



**Full Length Research Article**

**MEDICINAL PLANTS USED AGAINST JAUNDICE IN THOVALAI TALUK,  
KANYAKUMARI DISTRICT, TAMIL NADU**

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**ABSTRACT**

Kanyakumari District consists of four taluks Agasteeswaram, Kalkulam, Thovalai and Vilavancode. People of this taluk traditionally are co-existing with their native environment and depend on plants and plant products for health and treatment of diseases. Jaundice is the commonest ailments affecting the citizens. An ethnobotanical survey of Plants used by the traditional healers for the treatment of Jaundice was conducted in the Thovalaitaluk. A total of 30 plants belonging to 29 genera and 21 families have been documented for their therapeutic use against jaundice. The study indicates that the local inhabitants rely on medicinal plants for treatment. This paper suggests that further clinical experimentation is needed to scientifically evaluate these widely used herbal remedies for possible bioactive effects.

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**INTRODUCTION**

Nature has blessed us with enormous wealth of medicinal plants which are widely distributed all over the world as a source of therapeutic agents for the prevention and cure of various diseases. This is attracting the attention of several botanists and plant scientists who directing vigorous researches towards the discovery or rediscovery of several medicinal remedies for various diseases. Several workers Bhattacharya and Goel (1981) and Manikandan et al., (2009) were reported the utility of plants for the treatment of jaundice. Jaundice can indicate liver or gall bladder disorders. Jaundice can also result from excessive breakdown of red blood cells and too much bilirubin is released in to the blood stream. The Present study is aimed to focus the medicinal plants which are used in the treatment of Jaundice in Thovalaitaluk, Kanyakumari District.

**MATERIALS AND METHODS**

**Study Area – Thovalai Taluk:** Thovalai Taluk is bounded on the north by the western ghats, on the east by Tirunelveli District, on the South by Agasteeswaram taluk and in the west by Vilavancodu and Kalkulam taluks (Fig.1).

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**Methodology**

Medicinal plants were recorded through interviews, discussion and field observation with herbal healers and knowledgeable experienced people of the study area using a semi-structured questionnaire.

The information about plants and their local name, parts used for preparation of drug, mode of administration and specific comments were documented in the field survey. The medicinal use of species was cross checked through the literature available. Plant specimens were identified using Gamble (1935).

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

The Present study revealed the traditional healers of Thovalaitaluk, Kanyakumari District 30 plant species belonging to 21 families, were studied. Biological names, families, local names, and mode administrations of the plants are presented in Table 1.

Different types of preparation made from medicinally important plants included decoction, extract and powder. Plant samples along with the dosages and combination with other plants were also provided.

Table 1. Plant species identified against jaundice from Thovalai Taluk

	Botanical Name	Family Name	Local Name	Mode of Administration
1.	Acacia concinna, Dc.	Leguminosae	Sigaikai	To take care of Jaundice, make a decoction with the tender leaves, add 3 or 4 dry peppercorns, a bit of tamarind pulp and a small pinch of redchilli and salt. The decoction can be taken after meals.
2.	Aeglemarmelos, roxb.	Rutaceae	Vilvam	A blend of juice prepared from 5 g of the fresh leaves along with 5 g of the fresh leaves of Eclipta prostrate is taken with honey twice a day.
3.	Agave Americana, L.	Agavaceae	Aanaikathalai	One table spoon sap of the plant can be used.
4.	Andragraphis lineate, wall.	Acanthaceae	Periyanangai	10 g root paste mix with milk
5.	Argemone Mexicana, L.	Papaveraceae	Kudiyeotti	The yellow juice or latex is recommended
6.	Arachishypogaea, L.	Leguminosae	Verkadalai	Eating of raw peanut has cured them of Jaundice.
7.	Asteracanthalongifolia Ness.	Acanthaceae	Neremulli	50 ml of decoction of the leaves taken twice a day.
8.	Azadirachtaindica, A. Juss.	Meliaceae	Vempu	20 ml of tender leaves decoction taken.
9.	Boerhaavia Diffusa, L.	Nyctaginaceae	Mukkurattai	One teaspoon of the leaf paste is taken with twice a day for period of one week.
10.	Cajanuscajan, L.	Fabaceae	Thuvarai	30 ml of the salted boiled water extract of the fresh leaves is taken in empty stomach for a period of 2 weeks.
11.	Cassia fistula, L.	Caesalpiniaceae	Konnei	One teaspoon of leaf and flower powder is taken with a glass of cow's milk once a day.
12.	Citrus limon, L.	Rutaceae	PeriyaYelumichiai	Mix half a cup of lemon juice with half a glass of water. Add a tablespoon of honey. Take a glass before breakfast and another at mid-afternoon.
13.	Cocciniaindica, wt. Arn.	Cucurbitaceae	kovai	Make a decoction of the flowers and drink 3-6 cups daily.
14.	Coleus aromaticus, Benth.	Lamiaceae	Kurpurvalli	The juice of the leaves is recommended.
15.	Cuscutareflexa, Roxb.	Convolvulaceae	Kodiyagundal	50 ml of decoction of the plant is taken.
16.	Cynodondactylon, Pers.	Poaceae	Arugam-pullu	20 ml of whole plant extract given oral.
17.	Cyperusrotundus, L.	Cyperaceae	Koraikilangu	Crushed tubers with water and given oral.
18.	Eclipta alba, L.	Gramineae	Karisilankanni	The leaves boiled in hot water combined with extracts of Leucasaspera (Thumbai) and phyllanthusamarus (kelanelli) is taken with buttermilk twice a day for a period of one week.
19.	Euphorbia tirucalli, L.	Euphorbiaceae	Tirukalli	20 ml of the salted stem extract is taken.
20.	Glycosmispentaphylla, L.	Rutaceae	Kulaparai	One teaspoon of the leaf powder is taken with honey twice a day.
21.	Indigoferatinctoria, L.	Fabaceae	Kottavurineeli	The leaf infusion in goat's milk is taken in the early morning.
22.	Latanacamara, L.	Verbenaceae	Arippu	The 50 g flowering top in decoction are used.
23.	Lawsoniainermis, L.	Lythraceae	Marithondi	Soak 2 to 5 tablespoons of the powdered root in a 2 litre container of water and drink from it frequently.
24.	Leucasaspera, Spreng.	Lamiaceae	Thumbai	Pasted leaf is applied on head.
25.	Menthaspicata, L.	Lamiaceae	pudina	The consumption of 10 g of mint leaves.
26.	Momordicacharantia, L.	Cucurbitaceae	Pakal	Dried fruit pieces are powdered and given with normal diet.
27.	Mussaendaglabrata, Hutch.	Rubiaceae	Vellaiyilai	100 g of leaves decoction mixed with milk is given.
28.	Musa paradisiacal, L.	Musaceae	vazhai	Interior stem portion is dried and powdered. Powder is given with honey.
29.	Phyllanthusamarus, L.	Euphorbiaceae	Keelanelli	30 ml of the extract obtained by squeezing some tender leaves together with few tender leaves of Eclipta prostrate and Leucasaspera is taken with cow's milk twice a day for a period of 2 weeks.
30.	Phyllanthusemblica, L.	Euphorbiaceae	AmalagamNelli	Decoction of dried fruits and few dried leaves of Ponnankannikeerai, and few cardamom in 200 ml of diluted cow's milk is taken twice a day.



Fig.1.Kanyakumari District mapshowing Study Area

### Conclusion

The study reveals that medicinal plants still play a vital role in the primary health care of this taluk. The use of herbal medicine in the treatment of liver disorder has been a tradition from long back. It is said that interest in medicinal plant is increasing as an alternative to modern medicine. Therefore, there is an urgent need for conservation of this valuable treasure.

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