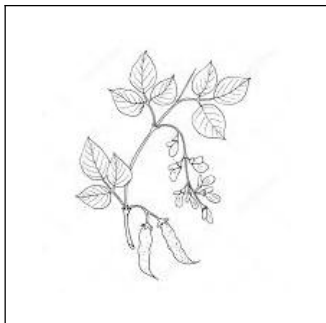
**Uses:** The bark of this tree is a mild astringent and combined with ginger it is given as a sudorific. The flowers are used for cough with expectoration, bleeding piles and uterine haemorrhages. The flower buds are used for dysentery and the flowers are useful for acute bronchitis and pneumonia.



### ***Mucuna prurita***

Achhariapalu, Wanduru-me, Amudari, Arugrattam, Attumabuttar (Sinh.); Punakkali, Punaippidukhan, Punaiyavarai, Sugasimbi (Tam.)

**Distribution:** It is rather common in Ceylon, in the dry and intermediate regions.



**Composition:** The wood of this plant contains the alkaloids 5-hydroxytryptamine, mucuadine, mucuadinine, mucuadinine and the seed contains mucunadine, iflucunine, nicotine, prurienidine, prurienine, prurieninine, a fatty free acid and its. glyceride, an acid resin and an albumen.

**Uses:** A decoction of the root is a powerful diuretic. The root is useful in paralysis and ailments of the nervous system. The powdered root made into a paste is applied on the body for dropsy and also a vinous infusion of the pods is given internally. The seed is a powerful aphrodisiac. It is boiled in cows' milk, decorticated, fried in cow ghee and made into a confection. This taken with bees' honey increases sexual power. The hair of the fruit is a mechanical anthelmintic for expulsion of roundworms but not the tapeworm. The usage of this is dangerous as an overdose kills the patient. The seed applied as a paste on scorpion stings is supposed to absorb the poison

### **MJcromelum ceylanicum**

Wal-karapincha, Kakaipalai (Sinh.)

**Distribution:** Occurs in the northern part of India, Ceylon', Burma, Malacca, Malaya, Java, China and in the Pacific Islands but not in South India. It is rather common in the lowcountry especially in the dry regions of Ceylon.



**Composition:** The leaves and stems of this tree contain an unnamed alkaloid.

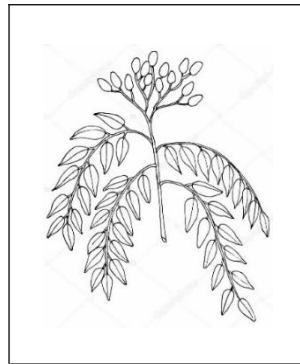
**Uses:** This plant is used as a substitute for *Murraya koenigii* Spreng., medicinally. It is recommended for phthisis and chest troubles in

Malaya and Indonesia. The root is chewed with betel leaves for coughs. The boiled roots are applied as a poultice for ague.

### **Murraya koenigii**

Karapincha, Karrypincha (Sinh.);  
Karuvembu, Karuveppilai, Kattuveppilai  
(Tam.)

**Distribution:** Occurs in India and Ceylon, It is very common in the low-country dry zone but rather rare in the hills of Anuradhapura, Polonnaruwa, Maturata, Badulla, etc.





### **Neolitsea involucrate**

Penitora (Sinh.); Nattandagarai, Peyavirai, Ponnnavirai (Tam.)

**Distribution:** It is very common in the low-country in Ceylon especially in wet places as a weed.

**Composition:** Contains a toxalbumin and oxymethylantraquinone. The seeds contain fatty matter, tannic acid, sugar, gum, cellulose, calcium sulphate and phosphate, crysophanic and malic acids, sodium chloride, magnesium sulphate, iron, silica and achrosine.

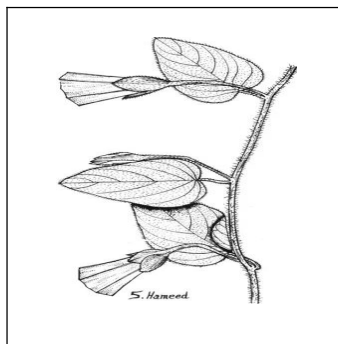
**Uses:** The plant is a purgative, tonic and febrifuge. It is employed in dropsy, rheumatism, fevers and venereal diseases. Externally, it is used in the form of ointments on ringworm, eczema and other skin diseases. The root is used in intermittent fevers and as a tonic and diuretic in dropsy and liver complaints. An infusion of the bark is supposed to be a remedy for diabetes. The seeds act readily as an emeto-cathartic and drunk like coffee for heart disease.

## **Operculina turpethum**

Agaladaia, Adatoda, Wanepala, Wetahera (Sinh.); Uppukkarinimulli (Tam.)

**Distribution:** common undershrub in mangrove swamps and ditches, along the sea coast

**Composition:** The leaves contain the alkaloids vasicine, vasicinone and betaine and an essential oil.



**Uses:** The expressed juice of the leaves of this shrub is used for diarrhoea, dysentery phthisis, cough, asthma and other bronchial diseases. According to Roberts, it is useful for pneumonia, typhoid and rheumatic fevers. The leaves dried and made into cigarettes are smoked for asthma. The root bark is used for haemoptysis, heart diseases, catarrh and eye diseases. The fresh flowers are used for ophthalmia. The plant is recommended as a snake-bite remedy. The fresh roots, bark and leaves are bruised and applied to wounds and given internally in the form of a decoction. Internally, it acts as a direct cholagogue increasing the flow of and liquefying the bile proving useful in acute and chronic congestion of the liver, jaundice and biliousness.

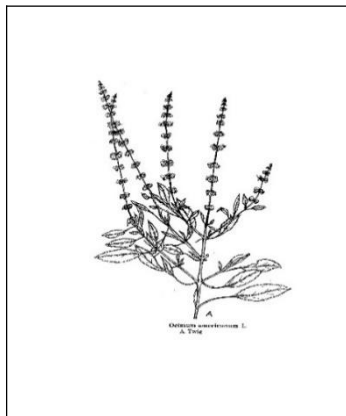
## **Ocimum americanum**

Peti-tora (Sinh.); Senavu, Sirutagarai, Tagarai, Usittagarai, Vamamavaram, Vaddutakari, Vindu (Tam.)

**Distribution:** It is found in the low - country in Ceylon by road sides and waste ground and is very common in the dry regions.

**Composition:** The seeds contain a glucosidal substance somewhat similar to emodin in composition, phytosterine and glucosenine. The leaves contain a principle similar to cathartin.

**Uses:** The leaves are laxative and are useful in habitual constipation and haemorrhoids. The seeds have anti-parasitic properties and are applied on ringworm and scabies.

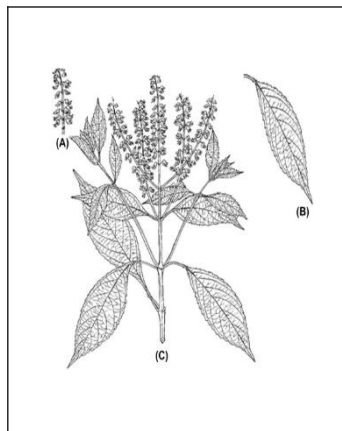


## **Ocimum gratissimum**

Elakatarolu, Katarolu, Nilkatarolu  
(Sinh.)

**Distribution:** It is common in Ceylon, especially in the dry regions but mostly cultivated in the moist regions.

**Composition:** The leaves and seeds contain an alkaloid, while the seed has a fixed oil, tannic acid and glucose in addition. The root bark contains starch, tannin and resins and the cotyledons, granular starch.



**Uses:** Used in large doses as a hydragogue cathartic and useful in anasarca and ascites and other conditions where it is necessary to remove large quantities of fluid from the system. In small doses, it is a cholagogue purgative and used with advantage in acute and chronic congestion of the liver and biliousness. The juice of the root of the white-flowered variety is blown into the nostrils as a remedy for hemicrania. An infusion of the root is given for irritation of the bladder and urethra. The powdered seed with ginger is recommended as a purgative and diuretic for enlargements of abdominal viscera.

## **Ocimum sanctum**

Hana (Sinh.); Chanai, Kuttiram, Kuttu, Manji, Nanandam, Shanal Imappu, Umadji Uttirabanni, Vakkunnar (Tam.)

**Distribution:** It is rather common in the low-country in Ceylon principally in the dry regions. Trincomalee, Kurunegala, Kalawana, Badulla

**Composition:** The leaves contain mucilage, a solid fat, a resin and an alkaloid while the seeds contain protein, starch and fat.



**Uses:** The leaves are used internally and externally in the form of an infusion in gastric and bilious fevers accompanied by skin diseases such as impetigo and psoriasis. The root is an astringent and useful in colic and epistaxis. The seed is said to purify the blood and promote the growth of hair.

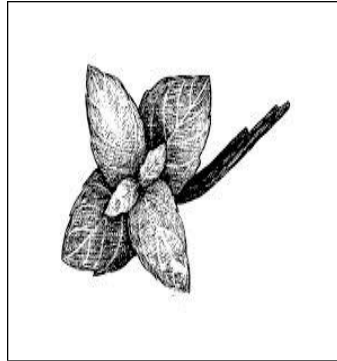
## **Ocimum sanctum**

Nil (Sinh.); andanahiriy, Kilukiiuppai, Kilvenla (Tam.)

**Distribution:** It is common in the low-country in Ceylon in open ground

**Composition:** The leaves, stems and fruits contain an alkaloid

**Uses:** The juice of the leaves is used, internally and externally, for cases of scabies and impetigo.

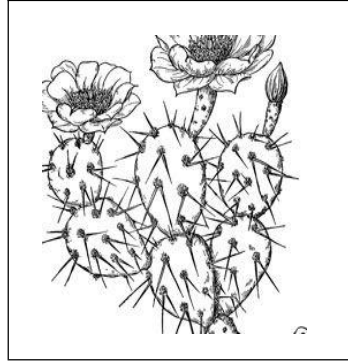


## **Opantia dillenii**

Maha-undupiyali (Sinh.)

**Distribution:** It is very common in Ceylon in the low-country, upto 2000 feet altitude.

**Uses:** The leaf is used for dysentery and to increase the flow of milk in mothers after child-birth. The roots and leaves are pounded together and applied on sores.



## **Oroxylum indicum**

Hin-undupiyali (Sinh.); Serupillady (Tam.)

**Distribution:** It is very common in the low-country in Ceylon.

**Uses:** An aromatic stomachic, cholagogue and laxative, and is useful in anorexia, chronic dyspepsia and congestion of the liver. It is a reputed aphrodisiac. The root is a carminative and diuretic. The leaves ground into a paste with cinnamon bark and roasted in gingeily oil, are applied on chronic ulcers to promote healing.



## **Osbeckia octandra**

Andara (Sinh.); Anatter, Mavilandam, Vadataram, Varittula, Veduttalam, Vidattalai, Vidatter (Tam.)

**Distribution:** It is very common in the dry regions in Ceylon, mostly in barren places. Jaffna, Trincomalee, Batticaloa, Kurunegala

**Uses:** The bark of this tree in decoction is used for washing itches, sores, etc., and applied on boils. The young leaves are bruised and applied to eyes for ophthalmia. In tropical Africa, the leaf is used for indigestion and diarrhoea. In Tanganyika, the root of the plant is used for chest complaints and the branches for gonorrhoea and syphilis. A decoction of the bark is given internally for elephantiasis and the powdered bark applied on skin diseases. The root is also considered as an aphrodisiac.



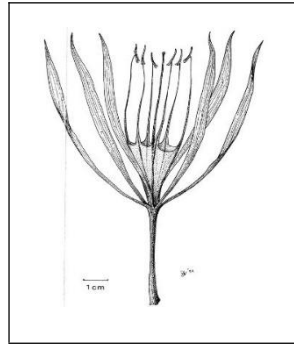
## ***Pancratium zeylanicum***

Maha-puswel (Sinh.); Irikki, Sillu (Tam.)

**Distribution:** It is common in Ceylon in the low-country up to 2000 feet altitude.

**Composition:** The bark and seeds contain saponin and an alkaloid. The seeds also contain a fatty oil.

**Uses:** A paste of the seed is applied externally on glandular swellings and pain in the loins and joints due to general debility. The powdered kernel of the seed mixed with spices is given to women after childbirth for allaying body pains and warding off colds.



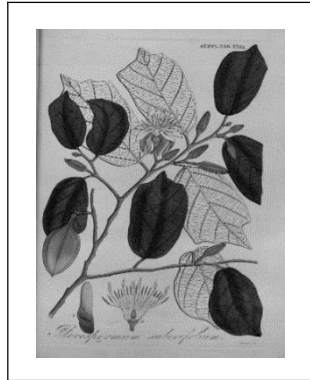
## **Pterospermum canescens**

Attumulli, Kaludaimulli, Kolimulli  
Uppukkarinimulli (Tam.)

**Distribution:** In Ceylon, it is a common undershrub in mangrove swamps and ditches, along the sea coast.

**Composition:** The leaves contain a bitter alkaloid, an organic acid, resin and fatty matter.

**Uses:** The whole plant is used as a nervine tonic, expectorant and stimulant. The root is used for coughs and asthma.



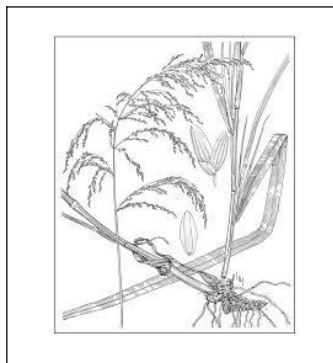
## **Panicum antidotale**

Erabadu, Eramudu (Sinh.);  
Kaliyanamurukku, Kavir, Munchi,  
Mullumurukku, Murukku, Palasam,  
Palasu, Parisadam, Savusayam,  
Sinsugam, Vallai, Venittu (Tam.)

**Distribution:** It is very common in Ceylon in the low-country.

**Composition:** The fruits contain a fatty acid and a saponaceous glucoside, while the seeds contain the alkaloid hypaphorine. The leaves and bark on the other hand contain erythrinine, a poisonous alkaloid which acts on the nervous system. Hydrocyanic acid has also been found in the leaves, stems, roots and fruits.

**Uses:** The fresh bark and leaves ground into a paste with water are applied on glandular swellings and local inflammations of the skin. Internally, they act as an expectorant and useful in chronic bronchitis and bronchial asthma. The fresh juice of the leaves is used to relieve earache and as an anodyne in toothache. Mixed with castor oil, it is a cure for acute and chronic dysentery. A **conjee** prepared from the juice of the leaves is given once a week to infants in order to prevent them getting worms.



## **Panicum miliare**

Ratkohomba (Sinh.); Iraivanvembu, Shivanarbembu (Tam.)

**Distribution:** It is rare in Ceylon confined to the dry regions especially in the sandy flats of Jaffna, Batticaloa, Talaimannar,

**Uses:** A decoction of the leaves and flowers is given for leprosy and cancerous affections. The root is an instant remedy for toothache. A decoction of the whole plant is given as an alterative in secondary syphilis, psoriasis, etc. The leaves are applied on abscesses and an oil obtained from the roots on skin diseases and to anoint the head for erysipelas.

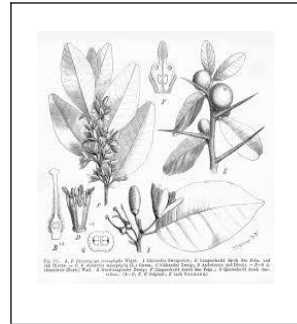


## **Paramjgnya monophylla**

Binawari (Sinh.); Cheppunerunji (Tam.)

**Distribution:** It is common in Ceylon in dry districts and on the seashore.

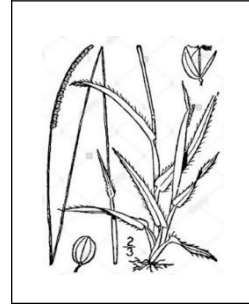
**Uses:** The juice of the plant is considered an alterative for chronic venereal affections. It is an anti-scorbutic and diuretic.



## **Paspalum scrobiculatum**

Nilawari (Sinh.); Asidai, Attipurashadam, Avuri, Chamundi, Irasani, Karundoli, Madubarunigai, Nili, Nilakkali, Toli (Tam.)

**Distribution:** It is rather common in Ceylon as a roadside weed, specially in the dry regions of the low-country.



**Composition:** This plant yields a valuable dye, indigo. Indican (a glucoside) is obtained from the fermentation of the fresh, grsen plant and this is chiefly indigotin or indigo-blue.

**Uses:** The juice of the leaves is administered both internally and externally, for hydrophobia and the bruised leaves applied on the wound. It is also believed to cure asthma, whooping cough, palpitation of the heart, some lung diseases, kidney complaints, hepatitis, epilepsy and other nervous affections. An infusion of the root is an antidote for arsenic poisoning.

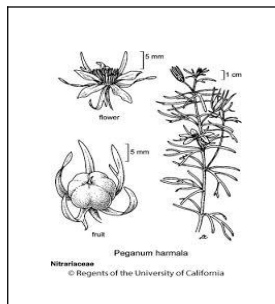
## **Peganom barmala**

Achariapalu, Wanduru-me (Sinh.); Amudari, Arugrattam, Attumabuttar, Irishiya, Kadigandu, Kavi, Magnttam, Punakkali, Punaippidukhan, Punaiyavarai, Sugasimbi (Tam.)

**Distribution:** It is rather common in Ceylon in the dry and ntermediate regions.

**Composition:** The wood of this plant contains the alkaloids 5-hydroxytryptamine, mucuadine, mucuadinine, mucuadinine and the seed contains mucunadine, iflucunine, nicotine, prurienidine, prurienine, prurieninine, a fatty free acid and its. glyceride, an acid resin and an albumen.

**Uses:** A decoction of the root is a powerful diuretic. The root is useful in paralysis and ailments of the nervous system. The powdered root made into a paste is applied on the body for dropsy and also a vinous infusion of the pods is given internally. The seed is a powerful aphrodisiac. It is boiled in cows' milk, decorticated, fried in cow ghee and made into a confection. This taken with bees' honey increases sexual power. The hair of the fruit is a mechanical anthelmintic for expulsion of roundworms but not the tapeworm. The usage of this is dangerous as an overdose kills the patient. The seed applied as a paste on scorpion stings is supposed to absorb the poison.



## **Pentapetes phoenicea**

Karanda, Magulkaranda (Sinh.);  
Agirunanandam, Ilangi, Kanjanam,  
Kolliyam, Naguttam, Nanandam, Nattam,  
Nattamalam, Nirppungu, Ponga, Pungu,  
Tattaippungu, Udagu (Tam.)

**Distribution:** It is common in the low-country in Ceylon on banks of streams and rivers, especially near the coast.



**Composition:** The bark, fruit and root contain an alkaloid. The seeds yield an essential oil and fatty acids. The bark also contains a greenish brown acid resin.

**Uses:** The bruised fresh bark and leaves heated in gingelly oil are applied on acute rheumatism, rheumatoid and gonorrhoeal arthritis, lymphangitis, phlebitis, elephantiasis, boils and abscesses with beneficial results. The oil obtained from the seeds is antiseptic and a parasiticide and is useful in chronic eczema, psoriasis, scabies, ringworm, pityriasis, etc. The bark is used internally for diarrhoea, dyspepsia and flatulency. It is a diuretic and valuable for bronchitis, pneumonia and strangury. It is also used as an anti-lithic for urinary gravel and calculi. It has anti-periodic properties and along with other drugs gives good results in chronic malarial fevers. The root bark is used internally for treating bleeding piles and the flowers for diabetes.

## **Pergularia daemia**

Gammalu, Ganmalu (Sinh.); Asanam, Kani, Kurinji, Pidasalam, Pirasalam, Pidagaragam, Sarvasadagam, Sarudagam, Tamisu, Tannini, Timisam, Timil, Timisu, Udiravengai, Vandunarmalar, Vengai, Visaga (Tam.)

**Distribution:** It is rather common in the low-country in Ceylon, chiefly in the dry and intermediate regions up to 3,000 feet altitude.

**Composition** The wood contains catechin, kinotannic acid, kino-red and an alkaloid.

**Uses:** Kino is used internally for diarrhoea and for pyrosis as a gargle; as an injection in leucorrhoea and topical application on chronic and flabby ulcers. The red latex tapped from the tree is used for diabetes. The gum is useful for toothache and the bark as an astringent. The wood is used for flavouring wines and is excellent for wood-carving.

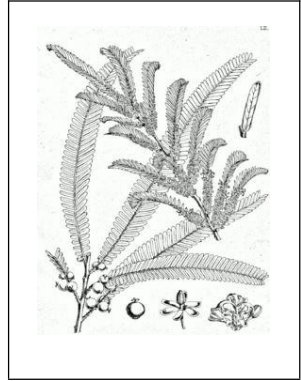


## **Phyllanthus emblica**

Asoka, Diyaratambala; Diyaratmal (Sinh.); Anagam, Asogam, Asogu, Malaikkarunai, Sasubam (Tam.)

**Distribution:** It is rather common in Ceylon, found growing by streams in forests of the low-country, especially in the drier districts.

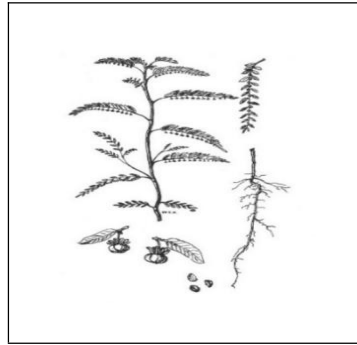
**Uses:** The bark of this tree is much used for uterine affections especially menorrhagia, bleeding piles and dropsical swellings. The flowers are used for haemorrhagic dysentery. Externally, the bark is employed in the treatment of fractures of bones.



## **Phyllanthus debilis**

Katuru-murunga (Sinh.); Acham, Agatti, Akatti-keerai, Kariram, Muni, Peragatti, Sewagatti (Tam.)

**Distribution:** In Ceylon, it is a common garden plant grown in the mid and low-country.



**Composition:** The flowers of this tree are rich in calcium, iron and vitamin B. The bark contains tannin and gum.

**Uses:** The root bark of the red-flowered variety is made into a paste with water and applied on rheumatic swellings. The juice of the flowers is dropped into the eye to clear dimness of vision. The expressed juice of the tender leaves and flower: is a popular remedy for nasal catarrh and headache and is blown up the nostrils to bring out mucous to relieve pain in the frontal sinuses.

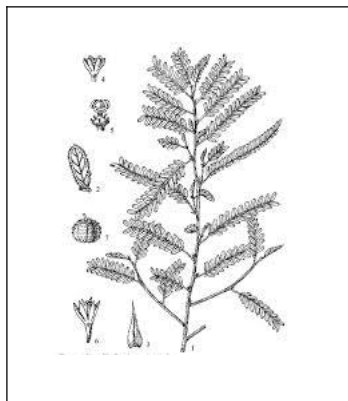
## **Phyllanthus urinaria**

Wel-murunga (Sinh.); Asnapanni, Chittakatti, Karunjembai, Segudai, Sembai, Sittagatti (Tam.)

**Distribution:** It is rare in Ceylon, confined to the dry country, Habarana, Trincomalee

**Composition:** The seeds of this herb contain catechol-tannin, an acid resin, a fixed oil, mucilage, a non-reducing oligasaccharide, alkaloid, glucoside, saponin and a large amount of protein.

**Uses:** A poultice of the leaves promotes suppuration of boils and abscesses, absorption of hydrocele and inflammatory rheumatic swellings. In Decca, the juice of the fresh leaves is used as an anthelmintic. The seeds are astringent and are used for checking diarrhoea, excessive menstrual flow and reducing enlarged spleen. As an ointment, it is applied on itch and other skin eruptions. The bruised root made into a paste absorbs poison from scorpion stings.

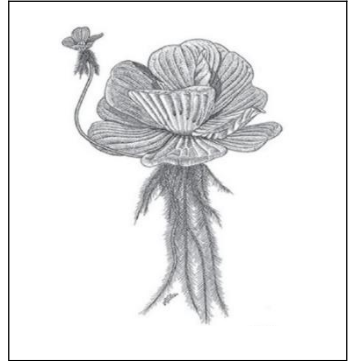


## ***Pistia stratiotes***

Wilnanu (Sinh.)

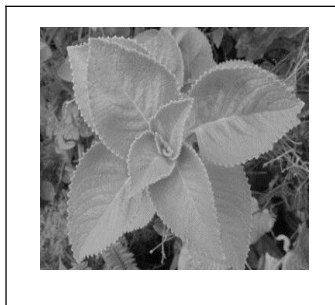
**Distribution:** It is common in wet places in Ceylon in the moist low-country.

**Uses:** This herb' has laxative properties It is used for biliousness, rheumatism and sterility-in women. Externally, it is used on ulcers.



## **Plectranthus zeylanicus**

Siyambala (Sinh.); Ambilam, Amilam, Egin, Eginam, Indam, Kinjam, Mugini, Odimam, Puli, Sanjivagarani, Sarittarai, Sevvarai, Sindagam, Sindam, Sinduram Sinjam, Siri, Tindiram, Tindurini (Tam.)



**Uses:** The leaves ground into a paste with lime juice and heartwood of *Acacia chundra* Willd. are applied on boils to prevent suppuration and inflammatory swellings. A decoction of the leaves is used as a fomentation on boils and abscesses. The testa of the seed mascerated with vinegar or lime juice is applied on the face to prevent formation of pimples. Internally, the leaves and pulp act as cholagogue laxatives and are often used in congestion of the liver, habitual constipation and haemorrhoids. The ripe fruit is regarded as a refrigerant digestive, carminative and laxative. The powdered seed is used as a dressing on boils and the flower is given internally as a remedy for jaundice. It is externally applied on eye diseases and ulcers. The pulp of the ripe fruit is largely used as an ingredient in curries and chutneys. The heartwood is very durable and used in furniture-making as it takes on a good polish

## **Plectranthus zeylanicus**

Katu-pila, Pila (Sinh.); Kollu-kayvillai, Kelinchij (Tam.)

**Distribution:** It is a very common weed in Ceylon found growing in the low-country both in the moist and dry regions.



**Composition:** The leaves, stems and branches of this herb contain an alkaloid and a glucoside, rutin. The root contains tephrosin, deguelin, isotephrosin and rotenone.

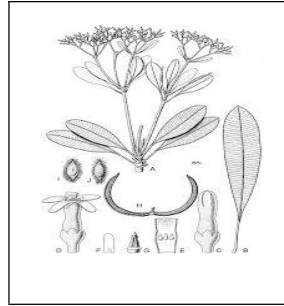
**Uses:** A deobstruent and diuretic and is useful for coughs, biliousness and obstructions of the liver, spleen and kidneys. The roots are used as a stomachic and carminative and employed for anorexia, atonic dyspepsia, flatulence and colic. It is also said to be blood purifier and is employed as an anthelmintic in children.

## **Plumeria acuminata**

Bupila (Sinh.); Punaikkaivetlai (Tam.

**Distribution:** It is very common in the dry regions of Ceylon. Jaffna, Anuradhapura, Polonnaruwa, Negombo

**Uses:** The juice of the leaves is given for dropsy. The roots are used for the preparation of toothpaste.



## **Pentapetes phoenicea**

Karanda, Magulkaranda (Sinh.); Agirunanandam, Ilangi, Kanjanam, Kolliyam, Naguttam, Nanandam, Nattam, Nattamalam, Nirppungu, Ponga Pungu, Tattaippungu, Udagu (Tam.)

**Distribution:** It is common in the low-country in Ceylon on banks of streams and rivers, especially near the coast.

**Composition:** The bark, fruit and root contain an alkaloid. The seeds yield an essential oil and fatty acids. The bark also contains a greenish brown acid resin.

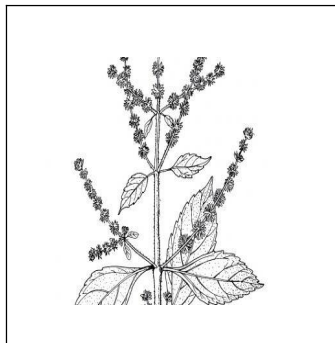
**Uses:** The bruised fresh bark and leaves heated in gingelly oil are applied on acute rheumatism, rheumatoid and gonorrhoeal arthritis, lymphangitis, phlebitis, elephantiasis, boils and abscesses with beneficial results. The oil obtained from the seeds is antiseptic and a parasiticide and is useful in chronic eczema, psoriasis, scabies, ringworm, pityriasis, etc. The bark is used internally for diarrhoea, dyspepsia and flatulency. It is a diuretic and valuable for bronchitis, pneumonia and strangury. It is also used as an anti-lithic for urinary gravel and calculi. It has anti-periodic properties and along with other drugs gives good results in chronic malarial fevers. The root bark is used internally for treating bleeding piles and the flowers for diabetes.



## **Pogostemon heyneanus**

Komarika (Sinh.); Angai, Angini, Kattalai, Kodiyan, Sifukattalai, Sivappusottukkattalai, Sottukkattalai, Veligam (Tam.)

**Distribution:** It is extremely abundant on the seashore of the north coast of Ceylon and naturalized. Mannar; Kalpitiya, Jaffna, Kanakesanturai



**Composition:** The leaves contain barbaloin, isobarbaloin, emodin, resin, cinnamic acid, d-arakinose, oxydase and traces of a volatile oil

**Uses:** Aloe is used for constipation, dyspepsia, coughs, asthma, nervous diseases, glandular enlargements of the spleen and various types of dropsies, piles and colics. The fresh juice of the leaves is cathartic and cooling. It is used for various eye diseases. The dried juice is often applied with lime juice for reducing swellings and promoting granulation in ulcers. In the Philippines, the juice is applied to prevent the falling of hair and to cure baldness. It is mixed with milk and given for dysentery and pains in the kidney. A vaseline ointment prepared with it is useful for treating burns and scalds.

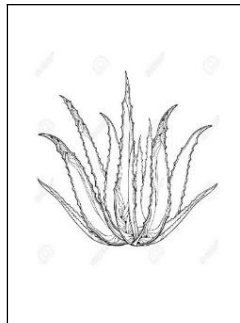
## **Paspalum scrobiculatum**

Nilawari (Sinh.); Asidai, Attipurashadam, Avuri, Chamundi, Irasani, Karundoli, Madubarunigai, Nili, Nilakkali, Toli (Tam.)

**Distribution:** It is rather common in Ceylon as a roadside weed, specially in the dry regions of the low-country.

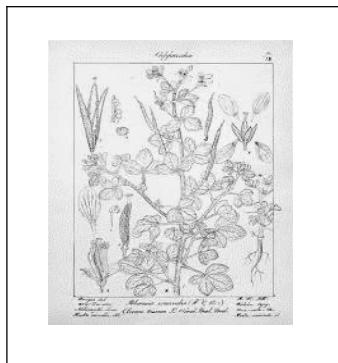
**Composition:** This plant yields a valuable dye, indigo. Indican (a glucoside) is obtained from the fermentation of the fresh, grsen plant and this is chiefly indigotin or indigo-blue.

**Uses:** The juice of the leaves is administered both internally and externally, for hydrophobia and the bruised leaves applied on the wound. It is also believed to cure asthma, whooping cough, palpitation of. the heart, some lung diseases, kidney complaints, hepatitis, epilepsy and other nervous affections. An infusion of the root is an antidote for arsenic poisoning.



## **Polanisia icosandra**

Liyanagala, Niyangala (Sinh.);  
Akkinichilam, Anaravam, Ilangali,  
Iradi, Irumbu, Kandal,  
Kalappaikkilangu, Karltigaikkilangu,  
Kannovuppundu, Kirttigaikkilangu,  
Kodai, Milangili, Nabikkodi, Patrai,  
Sengandal, Sivappukkandal,  
Talaichuruli, Tondri, Vendondri,  
Ventonti (Tam.)



**Distribution:** It is common in the low-country in Ceylon.

**Composition:** An alcoholic extract of the tuber of this plant yields various organic acids, choline, dextrose, a ydrocarbon, a fatty alcohol, a mixture of phytosterolins and alkaloids colchicine, demethylcolchicine, N-formyl-desacetylcolchicine, gloriosine, lumicolchicine and another unnamed alkaloid. The flowers contain the alkaloids N-formyl-desacetylcolchicine and lumicolchicine, while the leaves contain chelidonic acid.

**Uses:** The tuber is poisonous and tannic acid is an antidote which precipitates the colchicine already present in the gastro-intestinal tract and prevents further absorption. In Ceylon, the tuber is used for the treatment of bruises and sprains, while in India it is used in blood diseases, swellings, wounds, abscesses, leprosy, piles and gonorrhoea. The tuber is ground into a paste and applied on the navel and suprapubic region to promote easy labour.

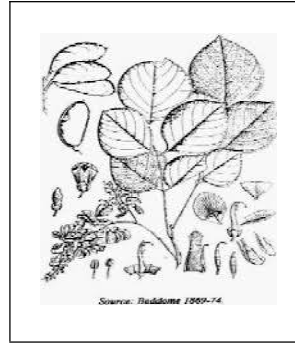
## **Pongamia pinnata**

Muruwa, Niyanda (Sinh.); Maral, Marul-kalang (Tam.)

**Distribution:** It is common on dry rocks and sandy places in the dry zone. Dambulla Kurunegala

**Composition:** This plant contains an alkaloid, sansevierine, besides other components.

**Uses:** The root is used for treatment of bile and gonorrhoea. The fibres of the leaves are used for making ropes' and for weaving mats.

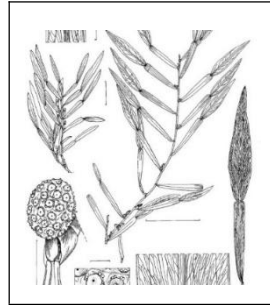


### **Pothos scandens**

Hin-kabarossa, Kabarossa (Sinh.); Ayadi, Malaitamarai, Tirunamappalai (Tam.)

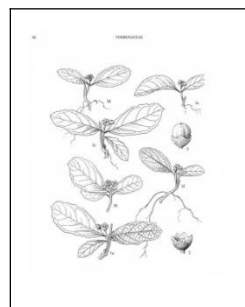
**Distribution:** It is common in Ceylon up to 5,000 feet altitude.

**Uses:** The roots are used for treating venereal diseases, bloodless dysentery, rheumatism and pains in the lower part of the body.



## **Premna herbacea**

Godakaduru, Kanchura, Vishakaduru (Sinh.); Eddi, Etti, Kagodi, Kalam, Kanchurai, Kanjiga, Kanjirai, Kanjiram, Karalam, Keshamamutti, Kiruttinabanam. Kobagundam, Kodaram, Kondagulam, Kubashuba, Maduragam, Mavagam, Mutti, Nachu, Sitti, Suvasagam, Vishamutti, Yettikottai (Tam.)



**Distribution:** It is common in the dry forests of Ceylon.

**Composition:** The leaves, bark, wood and roots of this tree contain strychnine and brucine while the leaves contain strychnicine in addition. The seeds on the other hand contain in addition to strychnicine-and brucine, cc and B colubrine, novacine, struxine,  $\beta$ -strychnine, vomicine and a fixed oil.

**Uses:** poultice of the. leaves of this tree is applied on ulcers. The bark is used as a tonic for dyspepsia for pain after meals accompanied by. diarrhoea. The root bark ground into a paste with lime juice is given in the form of pills for cholera.

## **Premna latifolia**

Ingini (Sinh.); Akkolam, Ilalam, Kadali Sillam, Tetta. Tettankottai, Teru (Tam.)

**Distribution:** It is rather rare in Ceylon being confined to the dry regions. Trincomalee, Dambulla, Kurunegala

**Composition:** The seeds of this tree contain brucine.



**Uses:** The seeds are used as local applications for eye diseases and internally, for chronic diarrhoea. They act as a diuretic, demulcent and diluent to the urinary tract and are useful for pyelitis, cystitis, gonorrhoea, strangury and Bright's disease.

## **Pterocarpus marsupium**

Badal-wanassa, Wanassa (Sinh.)

**Distribution:** In Ceylon, it is found both in the hill country and moist low-country. It grows on the wet banks of hill cuttings.

**Composition:** The fronds of this herb contain the alkaloids, cernuine and nicotine.

**Uses:** A decoction of the plant is given for coughs and as a diuretic. It is effective for dysentery, gout and rheumatism. An embrocation of the ashes of the plant with vinegar is recommended for eruptions of the skin.



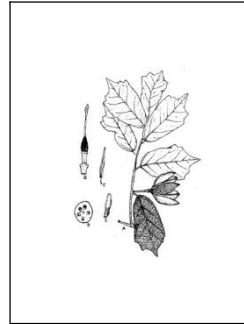
## **Pterospermum canescens**

Attumulli, Kaludaimulli, Kolimulli, Uppukkarinimulli (Tam.)

**Distribution:** In Ceylon, it is a common undershrub in mangrove swamps and ditches, along the sea coast.

**Composition:** The leaves contain a bitter alkaloid, an organic acid, resin and fatty matter.

**Uses:** The whole plant is used as a nervine tonic, expectorant and stimulant. The root is used for coughs and asthma.

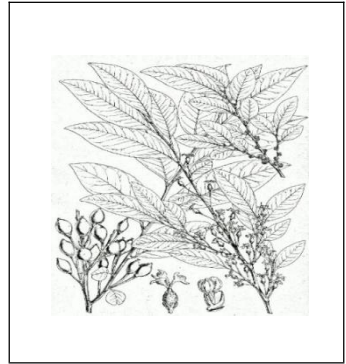


## **Putranjiva roxburghii**

Maha-hedaya (Sinh.)

**Distribution:** It is common in Ceylon in the mid and up-country rain forests.

**Uses:** Used- in the preparation of medicinal oils for the treatment of snake-bites.

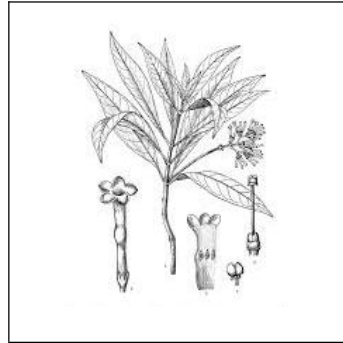


## **Rauvolfia serpentina**

Kuda-hedaya (Sinh.)

**Distribution:** It is common in Ceylon in the mid and up-country rain forests.

**Uses:** Used for the same ailments as *Lycopodium phlegmasia* is employed.



## **Rhaphidophora laciniata**

Murutha (Sinh.); Kadali, Kadalimugai, Kadalippuva, Pumaruda (Tam.)

**Distribution:** It is rather common in Ceylon, on banks of rivers and streams in the low-country up to 2,000 feet altitude.

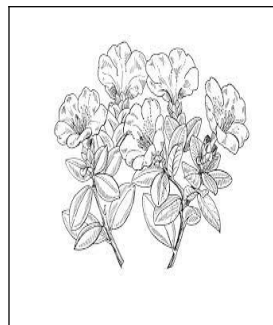
**Uses:** The mature leaves and ripe fruits are given in decoction to lower the blood sugar in diabetes mellitus. The bark and leaves are purgative and the seeds. used for treating aphthae.



## **Rhododendron zeylanicum**

Maritondi (Sinh.); Aivanam, Aivani,  
Korandam, Kurandagam, Kufinji,  
Marudondri, Mayilainandi, Pidai,  
Ponninpuvalamarudondri (Tam.)

**Distribution:** It is rather rare in Ceylon being confined to the dry and desert regions especially near the sea coast. Batticaloa, Chilaw, Mannar, Jaffna,



**Composition:** The leaves of this plant contain a glucoside and tannin, resin lawsone and probably an alkaloid. The flowers contain an essential oil, which suggests the smell of mignonette and the seeds a fixed oil consisting of  $\alpha$ -ionone and  $\beta$ -ionone

**Uses:** The roots and leaves are said to be anthelmintic. The roots are used in the treatment of hysteria and nervous disorders.' The bark is given in the form of a decoction for jaundice, enlargement of the spleen and obstinate skin diseases. The root is regarded as a specific for leprosy. The leaves stimulate the growth of hair and the flowers are sudorific. The flowers and fruits are reputed to have emmenagogue properties. Henna is best known on account of the orange-red dye obtained from the leaves and used as a cosmetic. A perfume is extracted from the flowers.

## **Ricinus communis**

Mala ita, Malitha, Malitta (Sinh.);  
Velakkai (Tam.)

**Distribution:** It is rare in Ceylon, confined to open, sunny places in the lower montane zone. Maturata, Uva patanas, Bandarawela

**Composition:** The leaves, flowers and fruits are rich in tannin and the bark contains a gum.



**Uses:** The dried flowers are a tonic for haemorrhoids and diseases of the liver. The powdered flowers are given with honey for dysentery. The fresh leaves are used in the treatment of snakebites. The plant and particularly the flowers are one of the ingredients in the preparation of many decoctions for treatment of dysentery, colic, dropsy, liver and spleen diseases, fever, asthma, fistula, syphilis, piles, diseases of the heart and lungs, insanity, apoplexy and nervous diseases

## **Ruta graveolens**

Ankenda (Sinh.); Kattukanni, Muttainari (Tam.)

**Distribution:** Occurs in India, Malaya, Ceylon and Philippine Islands. It is common in Ceylon up to 5,000 feet elevation.

**Composition:** The leaves of this tree contain an aromatic oil

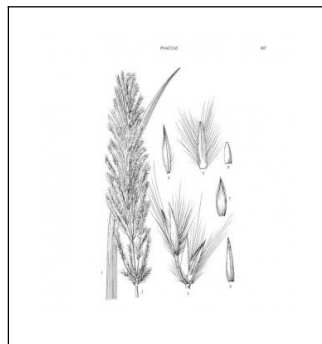


**Uses:** The bark is used externaliy on swellings, fractures, sores and ulcers and taken internally as a purgative. In Indo-China, it is prescribed as a tonic for scabies.

## **Saccharum arundinaceum**

Pamburu (Sinh.); Kuruntu (Tam.)

**Distribution:** Occurs in India specially in the Madras Presidency and Ceylon. It is rather common in the low-country dry regions in Ceylon. Batticatoa, Jaffna, Panadura, etc



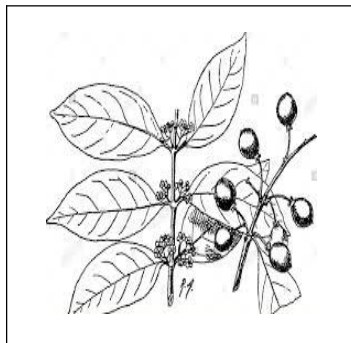
**Composition:** A much branched small tree with grey bark, rugged smooth branchlets armed with short, sharp spines 0.6—1.2 cm long; leaves simple, alternate, exstipulate, large, 6.3—10 cm long, narrowly oval, spreading or recurved, soon falling; stamens 8 or 10, quite distinct, filaments slender, anthers narrowly oblong; ovary superior, small, glabrous on a short gynophore, 4 or 5-locular with 2 ovules in each loculus, style long stout, thickened upwards; fruit a 4 or 5-chambered, globular berry about 2.5 cm long with a thick rind, each chamber with one or two globose seeds embedded in a glutinous mucilage

**Uses:** The leaves of this tree are used on swellings, fractures, piles and fistula. Internally, a decoction of the leaves is given for phlegm and puerperal diseases

## **Salacia prinoides**

Migon-karapincha (Sinh.); Pannai, Purankainari (Tam.)

**Distribution:** Occurs in India and Ceylon. It is rather common in the low-country dry regions. Kurunegala, Jaffna, Anuradhapura, Mannar, etc.



**Composition:** A small tree or shrub with pubescent young parts; leaves compound, alternate, exstipulate, imparipinnate, large, 15—30 cm long, rachis glabrous or puberulous, leaflets 7—13, distant, alternate, shortly stalked, 3.7—8.9 cm long, very unequal at base; ovate or lanceolate, obtusely acuminate, very faintly crenate, wavy, glabrous on both sides and shining; flowers regular, bisexual, small, greenish white, 6—8 mm long, shortly pedicellate in a short strictly terminal panicle; sepals 5, small

**Uses:** An infusion of the stem of this plant is given for colic and diarrhoea. The leaves and roots are used for indigestion and as a diuretic.

## **Salacia prinoides**

Ankenda, Lunu-ankenda, Nebeda  
(Sinh.)

**Distribution:** Occurs in India, Ceylon Malay Peninsula, Sumatra and Java. In Ceylon, it is common in lower elevations and rarer higher up between 2,000- and 6,000-feet altitude.

**Composition:** A small tree with opposite branches, bark grey, smooth, young parts finely tomentose



**Uses:** An infusion of the leaves and flowers of this tree is given as a tonic and emmenagogue. The juice of the leaves is administered for fever. A decoction of the root or root bark boiled in oil is taken for improving the complexion. In Indo-China, the plant is used as a bitter tonic and the bark and leaves are given for fever.

## **Salacia reticulates**

Dodanpana (Sinh.); Anam,  
Kattukkonji, Konji, Kulapannai  
(Tam.)

**Distribution:** Occurs in the tropical and sub-tropical regions of India, Ceylon, Malaya, China, Borneo and Australia. It is common as an undergrowth under the shade of trees in dry regions from sea level to 3,000 feet elevation in the low-country in Ceylon. Colombo, Kandy, Galagama, Kalutara, etc.



**Composition:** This plant contains the alkaloids glycosine, glycosimine, skimmianinc and the leaves kokusaginine and an unnamed alkaloid. In addition, the plant has an active principle glycosmine, a tannin, a phlobaphene, traces of salicin and sugars.

**Uses:** The juice of the leaves is used for fevers, liver complaints and for intestinal worms in children. The leaves are applied externally as a paste on eczema and other skin diseases.

### **Salmalia malabarica**

Karapincha, Karrypincha (Sinh.);  
Karuvembu, Karuveppilai,  
Kattuveppilai; (Tam.)

**Distribution:** Occurs in India and Ceylon, It is very common in the low-country dry zone but rather rare in the hills of Anuradhapura, Polonnaruwa, Maturata, Badulla, etc.



**Composition:** fruit of this plant yields an oil and the leaves contain a glucoside called koenigin.

**Uses:** The leaves, bark and roots are tonic and stomachic. The leaves with other ingredients are roasted, made into a powder and given for constipation, abdominal colic and diarrhoea. The boiled leaves are given for hiccough and hoarseness. The juice of the fresh leaves is also given for diarrhoea and dysentery. The bruised leaves are applied externally on eruptions.

## **Samadera indica**

Rata-aruda (Sinh.); Shimaiazha-  
vanai-virai, Simaiyalavinai,  
Simaiyaravandi (Tam.)

**Distribution:** Grows in India,  
Persia, Mediterranean regions,  
Central Asia, Arabia, North  
Africa, Hungary and Spain



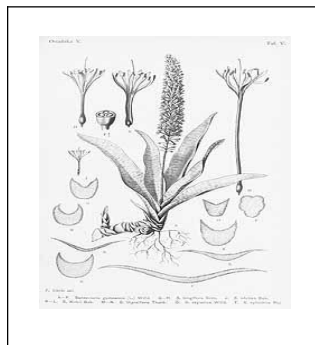
**Composition:** The root of this plant contains calcium oxalate.

**Uses:** The root is used as an alternative tonic. The bruised leaves are applied externally on snake-bite wounds. This plant is fed to cattle suffering from haematuria or flux of blood from the abdomen.

## **Sansevieria zeylanica**

Aruda (Sinh.); Aruvadam, Arvada, Pambugolli (Tam.)

**Distribution:** Occurs in waste and stony ground throughout S. Europe extending from Spain and Portugal to Greece and Crimea. It is cultivated in India and in the up-country in Ceylon. (Central Prov., Hakgala, Bot. Gard., cultivated, J. M. Silva, Jan.1928; Diyatalawa, F. W. de Silva, May 1929.)



**Composition:** The whole plant contains the glucoside rutin, the fruits kokusaginine and skimmianine and the leaves an unnamed alkaloid. The oil of rue consists of two characteristic constituents namely methyl-n-heptyl ketone and methyl-n-nonyl ketone

**Uses:** Rue is an acro-narcotic poison. It is given internally for hysteria, amenorrhoea epilepsy and flatulent colic while it is used externally as a rubefacient. This herb and its oil stimulate the uterine and nervous systems and considered injurious to pregnant women. It is a strong antispasmodic. A medicinal oil prepared with its juice is prescribed for convulsions in children and acute bronchitis and pneumonia. The seeds are considered a good ascaricide in Annam.

## **Santalum album**

Kudumiris (Sinh.); Kattumilagu, Kichili karanai, Milagaranai, Mullukkaranai (Tam.)

**Distribution:** Occurs in India, Ceylon, Java, Sumatra, China, Philippine Islands and tropical Africa. It is very common in Ceylon from sea level to about 6,000 feet elevation.

**Composition:** The leaves of this plant yield a volatile oil with citronellal and linalool, while the root bark contains the alkaloids toddaline, toddalinine, lactone, resin, fixed oil and a glucoside, diosmin. The stem bark yields three coumarins, aculeatin and aculeatin hidiate.

**Uses:** The root bark is a reputed antimalarial remedy, though clinical tests with alcoholic extracts have not shown positive results. An infusion of it is a stimulating tonic, particularly after malaria. In the Philippines, a decoction of the root is used as an anti-pyretic and antidiarrhoeic. The fruit and root are rubbed down with oil to make a stimulant liniment for rheumatism. A decoction of the leaf is used in pneumonia and rheumatism, while that of the root is used on stomach-ache and as an anthelmintic. A poultice of the leaf is applied to carious teeth for relief from toothache. The root is also used for malaria, intermittent fever, diarrhoea, cholera, rheumatism and syphilis.

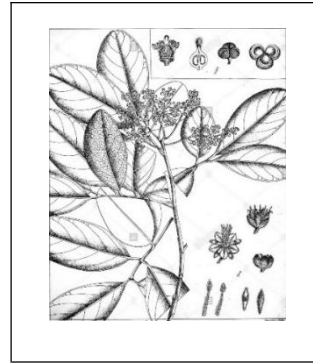


## **Sapindus emarginatus**

Katukeena (Sinh.)

**Distribution:** Occurs in India and Ceylon. It is rather common in the montane zone in Ceylon and much rarer at lower elevations, Maturata, Hakgala, Hewaheta, etc.

**Uses:** This species has the same properties as *Zanthoxylum budrunge* Wall., from India and *Zanthoxylum hamiltonianum* Wall., from Burma both of which can be cultivated in Ceylon. The fruit of this plant is a stimulant, astringent and digestive. It is prescribed for dyspepsia, Some forms of diarrhoea and rheumatism. It resembles coriander, from which it is difficult to distinguish.



## **Sapindus trifoliatus**

Pilu (Sinh.); Kalarva, Kargol, Kargoli, Opa, Perungoli, Surugalarva, Sittuvila, TJba, Uga, Uvay, Vijay (Tam.)

**Distribution:** Occurs in the dry regions of India, Ceylon, Arabia, North Africa, Abyssinia, Syria, etc. It is common in dry and desert places, especially along the coast in Ceylon. Jaffna, Anuradhapura, Hambantota, etc.

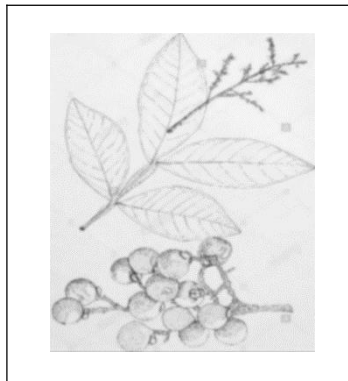
**Composition:** The leaves and bark of this tree contain the alkaloid trimethylamine, and the seed a volatile oil whose main constituent is benzyl mustard oil.

**Uses:** The bark of the stem is acrid and used in decoction for low fever and as a stimulant and tonic in amenorrhoea. In Punjab, the shoot and leaves are considered as antidotes for poisons and the juice of the leaves is given for scurvy. In Persia, the fruit is employed as a deobstruent, carminative and diuretic. In Africa, the root bark is used as a remedy for ankylostomiasis and the stem bark for gastritis and as an ascarifuge. The powdered root is applied like mustard plaster and a decoction of the root given for gonorrhoea and vesical catarrh. The leaf is a reputed diuretic.



## **Sapium indicum**

Sudu-handun (Sinh.); **Amukkam**, Asam, Chandana kaltai, Igam, Ingam, Kandanam, Koravaram, Kulavuri, Malaivedbu, Malaiyaram, Malaiyasam Padiram, Pidasaralam, Pidasaram, Saleyam, Sandanam, Sandani, Selegam, Selodam, Sisiram, Ulosidam (Tam.)



**Distribution:** Indigenous to Mysore in India, and occurs in E. Java, Timor and Islands of Malay Archipelago. It is cultivated in Ceylon

**Composition:** The heart wood of this tree contains a volatile oil, the chief constituent of which is the alcohol, santalol.

**Uses:** The heart wood is used alone or with other ingredients for fever, diarrhoea dysentery, gastric irritation, spermatorrhoea and gonorrhoea. The wood ground up with water into a paste is applied on local inflammations and skin diseases to allay heat and pruritus. It acts as a diaphoretic and checks haemoptysis. The seeds also contain an oil which is used in skin diseases. The wood is considered a diuretic and antipyretic in Cambodia. In Madagascar, the wood is mascerated with salt water and applied on wounds. The oil is recommended for gonorrhoea. It is often used in perfumery.

## **Saraca indica**

Bu-kobbe, Kobbe, Kobo (Sinh.); Amlai (Tam.)

**Distribution:** Occurs in India, Ceylon, N. Australia and Indian Archipelago. It is very common in the moist low-country in Ceylon.

**Composition:** The seed of this plant contains an unidentified alkaloid.

**Uses:** This plant is an emenagogue. The astringent root is employed to check diarrhoea. All parts of the plant are used for preparation of medicinal oils for use on fractures

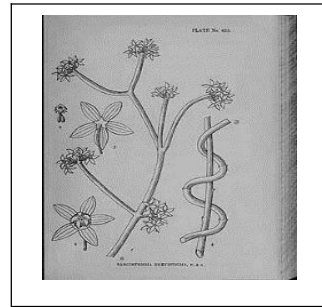


## **Sarcostemma brunonianum**

Walkobo, Wel-kobbe (Sinh.)

**Distribution:** Occurs in India and Ceylon, It is rather common in the moist regions in Ceylon. Hunnasgiriya, Hantane, Ambagamuwa, Haputale, Hakgala, Maturata, etc

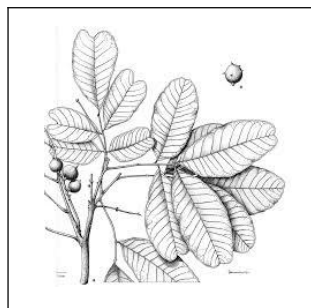
**Uses:** All parts of this tree are used for preparation of medicinal oils applied on fractures. The leaves and bark are also applied as a poultice.



## **Schleichera oleosa**

Penela-wel (Sinh.); Kottavan,  
Mudakattan, Mudakottan, Periyailai-  
mudakottan, Samuttiram, Samuttiradoyan  
Siliyanai, Soliyan, Sugattan,  
Tiragamulagam (Tam.)

**Distribution:** Occurs in India, Ceylon and Malacca in wet places. In Ceylon, it grows in the mid and low-country.



**Composition:** This plant contains saponin and quebrachitol and an alkaloid, a glucoside, resins and tannins. The seeds possess an essential oil

**Uses:** The whole plant is used both internally and externally in cases of rheumatism, nervous diseases, dropsy and orchitis. The juice of the plant is used as eardrops for earache and discharge from the meatus. It is also used for piles, bronchitis and phthisis. The root is an emetic and laxative and considered an aperient. The leaves are boiled in castor oil and applied externally on rheumatic pains, swellings and tumours. In China, the plant is considered an anthelmintic and anti-blenorrhagic. In Africa, an infusion of the leaf is given as an enema for dysenteries and diarrhoeas and taken internally for general outbreak of sores in the body. It is used as an anti-rheumatic and in digestive and pulmonary disorders. The root is a laxative, demulcent, diuretic and used in nervous diseases. In East Indies, the leaf and root are used as a diaphoretic, diuretic and as a remedy for dropsy, orchitis, amenorrhoea, rheumatism, nervous complaints and lung diseases.

## **Securinega leucopyrus**

Gas-penela, Penela (Sinh.); Nekkoyddan Panalai, Pouanga (Tam.)

**Distribution:** Occurs in India and Ceylon. It is common in the low-country in Ceylon/Ceylon.Eastern Prov.Trincomalee, 77in /7e', yC.P. 1151. NorthCentral Prov., Anuradhapura, Herb Peradeniya, March 1883;

Mahailluppallama, Herb. Peradeniya, March 1905. Southern Prov., Ruhuna National Park, Situlpahuwa, Mueller-Dombois 68022507, Feb. 1968; Ratanangala Beach, Mueller-Dombois and Comanor 67062221, June 1967; Batuwa Modera, Fosberg 50310, April 1968; Yala, Cooray 68052911/? May 1968; Komawa Wewa, Comanor 409, Aug. 1967. North-Western Prov., Wilpattu National Park, Mueller-Dombois, Wirawan, Cooray and Bala-krishnan 69043002, April 1969.

**Composition:** This tree contains the alkaloid, sanguinarine

**Uses:** fruit of this tree is the popular "soap nut" used as a substitute for soap. The pericarp of the fruit is applied as an ointment on swollen glands in the throat and tonsils. The seed along with other ingredients is given for fever in children



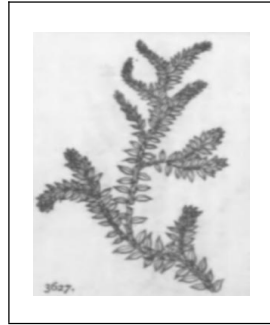
## **Selaginella wightii**

Kahapenela (Sinh.); Manippungu, Nittavanji, Neykottan, Puvand, Puchikottai, Punalai (Tam.)

**Distribution:** Much cultivated in S. India and is rather common in the moist low-country in Ceylon.

**Composition:** The oil extracted from the seeds of this tree contains n-eicosanic acid while the root bark contains saponin.

**Uses:** The fruit of this tree is given internally as an emetic nauseant and expectorant. It relieves asthma and certain types of colic. As an errhine it is employed in heracrania, asthma, hysteria and epilepsy. The root is also a useful expectorant.



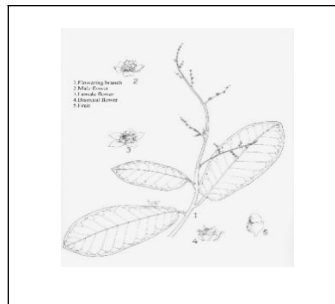
## **Semecarpus coriacea**

Kon, Kon-gas (Sinh.); Kolama, Konji, Konjivanji, Kumbadiri, Mirugakkottai, Mudgottan, Pu, Pulichai, Puvam, Sakkattai (Tam.)

**Distribution:** Occurs in the dry forests of India, Burma and Ceylon.

**Composition:** A large tree with close branches and corrugated rough and cracked bark; leaves alternate, compound, paripinnate, rachis 7.5—18 cm long, bearing 4—6 leaflets, leaflets oblong, 7—18 cm long, 3.5—8 cm broad, opposite, coriaceous, flowers small, green, polygamo-dioecious, pedicellate, in lax, slightly branched, spicate panicles 5—12.5 cm long, from the young shoots below the new leaves; calyx 4—6 fid, segments acute, petals absent; disc flat, crenate at margin; stamens usually 7, style long, stigma 3-lobed, capitate; fruits globular, apiculate, corky brown berries 1.7—2.2 cm diam. 1—2-chambered with a single seed in each chamber covered with an orange brown acid aril; seed exalbuminous, 1.3—1.4 cm long with a brittle brown testa.

**Uses:** The bark of this tree is astringent. With oil it is used as a cure for itch and rubbed externally to relieve pain in the back and loins. The oil extracted from the seeds is applied on the head to promote the growth of hair. In different parts of India, it is used for different purposes such as a purgative, prophylactic against cholera, rheumatism, headaches and on skin diseases. In Cambodia, the bark is prescribed for malarial fever.



## ***Semecarpus gardneri***

Wana-mi (Sinh.); *Dasyaulus fulvus* Thw  
(Tam.)

**Distribution:** A rare endemic species growing in the moist low-country in Ceylon below 1,000 feet altitude. Hewesse, Ekneligoda, etc.

**Composition:** A moderate sized tree with a brownish grey bark and the young shoots densely covered with copious orange tomentum; leaves simple, alternate, few on stout densely tomentose petioles about 1.8 cm long, broadly oval or oblong-oval, acute or subacute at base, shortly acuminate, glabrous above when mature and fulvous hairy on veins beneath, rather thick depressed above and venation prominent beneath; flowers regular, bisexual, numerous, in clusters of 4—8 from tomentose, prominent bosses in axils of fallen leaves, pedicels 3.7 cm long, glabrous; sepals 4 in two pairs, the outer pair enclosing the inner, persistent, outer segments oval, acute, glabrous, recurved, inner segments obtuse, densely fulvous tomentose, erect; petals not seen; ovary superior, not seen; fruit (immature) 3.7 cm long, ovoid, pointed and glabrous.

**Uses:** The leaves and bark of this tree are used on scalds and burns



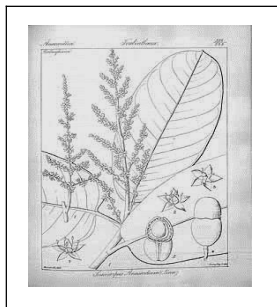
## **Semecarpus obovata**

Mi (Sinh.); Illuppai, Iruppai, Kuligam, Kulisam, Maduragam, Mavagam, Nattiluppai, Seyilam, Tittinam (Tam.)

**Distribution:** Occurs in India and Ceylon. It is common in the dry forest region in Ceylon but mostly planted in the moist low-country.

**Composition:** The seeds yield a fixed oil.

**Uses:** The bark is a good remedy for itch, swellings, fractures and snake-bite poisoning. The oil extracted from the seed is applied on swellings, rheumatism and other skin diseases. The heartwood made into a paste is applied on the throat for glandular swellings in the neck and throat.

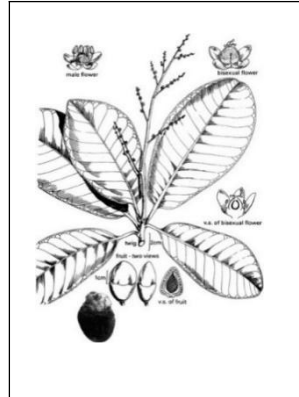


## **Semecarpus obscura**

Gan-mi (Sinh.)

**Distribution:** Endemic to Ceylon, it grows in the moist low-country by streams. Ambegamuwa, Ratnapura, Hantane, Trincomalee, etc.

**Composition:** A small tree with a dark brown bark and glabrous young parts; leaves simple, alternate, stipulate, numerous, scattered on short petioles, 10—17.5 cm long, oblong-linear, tapering to base, often apiculate, glabrous, rather thin, venation pellucid, stipules filiform, brown persistent; flowers regular, bisexual in clusters of about 6 from axils of leaves, pedicels about 2.5 cm long, erect or deflexed, glabrous; sepals 4 in two pairs, outer pair enclosing the inner, segments oval-lanceolate, acute, inner sepals silky hairy; petals 6, fused into a campanulate tube, lobes oblong, obtuse, silky outside, wisted; stamens 12 in one tier, sessile, very acute; ovary superior, 6-locular with a solitary ovule in eachloculus, style much exserted and persistent; fruit a linear-ovoid, beaked berry 2.5—3.7 cm long; seed solitary, 2.5 cm long, linear-ovoid, compressed, acute at both ends, shining, pale brown, hilum along the whole length of one side.

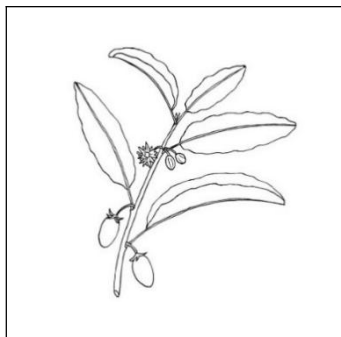


**Uses:** The bark, root, heartwood and the oil extracted from the seeds of this tree are used for the same ailments as Madhuca longifolia is used. The oil is applied on wounds and sores caused by bears

## **Semecarpus subpeltata**

Munamal (Sinh.); Alagu, JJanji, Kesaram, Magil, Magilam, Makil, Mukalai, Vagalam, Vakudam, Vilva-pattiri (Tam.)

**Distribution:** Occurs in India, Ceylon Malay Peninsula and Andaman Islands. It is rather common in the low-country in Ceylon, often cultivated



**Composition:** The bark and flowers of this tree contain an alkaloid, while the bark has in addition a tannin and a saponin. The seeds contain a toxic principle and a saponin, mimosops-saponin. The leaves do not contain saponin

**Uses:** A decoction of the bark of this tree is used as a gargle for diseases of the gums and teeth and taken internally for discharges of the mucous membranes of the bladder and urethra. It is useful for treating fever and is supposed to increase fertility in women. Along with the flowers, it is given in diarrhoea. The young fruit in decoction is used as gargle for treating sprue and is chewed for strengthening gums. The pulp of the ripe fruit cures chronic dysentery. The flowers serve as a cosmetic owing to their fragrance, while the ripe fruit is made into pickles and preserves. The bark is a source of tannin

## **Sesbania grandiflora**

Gaskotala (Sinh.)

**Distribution:** It is rather common in Ceylon in open and waste ground up to 4000 feet altitude.

**Composition:** A stout herb, stem 60—90 cm tall, erect, branched, quadrangular with very acute angles, glabrous, often purple; leaves simple, opposite, exstipulate, sessile, 6.2—12.5 cm long, narrowly ovate-lanceolate, tapering to base, acuminate, very acute at apex, serrate, harsh on both sides and at margin with fine asperities; flowers irregular, bisexual, large, petals 5, fused into a funnel-shaped corolla, dilated at mouth, glandular pubescent inside, nearly 2.5 cm long, 2-lipped, upper lip erect, lower lip 3-lobed, lobes rounded, obtuse; stamens 4, didynamous, anthers coherent in pairs, cells confluent, 2-locular with numerous ovules in each loculus, style simple, stigma of two blades; fruit a globose capsule, seeds tabulated.

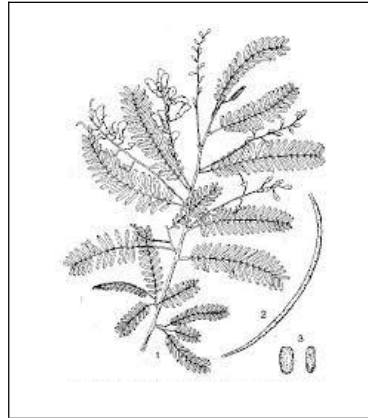


**Uses:** A decoction of the root is given for rheumatism, stones in the bladder, ophthalmia and diarrhoea. Seeds are used to improve vitality, favour conception and cure biliousness.

## **Sesbania sesban**

Lunuwila (Sinh.); Brami, Nirbrami, Nirpirimi (Tam.)

**Distribution:** Occurs in marshy places in India, Ceylon, Malaya and Philippine Islands. It is very common in the low-country in Ceylon, especially in paddy fields near the sea coast. Ceylon. Northern Prov., Talaimannar, /. M. Silva, July 1916. Without locality, Thwaites CP. 2034.



**Composition:** This herb contains the alkaloid, herpestine.

**Uses:** It is considered as a nervine tonic useful for insanity, epilepsy and loss of voice in phthisis. It is a diuretic, aperient and a mild purgative, especially given to children. The juice of the fresh stems and leaves is used as a snake-bite remedy. A special preparation of it with gold and other ingredients is given to increase strength, memory, voice, brain and sexual power.

## **Shorea robusta**

Dutusatuta (Sinh.)

**Distribution:** Occurs in India and Ceylon. It is rather common in damp places in the low-country of the moist regions of Ceylon up to 3000 feet altitude very rare in the dry regions. Batticaloa, Colombo, Galle, Galagedara, Gannoruwa etc.



**Composition:** An erect herb with thick, much branched, bright orange roots and numerous, obscurely quadrangular or compressed, hispid, often purple stems 7.5—45 cm long covered with spreading white hairs; leaves simple, alternate, exstipulate, sessile, oblong, 1.2—2.5 cm long, obtuse rather thick and stiff, sparsely bristly hairy and ciliate with largesunken glands, veinless; flowers irregular, bisexual, rather large, white usually with a large, brown-pink stain on the upper side of the throat, very shortly stalked, solitary, bractlets small, and flattened with 5, style simple, stigma bilobed, dilated, acute; fruit capsule 1 cm long, ovoid, loculicidally 2-valved, valves often split into two, seeds numerous, yellow.

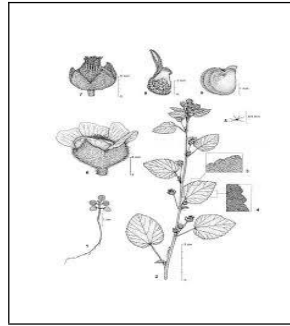
**Uses:** All parts of this plant are considered diuretic and are used in decoctions along with other drugs for fever. It is used externally for sore eyes.

## **Sida cordifolia**

Ambawila (Sinh.)

**Distribution:** Occurs in India, Ceylon and Burma. It is common in wet places in the low-country in Ceylon.

**Uses:** This herb is chiefly used for poulticing sores on legs. A decoction of the roots and leaves is given for fever and acts as an aperient and expectorant



## **Sida rhombifolia**

Kothala-wel, Welkothala (Sinh.)

**Distribution:** Occurs in India, Ceylon, Burma, Java and China. It is common in damp places in the moist regions in Ceylon up to 4,000 feet altitude.

**Uses:** The juice of the leaves is considered useful in the treatment of gonorrhoea



## **Smilax zeylanica**

Sanjeeva (Sinh.)

**Distribution:** Occurs in the north and south temperate zones of both hemispheres. It is found in Brazil, India and Ceylon. The author has come across it forming a carpet at the base of the Dambulla rock.



**Uses:** This plant is used in the preparation of medicinal oils for treatment of paralysis. In Africa, the plant is smoked with *Lycopodium clavatum* for relief of headache. The powdered rhizome is made into an ointment and rubbed on venereal sores in South Rhodesia

### **Smithia conferta**

Kambalu, Kumbulu, Maha-kohomba, Wal-bilin (Sinh.); Mattipalai, Peru, Peru-maram, Peru vempu, Pongiliyam (Tam.)

**Distribution:** Occurs in India, Ceylon, Burma and Cochin-China. It is rather rare in the moist low-country in Ceylon. Seven Korales, Colombo, Gampaha, etc.



**Composition:** The bark and leaves of this tree contain ailanthic acid

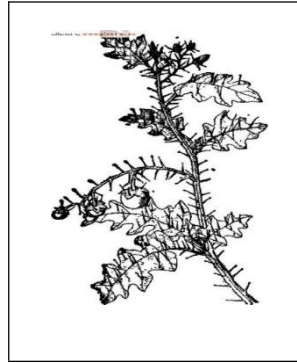
**Uses:** The juice of the fresh bark and the gum resin which exudes from the injured bark are excellent remedies for dyspepsia, diarrhoea, dysentery and bronchitis. The leaves are recommended for cephalalgia and gastralgia. A decoction of the root bark given, internally acts as an antidote against cobra-bite poisoning.

## **Solamim xanthocarpnm**

Kaputugedi, Tittakohomba (Sinh.)

**Distribution:** A native of East Indies and Indo-Malaya. It is common in the low country in Ceylon, though not native. Kandy, Kegalle District, Negombo, etc.

**Uses:** The entire plant is bitter and the seeds are much used in Java as a cure for dysentery- It has anti-periodic and anti-dysenteric properties. In Indo China, the seeds are well known for their anthelmintic and anti-dysenteric properties and they are believed to have also some anti-pyretic value. They are toxic.



## **Solanum verbascifolium**

Samadara (Sinh.); Nibam, Niepa (Tam.)

**Distribution:** Occurs in India, Ceylon and Philippine Islands. It is rather common in the moist low-country forests. Galle, Kalutara, Chilaw, Hewesse, etc.

**Composition:** The seeds of this tree contain a fatty oil consisting of triolein, tripalmitin and tristearin, an alkaloid, inositol, a bitter principle, sucrose and a glucoside, samaderin. The bark contains a bitter principle, phloroglucotannin, ellagotannic acid and tannic acid.

**Uses:** The bark is used as a febrifuge, while the bruised leaves are applied xternally for erysipelas. An infusion of the leaf is a good insecticide especially against white ants. The oil extracted from the seeds is a useful application for rheumatism. In the Philippines, the juice of the pounded bark is considered a cure for skin diseases.



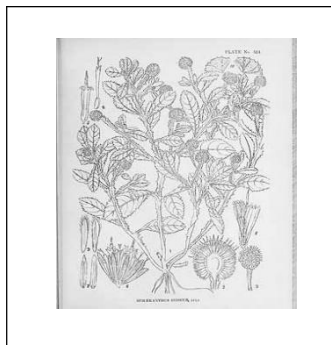
## **Sphaeranthus indicus**

Ela-attana, Kalu-attana, Sudu-attana (Sinh.); Ayigam, Emanamam, Karuvumattai, Madumattai, Maiyal, Mattadi (Tam.)

**Distribution** A native of tropical Asia and new pantropic in distribution. It occurs in India, Cealon, China, Philippine Islands and in the tropics generally. It is a common weed in waste and cultivated land in Ceylon.

**Composition:** The seeds of this tree contain a fatty oil consisting of trioein, tripalmitin and tristearin, and the leaves, flowers, fruits and seeds of this plant contain atropine, hyoscine, hyocyanine, cuscohygrine, norhyocyanine and metaloidine, while the fruits contain scopolamine and the seeds, a fatty oil.

**Uses:** The plant is a narcotic, anodyne and antispasmodic. When applied locally in aqueous masceration, it causes dilatation of the pupil of the eyes similar to belladonna. The leaves are used as poultices on inflamed breasts to check excessive secretion of milk, rheumatic swelling of joints, lumbago and painful tumours. It is a suitable substitute for belladonna for treatment of cataract and other diseases of the eye. The dried leaves made into cigarettes are smoked for bronchial asthma at the onset of the attacks, with beneficial results. Internally, it is given as a remedy for preventing hydrophobia. The powdered seed is given in the form of pills for severe colds. It may be stuffed into cavities of teeth for toothache.



## **Spilaothes paniculata**

Thunbo-attana (Sinh.)

**Distribution:** A garden plant of Mexican origin and grown in Ceylon as an ornamental plant. In Ceylon: Central Prov., Peradeniya, Bot. Gard., cultivated, Herb. Peradeniya, Oct 1888.



**Composition:** The leaves of this plant contain the alkaloids, hyoscyamine, hyocyamine, scopolamine and daturine which is a mixture of atropine and hyocyamine.

**Uses:** This plant is used as a narcotic. The Indians of the upper and northern Amazon brink it and the intoxicating effect lasts three days.

## ***Sterculia urens***

Hekarilla (Sinh.); Anaichundai, Malaichundai, Sundai (Tam.)

**Distribution:** Occurs in tropical and subtropical parts of India, Ceylon, Malaya, China, Australia and tropical America. It is common in the moist regions from 1,000 to 6,000 feet altitude in Ceylon. / Central Prov., Rikillagaskade, Thwaites CP. 1902; Mangala, Alston 1657, March 1928.



**Composition** This plant contains solanidine, mallic acid and saponin

**Uses:** The leaves are used as an abortifacient and for expelling toxic substances from the body. In the Philippines, the roots are given in the form of a decoction for dysentery and diarrhoea. In Mexico, the leaves are applied as poultices on boils and ulcers and a decoction of the root given for fever

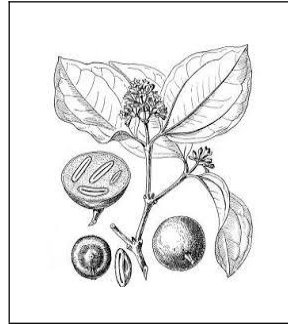
## **Strychnos nux-vomica**

Katuwel-batu (Sinh.); Kandangattari. Sutturam. Udaravani, Udavani (Tam.)

**Distribution:** Occurs throughout India and in the dry and sandy places in Ceylon. It is much cultivated for medicinal purposes

**Composition:** this plant contains the alkaloid, solasodine, an unidentified alkaloid is found in leaves, stems and roots.

**Uses:** The root is valued as an expectorant and used in coughs, asthma, colic fever, loss of appetite and pains in the chest. The fumes of the burning seed cures toothache. In Bengal, this plant is used as a diuretic in dropsy, while in Punjab a decoction of the plant is given for gonorrhoea.

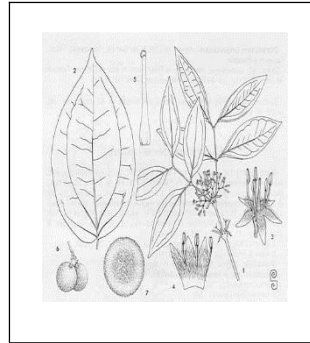


## **Strychnos potatorum**

Liniya, Zimia (Sinh.); Vadampiri, Valamburi, Valumberi, Valumpuri (Tam.)

**Distribution:** Occurs in India, Ceylon, Burma, Malaya, Java, Australia and West Indies. It is rather common in the low-country in Ceylon up to 2,000 feet altitude Matara, Colombo, Kurunegala, Yatiyantota, etc./ Mirigama, deSilva, Aug. 1923; Yatiyantota, Bulathkohupitiya Road, Simpson 9986, Aug. 1932; Without locality, Thwaites CP. 1137

**Uses:** The juice of the roots and fruits is administered internally for stomach ailments such as colic, griping and flatulence. The bark is used in diarrhoea and dysentery. In Jamaica, a decoction of the leaves is given for clysters

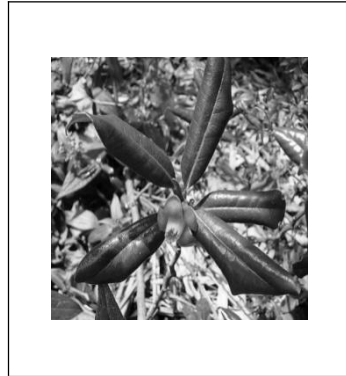


## **Symplocos loha**

Bandu-vada (Sinh.); Nagappu (Tam.)

**Distribution:** Occurs in India, Ceylon and Burma. It grows in the dry regions in Ceylon

**Composition:** Occurs in India, Ceylon and Buruma. It grows in the dry regions in Ceylon / In Ceylon - Northern Prov., Mannar District Giant's Tank; Central Prov., Peradeniya - Bot Gard.



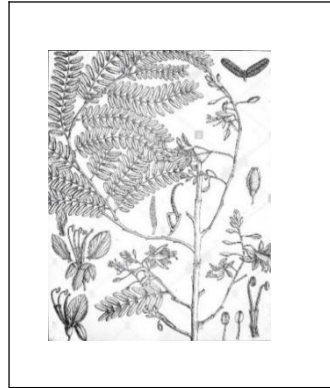
**Uses:** The flower of this tree mascerated with conjee water is applied for hemicrania. In Concan, the flowers and bark are charred and applied on suppurating smallpox ulcers

## **Tamarindus indica**

Velang (Sinh.); Sembolava, Sittilaipolavu, Todai, Vennagu (Tam.)

**Distribution:** Occurs in India and Ceylon. It is common in the low-country especially in the dry regions in Ceylon. Jaffna, Hanguranketa, Batticaloa, etc.

**Uses:** The flower of this tree mascerated with conjee water is applied for hemicrania. In Concan, the flowers and bark are charred and applied on suppurating smallpox ulcers.

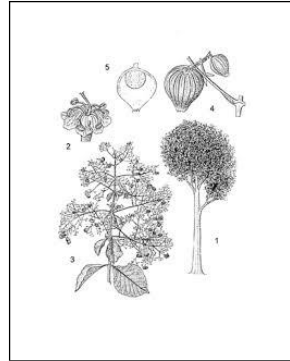


## **Tectona grandis**

Dadiya (Sinh.); Kavalam, Puttali, Sendalai, Sendanakku, Singapputtanaku, Tanakku, Vellaipputtali (Tam.)

**Distribution:** Occurs in India, Ceylon, Burma and Philippine Islands. It is rather rare in the dry low country in Ceylon. Haragama, Bintenne, Uma-oya, etc.

**Uses:** The gum exuded from the bark of this tree is a useful medicine for throat ailments. The leaves and tender branches are used for treating cattle suffering from pleuro-pneumonia. In the Philippines, the root bark is used as a poultice on ounds and fractures.



## **Tephrosia purpurea**

Bombu, Wal-bombu (Sinh.); Elumunukkai (Tam.)

**Distribution:** Occurs in India, Ceylon, Malaya, China and Japan. It is a very common tree from sea level to 7,000 feet altitude in Ceylon.

**Composition** A small tree with prominent leaf scars on the twigs and glabrous young parts; leaves simple, alternate, exstipulate, 7.5—15 cm long, oval or oval-anceolate, acute at base, acuminate, acute at apex, shallowly crenate-serrate, glabrous and shining, coriaceous, veins slender, pellucid petioles 0.6—1.2 cm long, stout, flat or furrowed above; flowers regular, bisexual, white, slightly scented, small, numerous, sessile or nearly so with 3 small bracts at base rather laxly arranged in simple or more usually branched, erect, glabrous or puberulous inflorescences 5—7.5 cm long



**Uses:** This tree is used in the treatment of phlegm. The bark is used externally for poulticing fractures, as it promotes the healing of bones

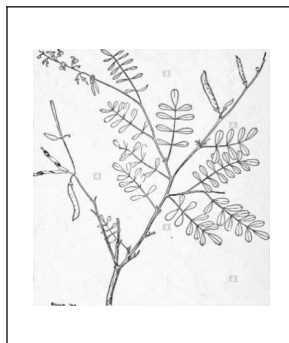
## **Tephrosia villosa**

Naha (Sinh.); Malaiviralan, Nachannar (Tam.)

**Distribution:** Occurs in India and Ceylon. It is rather common in open rocky places especially in the Uva Province in Ceylon

**Composition** A much branched bush 2—3.3 m high, twigs slender, erect, glabrous; leaves simple alternate, exstipulate, 5—7.5 cm long, linear or lanceolate-oblong, acute at base, acute or obtuse at apex and apiculate, entire, glabrous, thin, petioles very short; flowers regular bisexual, bright yellow, nearly sessile in erect, dense, terminal heads 2.5—3.7 cm wide surrounded at base by an involucre of large, imbricate, oval, acute, silky bracts

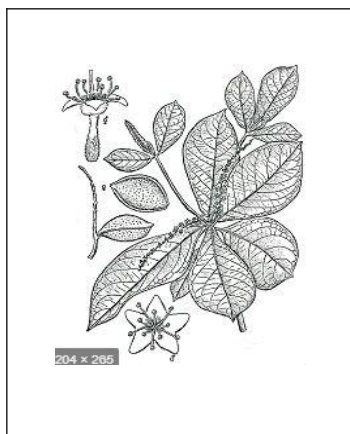
**Uses:** The leaves of this plant are mascerated and applied on contusions, swellings, etc. The bark is used as a fish poison



## **Terminalia catappa**

Patta-walla, Walla (Sinh.)

**Distribution:** Occurs in India and Ceylon. It is rather common in the moist regions up to 4,000 feet altitude in Ceylon. / Ceylon. Western Prov., Mirigama, Alston 675, June 1927; Hunuwala, J. M. Silva, April 1928. Southern Prov., Galle, Thwaites CP. 1828.



**Composition** A small tree with a slender erect trunk and a small rounded head, branchlets numerous, slender, erect, bark thin, smooth, reddish brown, buds silky; leaves simple, alternate, exstipulate, 3.7—10 cm long, oblong-lanceolate, acute at base, shortly acuminate, obtuse or subacute, entire with a very narrow hyaline edge, quite glabrous, slightly shining, lateral veins very fine and numerous, midrib prominent beneath, petioles very short;

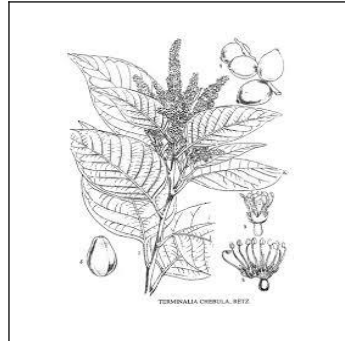
**Uses:** The tender leaves of this tree are used as a vermifuge. They are applied as a poultice on boils, fistula in ano and snakebites with beneficial results. The mascerated leaves when placed in tooth-cavities loosen the teeth. The plant is also used for preparation of medicinal oils. The bark of the tree is tough and is used for making ropes

## **Terminalia chebula**

Jaladara (Sinh.); Piratti-kirai (Tam.)

**Distribution:** Occurs in India, Ceylon and Malaya. It is found as a weed in the lowcountry in Ceylon.

**Composition** The seeds of this plant contain raffinose and the glucoside, corchorin, while the leaves contain another glucoside, capsularin.

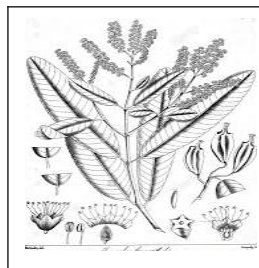


**Uses:** The leaves are demulcent, bitter, tonic, stomachic, laxative, carminative, refrigerant and diuretic. An infusion of the plant is given for fever. An infusion of the leaves with coriander is a popular domestic remedy for colic. The fibre of the stem is used for manufacture of sacking, paper-making and carpetmaking.

## **Termroalia arjuna**

Wal-munamal (Sinh.); Kodaittani (Tam.)

**Distribution:** Occurs in India, Ceylon, Java, Celebes and Philippine Islands. It is rather rare in the low-country in Ceylon between 1,000- and 3,000-feet altitude. Between Kurunegala and Matale, Gannoruwa, Deltota and Badulla



**Composition :** An unarmed evergreen tree, 10—13 m tall with glabrous, lenticellate branchlets and glabrous or sparsely adressed hairy young parts; leaves simple, alternate, stipulate, 7.5—12.5 cm long, oblong to ovate-lanceolate, acuminate or caudate, base rounded or acute, smooth, glabrous, shining, finely reticulated above, scaberulous beneath, veins 10—12 pairs, spreading, petioles 0.6—1.2 cm long, stipules connate sheathing the buds, lanceolate, hairy, caducous; flowers regular, unisexual, dioecious, apetalous, males in shortly peduncled cymes and females solitary and axillary; male flowers: minute, globose, sepals 5, fruit an ovoid drupe, 1.2—1.8 cm long, shortly beaked, glabrous and hardly compressed.

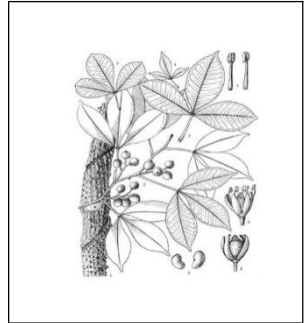
**Uses:** The bark is given internally for cutaneous diseases as it purifies the blood.

## **Toddalia asialica**

Dadakirilla, Godakirilla (Sinh.); Avali, Aya, Kanji, Tabasi, Vellaya (Tam.)

**Distribution:** Occurs in India, Ceylon, Burma and Cochm-China. It is common in the dry regions of Ceylon

**Composition:** Occurs in India, Ceylon, Burma and Cochm-China. It is common in the dry regions of Ceylon



**Uses:** The mucilaginous bark is boiled and the juice applied on rheumatic swellings. The bark is powdered and tied as a poultice

## **Torenia travancorica**

Sadu-duru, Suduru (Sinh.);  
Seerugam, Shiragam (Tam.)

**Distribution:** A native of the Mediterranean regions, now widely cultivated in India, China, U.S.A., Malta and Sicily

**Composition:** Cumin seeds contain a volatile oil which is composed of the hydrocarbon cymol, an oxygenated oil called cuminal, acymene and other terpenes. Cymol has a lemonlike odour, while cuminal is typical of cumin

**Uses:** Cumin seed is much used for flavouring curries in India and Ceylon. Medicinally, it is a stomachic, carminative and astringent. It is useful for dyspepsia, chronic diarrhoea and bilious nausea in pregnant women. It increases the secretion of milk when taken soon after childbirth.



## **Trachyspermum roxburghianum**

Perunkayam (Sinh.); Perungayam (Tam.)

**Distribution:** Occurs in India and Western Tibet. It is not cultivated in Ceylon

**Composition:** Asafoetida is composed of a volatile oil, resin and gum together with traces of malic acid, etc. The volatile oil is a mixture of sulphur compounds of the hydrocarbon C<sub>6</sub>H<sub>12</sub>, the resin containing ferulaic acid and umbelliferone, the resin and volatile oil are the active constituents of the drug.



**Uses:** The gum-resin is used extensively in India as a condiment. It is effective in flatulent colic and is used externally on ringworm. It is a powerful antispasmodic, expectorant, anthelmintic and a nervine stimulant, it is useful for asthma, dysentery, catarrh, hernia, whooping cough and angina pectoris. Its effect is remarkable in advanced stages of pneumonia and bronchitis in children. It is also used as a snake-bite cure. In certain parts of Baluchistan, the leaves are given for rheumatism and the seeds to expel worms in children. The seeds and leaves possess sudorific and carminative properties

## **Tragia involucrate**

Asamodagam (Sinh.); Ashamtagam, Ashamtavomam, Omam (Tam.)

**Distribution:** Cultivated in India, Ceylon and Malaya.

**Uses:** The seeds are useful for flatulence, hiccough colic, atonic dyspepsia, spasmodic ailments of the bowels, vomiting and pain in the bladder. A popular remedy for diarrhoea in children is an infusion of the powder made by roasting these seeds with seeds of *Holarrhena antidysenterica* (S. Kelinda). The root is regarded as a diuretic and prescribed for anasarca

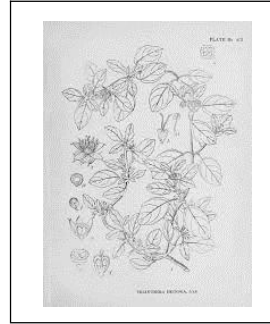


## **Trianthema decandra**

Iliā (Sinh.); Kattukkumil, Vettilaippattai (Tam.)

**Distribution:** Occurs in India, Ceylon and Malaya. It is very common in the moist regions up to 4,000 feet altitude in Ceylon

**Uses:** The bark and root of this tree are given in decoction to remove hepatic obstructions. The root is used for cutaneous ailments. In Malaya, this plant is considered a diuretic.

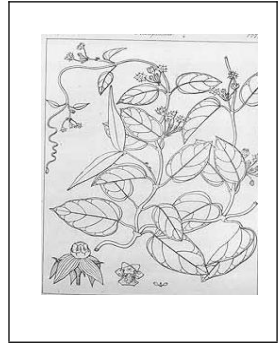


## **Tylophora flava**

Gaspinna (Sinh.); Karukanni, Perugilai, Vellaikkanni (Tam.)

**Distribution:** Occurs in India, Ceylon and Malaya. It is common in the moist regions of Ceylon up to 4,000 feet altitude Negombo, Galle, Kalutara, Bibile, etc.

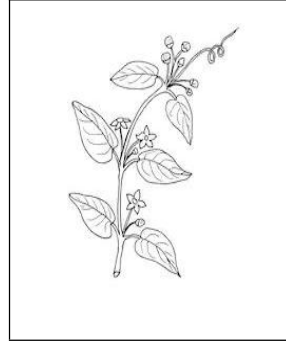
**Uses:** The leaves and roots of this plant are used externally for tumours and certain skin diseases. The fresh juice is given internally as a vermifuge and febrifuge in malarial fevers, especially in children.



## **Tylophora indica**

Et-demata (Sinh.); Arisa, Goomadee, Gumudu-takku, Kalarbadi, Kattanam, Kumil, Kumbal, Perungumil, Pulirgumil, Umitekku (Tam.)

**Distribution:** Occurs in India, Ceylon, Burma and Philippine Islands. It is rather common but often cultivated in the moist regions of Ceylon up to 5000 feet altitude



**Uses** The juice of the leaves of this tree is used to remove foetid discharges and worms from ulcers. A decoction of the roots and bark is given for fever and thirst and to increase the secretion of milk in women

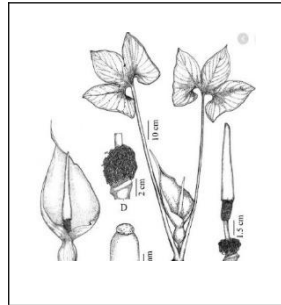
## **Typhonium trilobatum**

Siritekku (Sinh.); Bumisamba, Sirudekku (Tam.)

**Distribution** Occurs in India, Thailand, China and Philippine Islands. It is cultivated in Ceylon.

**Composition:** The roots of this plant contain traces of an alkaloid and an orange brown acid resin.

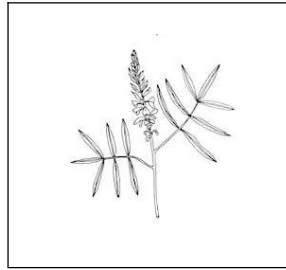
**Uses** A preparation from the root is given internally for rheumatism and dropsy. The juice of the root with juice of ginger and water is given for asthma, according to Hoatson. A medicinal oil prepared from the various parts of the plant is given for fever and body pains in pregnant women.



## **Uraria picta**

Mahamidi (Sinh.); Erumaimunnai, Munnai, Pasumunnai, Pachumullai (Tam.)

**Distribution:** Occurs in India, Ceylon and Burma. It is rather common in the dry regions of Ceylon. Trincomalee, Mannar, Sigiriya, Uma Oya, etc

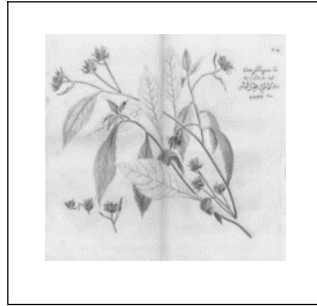


**Uses:** The leaves of this plant are diuretic and given internally as a decoction in dropsy and also applied externally. An infusion of the leaves with coriander is a popular remedy for acute dropsy. The latex of the plant is applied on boils.

## **Vernonia antbelmintica**

Thekka (Sinh.); Kalindi, Kumidigam, Sadi, Sagam, Sarasam, Tekku (Tam.)

**Distribution** Occurs in India, Malay Peninsula and Burma. It is cultivated in Ceylon for timber.



**Composition:** The leaves of this tree contain tannin, the heart-wood a resin, tecto-quinone, calcium carbonate, tricalcic orthophosphate, quartz, etc

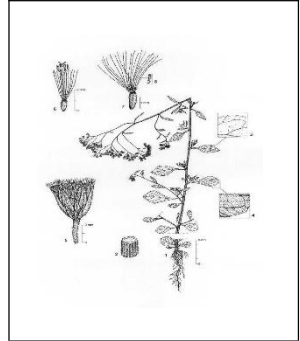
**Uses:** A decoction of the leaves is a remedy for haemoptysis and used as a gargle for sore throat. The powdered heartwood is beneficial for dyspepsia, acute dermatitis and as a vermifuge. The bark is astringent and the flowers and seeds diuretic. The oil extracted from the fruits is used to promote the growth of hair. It also soothes itching skin

## **Veroonia cinerea**

Nebedda (Sinh.); Kaddu-nochchi, Kattunochi, Nirnochi (Tam.)

**Distribution** Occurs in Madras in India and in Ceylon. It is common near tanks in the dry zone in Ceylon

**Uses:** The leaves of this tree are smoked for catarrh and headache. The roots are used for intermittent fevers and the fruit as an anthelmintic



## **Vetiveria zizanioides**

Nika, Nil-nika (Sinh.); Nirkkundi, Nochi  
Sinduvaram,  
Tiriburamerittan, Vennochch (Tam.)

**Distribution** Occurs in tropical East Africa, Madagascar, India, Ceylon, Malaya, Polynesia, and Philippine Islands. It is common by the edge of streams especially in the dry regions of the low-country in Ceylon



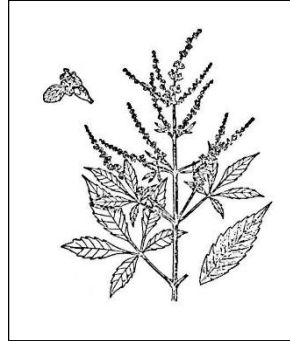
**Composition:** The leaves of this tree contain the alkaloid, nishindine, an essential oil and a resin, while the fruit contains an acid resin, an astringent organic acid and mallic acid

**Uses :**The leaves are used as a vulnerary. An oil prepared with the juice of the leaves is applied to sinuses and scrofulous sores with beneficial results. A decoction of the leaves is taken internally for flatulence. Externally, the leaves reduce inflammatory and rheumatic swellings in joints and swellings in the testes due to gonorrhoea. A pillow stuffed with the leaves is said to cure headache and catarrh. The leaves, roots and bark are used in snake-bite cures. The expressed fresh juice is given internally and poured into the nostrils for cases of stupor or coma. The bruised bark and leaves are applied on tarantula bites. The roots are used foe many ailments such as coughs, asthma, fever, etc., and on scrofulous ulcers. A tincture of the root is administered for irritation of the bladder and rheumatism.

## **Vitex negundo**

Sudunika (Sinh.); Karunochi, Niraochi, Nochi, Sirunochi (Tam.)

**Distribution** Occurs along the seashore in India, Ceylon, Malaya, Australia, Polynesia and Philippine Islands. It is rather common in the dry low-country by the sea coast in Ceylon



**Composition:** The leaves of this plant contain an alkaloid, an essential oil and a resin, while the fruit contains an acid resin, - an astringent organic acid and malic acid in addition to the alkaloid. The essential oil consists of I-d-pinene, camphene, terpinyl acetate and diterpene alcohol

**Uses:** The leaves are used as dry fomentation for sprains, contusions and rheumatism. An infusion of the leaves is given for intermittent fevers, rheumatism and enlargement of the spleen. The leaves are also used for treating cancer in the breast. The fruit is said to be nervine, cephalic and an emmenagogue

## **Vitex trifolia**

Ath-kaha, Kaha (Sinh.); Manjal (Tam.)

**Distribution:** A native of Southern Asia and now largely cultivated in India, Ceylon, China, Java and other tropical countries. It is grown in the mid and moist low-country in Ceylon.

**Composition:** The rhizomes of this herb contain fat, starch, camphor, resin, curcumin, a volatile oil, d-otphellandrene, carvone and cucumone

**Uses:** The dried rhizome is much used as a condiment and a yellow dye is made from it for dyeing robes of Buddhist priests. The fresh rhizome is crushed and applied externally on bruises, sprains, wounds and leech-bites. Internally, it is given as an anthelmintic and in disorders of the blood. It is administered for diarrhoea, dysentery, flatulence, dyspepsia, colic jaundice and amenorrhoea. Inhalation of the fumes of burning dry turmeric relieves colds in the head and catarrh. In Ceylon, a paste of it is applied on prurigo, urticaria, boils, sprains and bruises, and given internally for rheumatism, bronchial ailments and snake-bites. The rhizomes are roasted with *Vernonia zeylanica* and applied on eczema of the legs with beneficial results.



## **Vitex leucoxylo**

Ensal (Sinh.); Anji, Elam, Hangi, Iravadi, Kalindam, Korangi, Sukkumam Sittelam, Tadvairi, Tiraladi, Tudi, Turutti, Vedi (Tam.)

**Distribution** Occurs in southern India especially near the Malabar coast and frequently cultivated in Ceylon



**Composition** The seeds of this plant contain a volatile oil and starch

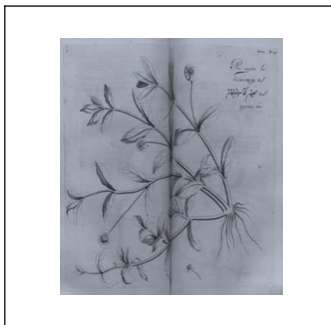
**Uses:** The fruit is an aromatic carminative, stimulant, stomachic, and emmenagogue. It is given internally for diseases of the liver and uterus and applied externally on tumours of the uterus. The seed is diuretic and used to relieve the retention of urine. It is administered to children to prevent excessive vomiting. In Cambodia, the root is used as a laxative and tonic. The seed of *Elettaria ensal* (Gaertn.) Abeywick., a common species growing in the forests of the moist regions of Ceylon, is also used medicinally for the same ailments

## **Wedelia chinensis**

Inguru, Sidhinguru (Sinh.); Allan, Arttiragam, Attiragam, Inji, Kulumamulam, Kodataram (Tam.)

**Distribution:** It is commonly grown in all vegetable gardens in Ceylon

**Composition:** The rhizome of this herb contains a pungent principle, mainly zingerone and shogaol, while the aroma is due to a volatile oil containing camphene, phellandrene, zingiberene, cineol and borneol. It also contains gingerol, a yellow pungent body, an oleoresin, gingerin, the active principle, and other resins and starch. Read adds the following constituents: singerone, zingiberol, citral, linalool, geraniol, chavicol, vanillyl alcohol, caprylic acid, methyl heptenon, pelargon-aldehyde and malate

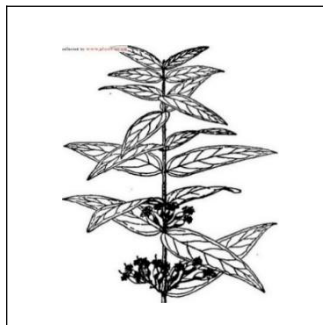


**Uses:** Ginger rhizomes are used both in the fresh and dry forms. They are stomachic, carminative, stimulant, diaphoretic, sialagogue and digestive. They are extremely valuable for dyspepsia, flatulence, colic, vomiting and other pains in the stomach and bowels. They are effective for colds, coughs and fevers. Dry ginger and coriander boiled in water is a universal remedy for colds and fevers. With black and long pepper, it is a specific for diarrhoea given with bees' honey. The expressed juice of the fresh rhizome given gradually in increasing doses is regarded as a diuretic for general dropsy. The juice with garlic and bees' honey is a favourite remedy for coughs and asthma. It is often used in the fresh form for flavouring curries, in sauces and cool drinks. Ginger preserve is an ingredient in cakes and other confectioneries.

## **Woodfordia fruticosa**

Hin-anoda, Sulu-bu-bebila, Wel-bevila (Sinh.); Arivalmandippundu, Chevakanpundu, Mayirmanikkam, Nilatutti (Tam.)

**Distribution:** Occurs as a weed in tropical and sub-tropical regions of India, Africa and Ceylon. It is a common weed in waste ground in the low-country in Ceylon, especially in the dry districts. Kantalai, Polonnaruwa, Galagama, Minneriya, Adam's Peak, etc.



**Composition:** This plant contains ephedrine in addition to fatty oil, phytosterol, mucins, potassium nitrate and resin acids. The seed has a high alkaloid content, chiefly ephedrine

**Uses:** The fresh leaves are bruised and applied on boils to promote suppuration. They are also cooked and eaten for bleeding piles. The juice of the entire plant is given with water for rheumatism, spermatorrhoea and gonorrhoea. It also has diuretic properties. An infusion of the roots is given for nervous and urinary diseases and for disorders in the blood and bile. It is also prescribed for asthma and as a cardiac tonic. The seeds are considered to possess aphrodisiacal properties and are given for colic, tenesmus, gonorrhoea and cystitis. In Africa, the plant is used as a remedy for children's diseases

## **Wrightia tomentosa**

Kotikan-bevila (Sinh.); Anaikurundotti, Kurundotti, Tenacham (Tam.)

**Distribution:** A weed growing in waste ground throughout the tropics. It is a roadside weed in Ceylon growing upto the montane zone

**Composition:** This plant contains the alkaloid ephedrine which is absent in the Australian variety.



**Uses:** Used for poulticing ulcers, boils, fractures and as skin application for chickenpox and itches. In Europe, it is regarded as a valuable remedy for pulmonary tuberculosis and rheumatism. A decoction of the roots is used as a mouthwash for toothache and taken internally for high fever, abdominal ailments, irregular menses and rheumatism. In Borneo and Central Africa, it is used as an abortifacient. The leaf is also applied as a poultice on inflammations. In Vietnam, the plant is used as a purgative. It is also a source of fibre.

## **Xanthium srrumarhim**

Heen-bowitiya, Kuruvina (Sinh.); Kathtoo mukhtohulai, Mahthulai (Tam.)

**Distribution:** Common in the moist mid and low-country upto 5,000 feet altitude in Ceylon. It also occurs in South India.

**Uses** The tender leaves of this plant made into a curry and the mature leaves made into a salad taken plentifully with both meals for 5—7 days is known to cure diabetes. The leaves taken as a gruel early in the morning for a week, cures haemorrhoids. The leaves and roots are given in the form of a decoction for hepatitis



## **Zanthoxylum tetraspermum**

Binkohomba (Sinh.)

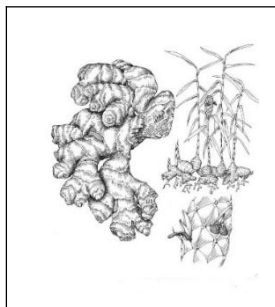
**Distribution:** An endemic species, common but not abundant, growing in rocky places in the low-country. Sigiriya Ritigala, Maturata, Balangoda, Lunugala Wellawaya, Botale, etc.



**Uses:** A decoction of this plant is an excellent bitter tonic often used as a substitute for Chiretta (*Swertia chirata* Buch.). It is given for fever, dysentery and purification of blood

## **Zingiber officinale**

Herali, Kos, Waraka, Wela (Sinh.);  
Murasabalam, Pagal, Pala, Palasu, Palavu,  
Panasam, Pila, Sira, Tagar, Vasukkai,  
Verphala (Tam.)



**Distribution:** A native of Western Ghats in India and now cultivated in most tropical countries including Ceylon, where it flourishes in the moist mid and low-country.

**Composition** The fruit of this tree contains a high carbohydrate content but is deficient in calcium and iron. The seeds are rich in starch. The wood contains morin and a crystalline compound, cyanomaclurin which has been found to contain the phloroglucinol group probably isomeric with catechins and piperonal, an essential oil. The pulp of the fruit is rich in vitamin C.

**Uses:** The fruit is eaten in various forms. The rich yellow flesh (aril) surrounding the seeds is sweet and aromatic when ripe and eaten raw. Before the arils ripen, they are boiled with the seeds and eaten with scraped coconut as a meal. The seeds are roasted and made into sweetmeats. The tender leaves minced fine and roasted with scraped coconut is a specific for insomnia, while the juice of the tender fruit with coconut milk and jaggery is a miraculous antidote for narcotic poisoning. The leaves are used in skin diseases and the root for diarrhoea and fever. The roots are also used for skin diseases and as an antiasthmatic. The milky juice mixed with vinegar is applied on swellings and abscesses.

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## About the Author



Dr. Fareena Ruzaik is Senior Lecturer of the Dept. of Geography, University of Colombo, possessing great knowledge and experience in the field of environment. She has a great exposure in teaching multiple courses in relation to medical geography and environmental health management.

At present, she is the Secretary of the Ethics Review Committee for Social Sciences and Humanities (ERCSSH), Faculty of Arts, UoC. and a member of the Board of Directors, Centre for Development Research and Intervention (CDRI).

‘**Medicinal Plants in Sri Lanka**’ is the third publication of Dr. Fareena and this book is an exquisite guide for assessing the potential medicinal values of specific medicinal species, available in Sri Lanka. It is a great source of knowledge for learners (undergraduate and postgraduate), traditional medicinal consumers and researchers. This book contains detailed information regarding 294 medicinal plants traditionally used in Sri Lanka together with their distribution, composition and benefits/uses. The descriptions each plant includes with photos, botanical name, synonyms, common name (Sinhala & Tamil), and its benefits.

I appreciate Dr. F. Ruzaik for her valuable effort in this nature.

I wish her great success in all her future endeavors!

**Senior Prof. Lasantha Manawadu**

Dean, Faculty of Arts  
University of Colombo

Colombo-03.

15<sup>th</sup> February 2021