

FOREST PLANTS OF THE NILGIRIS

SOUTHERN NILGIRI BIOSPHERE RESERVE

A Pictorial Field Guide



KEYSTONE FOUNDATION

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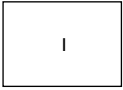
Southern Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve
A Pictorial Field Guide

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Front Cover



1. *Vanilla walkeriae*
2. *Capparis nilgiriensis*
3. *Ceropegia juncea*
4. *Gymnosporia heyneana*
5. *Byttneria herbacea*

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FOREWORD

The southern part of the Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve has a wide variation of flora ranging from the dry deciduous, riparian forest and grassland. The third in a five part series, this field guide covers the dominant plants of this zone. Keystone Foundation initiated the current line of work in 2002 with collecting seeds of forest species – both for raising nurseries and gathering information on flora of the region. This was done with indigenous people of each region, which enabled us to learn several ecological aspects of a plant besides identifying it. The presence of botanists in the team has served to complement this field information. Unlike the first volume of the eastern NBR, which had paintings of plants by indigenous artists – this volume relies on photographs only. We hope this volume will give an insight into the forests of the southern region made interesting by colourful plates and information with a difference.

The team at Keystone Foundation which has worked on this volume comprises Dr. L Rasingam for the content and photographs. Mathew John, Anita Varghese and Shiny Mariam Rehel for their contributions during editing. Contributions to indigenous information were made by Smt. Rangammal, Smt. Chitta, Smt. Vijaiya, Smt. Nanjamma, Smt. Lakshmi, Smt. Nagamma and Nanjan, Vellaiangiri from the villages of Gedaikadu, Korapathi, Kodiyur, Kilpillur, Annaipalam, Sittugunni, Poochamarathur, Nellimarathur, Baralikadu, Kadamancombai and Mel Pillur. The contribution of Smt. Kavitha, Thiru. Selvan and Dr. Vallaiyan, who are part of a team which works on community based ecological monitoring, is also acknowledged.

We would like to thank our reviewers, Dr. PLakshminarasimhan, Scientist D, Botanical Survey of India, Central National Herbarium, Howrah and Dr. D. Narashimhan, Madras Christian College, Chennai and Madhu Ramnath – who have painstakingly gone through the drafts, giving comments and editing both the content and the text.

We would like to thank Dr. R.V. Sanjay Molur of Zoo outreach, Coimbatore, for providing the IUCN Redlist icon.

We gratefully acknowledge the financial support from the Eco System Alliance and Both Ends for the publication.

Keystone Foundation
Kotagiri

List of Abbreviations

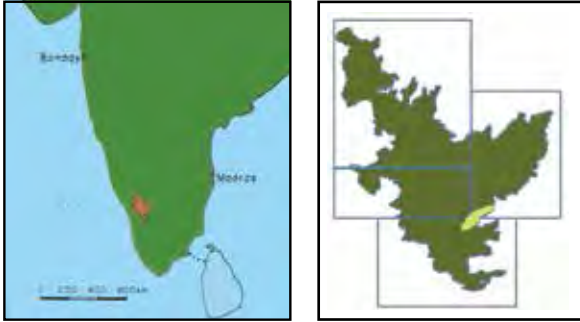
L. Ap	:	Leaf Apex
L. Ar	:	Leaf Arrangement
L. Ba	:	Leaf base
L. Ma	:	Leaf Margin
L. Sh	:	Leaf Shape
L. Ty	:	Leaf Type
En	:	English
Ir	:	Irula
Ta	:	Tamil
Ka	:	Kannada
Ma	:	Malayalam
Hi	:	Hindi

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INTRODUCTION

'Forest plants of the Nilgiris – Southern Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve' is the third in a series of publications about the flora of this region. The first volume is an illustrated field guide to the Forest plants of the Nilgiris – Eastern Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve; while the second volume is a pictorial field guide to the Forest Plants of the Nilgiris-Northern Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve. These books are an effort at increasing interest in wild and native plants amongst non specialists. . The Southern Nilgiri Biosphere



Reserve hosts a variety of habitats, ranging from dry deciduous to grasslands to riparian forest types. (Fig. 1) and is one of the lesser known regions of the reserve. Plants of the Pillur region are mainly recorded in this publication.

Information about the plants of Pillur was collected over several years of field work related to forest products, wild bee foraging plants, edible wild plants, ecological monitoring by local people and other ecological studies conducted by Keystone Foundation.

The adivasi people of Pillur Valley viz. the Irula, have been our partners in this undertaking. They use the vegetative features of a plant, especially the bark and leaf, for identification. This book attempts to focus on such 'all-season' features and to build on crucial linkages between plants and habitat, by the adivasi people. The basic botanical information given complements this aspect of the book, collated from several authoritative floras of the region.

Leaves have been given prime importance, with details of their arrangement, shapes, bases, apices and margin collectively used in identification. The leaf icons at the end of the page were drawn from the leaf-based 'Field Key to the Trees and Lianas of the Evergreen Forests of the Western Ghats (India)' by J.P.Pascal and B.R. Ramesh of the French Institute of Pondicherry and An Excursion Flora of Central Tamil Nadu, India by K. M. Matthew of Rapinat Herbarium, Trichy.

A total of 339 plant species have been documented in the book. The plants are arranged according to their habit as Trees ●, Lianas & Climbers ●, Shrubs ●, Herbs ● and Epiphytes & Parasites, with a color code for easy reference.

In every plate mention is made of the bee activity that was observed on the plant and represented by the following icon . The threat status for plant species mentioned in the plate is categorized as per IUCN Redlists accessed from the following website www.iucnredlist.org.

The section on flower and fruit describes the most obvious characteristics about them, especially the color, fragrance, shape and number of seeds. The seasons for each are indicated despite possibilities of slight variations between different locations.

Field tips contain additional information that was considered as important distinguishing characters of the plant. Miscellaneous information is a collation of interesting facts that were gleaned from multiple (field and literary) sources.

The photographs accompanying the text show a picture of the seed; picture of the bark, the stance of the plant, a prominent flower, fruit or leaf has been given.

The information with regard to habitat is based on field observation and distribution from literary sources. Indigenous Information was collated through conducting small group discussions encouraging local people to participate and share their knowledge of their landscape with each other. A few of the elders of Pillur Valley were very keen to share their information and ensure that it is documented. It must be mentioned here that the book describes plant use as narrated by the local adivasi people; the herbal prescriptions are taken in faith, without the contemporary scientific analysis. A major concern of ours is the sustainability of traditional knowledge. With changing cultural and livelihood trends, there is a good possibility that traditional knowledge of the environment could be lost, without active participation from current generations. This book is an appreciation of the immense knowledge the indigenous people has of their environment, and an attempt to revive and sustain an interest in the younger generations about their environment.

When the information with regard to field tips, miscellaneous or indigenous information was not available they have been omitted from the plate.

There are special pages on certain characteristic of Pillur valley. Special page A deals with the vegetation types. Special page B is about the indigenous people of the valley. Special page C is about the edible tubers, rhizomes and young shoots from the forest. Special page D is about the uncultivated leafy green vegetables. Finally Special page E is about uncultivated fruit found in the region.

A glossary of botanical terms used has been provided which have definitions for these terms. A list of vernacular names used by the Irula peoples of the Pillur Valley, are also indexed and can be used as a possible 'first lead' to a plant.

Through this book and the special focus pages that deal with local knowledge about plants we hope the reader carries a sense of the richness of this local knowledge and of the ecosystem that nurtures it.

Editors

Plate A. Leaf Arrangements



1. Alternate distichous



2. Alternate Spiral



3. Clustered



4. Opposite



5. Opposite decussate



6. Sub-opposite



7. Whorled

Plate B. Leaf Types



1. Simple



2. Bifoliate



3. Palmately trifoliate



4. Pinnately trifoliate



5. Digitate



6. Paripinnate



7. Imparipinnate



8. Bipinnate

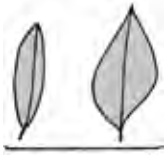


9. Tripinnate



10. Trifoliate

Plate C. Leaf Shapes



1. Asymmetric



2. Falcate



3. Pandurate



4. Rhomboid



5. Oblong



6. Elliptic



7. Ovate



8. Lanceolate



9. Obovate



10. Oblanceolate



11. Cuneiform



12. Ensiform



13. Hastate



14. Linear



15. Orbicular



16. Oval



17. Panduriform



18. Sagittate



19. Spathulate



20. Cordate



21. Deltoid



22. Reniform



23. Lacerate



24. Obcordate

Plate D. Leaf Apices



1. Acuminate



2. Acute



3. Caudate



4. Emarginate



5. Obtuse



6. Retuse



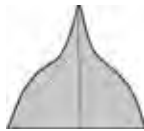
7. Rounded



8. Truncate



9. Sub acute



10. Cuspidate



11. Mucronate



12. Aristate



13. Long Acuminate



14. Apiculate

Plate E. Leaf Bases



1. Attenuate



2. Auriculate



3. Cordate



4. Rounded



5. Cuneate



6. Oblique



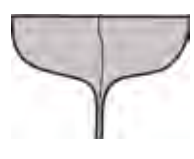
7. Peltate



8. Decurrent



9. Sheathing



10. Truncate



11. Obtuse



12. Acute

Plate F. Leaf Margins



1. Entire



2. Ciliate



3. Dentate



4. Denticulate



5. Crenate



6. Crenulate



7. Serrate



8. Serrulate



9. Lobed



10. Palmately lobed



11. Lacinate



12. Undulate



13. Incised



14. Sinuate



15. Pinnatifid

VEGETATION OF PILLUR VALLEY

Pillur valley is located in Mettupalayam taluk of Coimbatore district in the southeastern part of the Nilgiris Biosphere Reserve. It is bounded by the Sathyamangalam and Nilgiris divisions on the north and northeast and the Palghat division of Kerala in the south and south west. The elevations range from 0 to 700m and the region receives rain from the northeast monsoon. The annual average rainfall ranges from 1000 to 1400mm. The major forest types of Pillur are

1. Dry deciduous
2. Riparian forests
3. Grasslands

DRY DECIDUOUS

Dry deciduous are dominant and unique to this area, occupying more than 75% of the forest cover. The trees are of medium to large sized. The leaf fall starts by December-January, new leaves start to appear soon after the pre-monsoon showers in May-June. The dominant species are *Hardwickia binata*, *Psydrax dicoccos* and *Gyrocarpus americanus*. Common shrubs and subshrubs are *Tarenna asiatica*, *Abutilon ramosum* and *Acalypha fruticosa*. Climbers like *Scutia myrtina*, *Ipomoea staphylina*, *Ziziphus oenoplia*, *Acacia pennata*, *Cansjera rheedii* are widespread in the forests.



RIPARIAN FORESTS

The riparian forests are distributed along the banks of river Bhavani which flows through the valley. The vegetation is mainly of tall trees with lianas. The common plant species recorded here are *Terminalia arjuna*, *Mangifera indica*, *Hopea ponga* and *Hydnocarpus pentandra*. *Homonoia riparia*, *Clerodendrum infortunatum*, *Debregeasia velutina*, *Glycosmis pentaphylla* and *Hibiscus furcatus* are some shrubby species in the understory. *Anamirta cocculus*, *Acacia caesia*, *Caesalpinia bonduc* and *Cissus pallida* are some of the common climbers of this area.



GRASSLANDS

There are stretches of grasslands on the open slopes of the northern portion of the area intermingled with many rocky slopes, which harbour many annuals during the rainy season. The grasslands are mostly occupied by few tree species such as *Phyllanthus emblica*, *P. indofisherii*, *Ziziphus rugosa*, *Pterocarpus marsupium*, *Terminalia chebula*, *Cycas circinalis* and *Cordia obliqua*. The understory is dominated by the *Cymbopogon caesius*, *C. colaratus*, *Byttneria herbacea*, *Phoenix loureiroi*, *Euphorbia cristata* etc.



Acacia chundra (Rottler) Willd.

MIMOSACEAE

Red Cutch; Red Ebony -En

Kagalie -Ir

Karangaali -Ta



HABIT: A large deciduous tree.

L.Ar.

FLOWER: In axillary spikes; greenish-white. Flowering from April-August.



Alternate-spiral

FRUIT: A stipitate pod, flat, thin, strongly nerved, apically horned; seeds 6, ovoid. Fruiting September onwards.

FIELD TIPS: Bark rusty brown. Rachis sulcate with glands at the basal and the two upper most pinnae.

L.Ty.

MISCELLANEOUS: Wood is very hard; used for agricultural implements, rice pounders and as fuelwood.

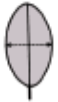


Bipinnate

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Not common in the deciduous forests from plains to 750m. Peninsular India, Sri Lanka and Myanmar.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: The bark is used in medicinal preparation to cure diarrhoea. Wood used for construction.

L.Sh.



Elliptic

L.Ap.



Subacute

L.Ba.



Oblique

L.Ma.



Entire



Acacia leucophloea (Roxb.) Willd.

MIMOSACEAE

White Barked Acacia; Distiller's Acacia -En

Velvela maram -lr

Velvelam -Ta; Nimbar, Safed babul -Hi

HABIT: A moderate-sized tree.

FLOWER: Two to three in clusters of terminal panicles; cream to yellow. Flowering from August-September.

FRUIT: A sessile, flat, elongate pod, rusty tomentose; seeds 10, ovoid, angular. Fruiting from October-February.

FIELD TIPS: Bark white and smooth, branchlets with globose galls.

MISCELLANEOUS: The bark is used in distilling and is a source of good rough fibre. Branchlets are used for fuel. Bark is used widely in herbal preparations.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common in the deciduous forests from plains to 1000m. India, Sri Lanka, Myanmar and Malaysia.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: The powdered bark is applied as a cure for open wounds. The fibrous bark is tied to the leg of cattle to heal bone fractures. The bark extract is taken to cure stomach ache.



L.Ar.



Alternate/
clustered

L.Ty.



Bipinnate

L.Sh.



Elliptic

L.Ap.



Aubacut

L.Ba.



Oblique

L.Ma.



Ciliate

Acacia nilotica (L.) Delile

MIMOSACEAE

Gum Arabic Tree -En

Karuvelam -Ta; Babul -Hi

HABIT: A moderate-sized, thorny tree.

FLOWER: Solitary globose heads; golden yellow. Flowering from August-October.

FRUIT: A moniliform pod, stipitate, constricted, apex horned; seeds 13. Fruiting October onwards.

FIELD TIPS: Rachis with many glands. Stipular thorns very long and straight.

MISCELLANEOUS: The gum extracted from the pod is used for making inks and dyes.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common in arable lands and scrub jungles from plains to 300m. Tropical Africa, Asia, Australia and America.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: Wood is very hard, durable and preferred for agricultural implements. Cattle feed on the fruits.

L.Ar.



Alternate-spiral

L.Ty.



Bipinnate

L.Sh.



Elliptic

L.Ap.



Rounded

L.Ba.



Oblique-obtuse

L.Ma.



Entire



Acacia polyacantha Willd.

MIMOSACEAE

Uthalai maram -Ir

Kovalai mullu maram -Ta

HABIT: A large deciduous tree.

FLOWER: In axillary spikes, solitary or paired; yellowish-white. Flowering from August-October.

FRUIT: A stipitate pod, oblong, grey, woody, prominently nerved; seeds 5-8. Fruiting throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: Stem with short stipular thorns.

MISCELLANEOUS: Wood very hard and used for making agricultural implements. The root extract is used as a cure for snakebites. The roots emit chemical compounds that repel animals like rats, snakes and crocodiles.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common along the forest edges in deciduous forests from plains to 800m. Peninsular India and Sri Lanka.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: Branchlets used for fuelwood.



L.Ar.



Alternate-spiral

L.Ty.



Bipinnate

L.Sh.



Elliptic

L.Ap.



Subacute-obtuse

L.Ba.



Truncate

L.Ma.



Entire-ciliate

Ailanthus excelsa Roxb.

SIMAROUBACEAE

Tree of Heaven -En

Peevari maram -Ir

Perumaram, Pee maram -Ta; Maharukh -Hi

HABIT: A lofty deciduous tree.

FLOWER: In axillary or terminal panicles; greenish-yellow. Flowering from January-March.

FRUIT: An oblong samara, prominently nerved, membranous, seed 1. Fruiting March onwards.

FIELD TIPS: Bark rough, branchlets with permanent leaf scars.

MISCELLANEOUS: Wood is very soft and used for building catamarans match sticks and boxes. Leaves and bark used in medicinal preparations.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Not common in the deciduous forests from plains to 1000m. India and Sri Lanka.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: Bark used in veterinary medicine.

L.Ar.



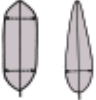
Subopposite

L.Ty.



Imparipinnate

L.Sh.



Oblong-lanceolate

L.Ap.



Acuminate

L.Ba.



Oblique

L.Ma.

Irregularly toothed-sublobate



Albizia amara (Roxb.) Boivin

MIMOSACEAE

Bitter Albizia; Wheel Tree -En

Arapu unja maram; Banni maram; Vanni -lr

Wunja, Usilai -Ta; Varacchi -Ma

HABIT: A large deciduous tree.

FLOWER: In heads of axillary clusters or in racemes; pinkish-white. Flowering from March-May.

FRUIT: A straight, flat, compressed pod, wavy along margin; seeds more than 10, ovoid. Fruiting June onwards.

FIELD TIPS: Leaflets are very minute. Young shoots yellow pubescent. Petiole and rachis with globose glands.

MISCELLANEOUS: The wood is very hard and strong, used in construction and agricultural implements.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common tree in the deciduous forests from foot hills to 900m. India, Sri Lanka and East Africa.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: Leaves used for fodder. The young leaves are dried, powdered and used as a substitute for soap or shampoo.



L.Ar.



Alternate-spiral

L.Ty.



Paripinnate

L.Sh.



Elliptic

L.Ap.



Obtuse

L.Ba.



Subacute

L.Ma.



Sparsely
ciliate

Albizia lebeck (L.) Benth.

MIMOSACEAE

East Indian Walnut -En

Vaagai -Ir

Vaagai -Ta; Vaga -Ma; Siris -Hi



HABIT: A large deciduous tree with spreading crown.

L.Ar.



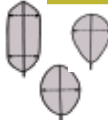
Alternate-distichous

L.Ty.



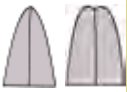
Bipinnate

L.Sh.



Oblong-elliptic or obovate

L.Ap.



Obtuse-retuse-apiculate

L.Ba.



Oblique-obtuse

L.Ma.



Entire

FLOWER: Solitary or in axillary umbellate clusters; greenish-white; fragrant. Flowering from February-April.

FRUIT: A flat, compressed yellow pod, wavy along margin, strongly nerved; seeds 10 or more. Fruiting April onwards.

FIELD TIPS: Bark brownish-grey. Petiole eglandular, rachis with glands opposite to uppermost pinnae.

MISCELLANEOUS: Wood hard and useful for construction, furniture and agricultural implements. The bark is used as a medicine to treat inflammation.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common tree in the deciduous tracts from plains to 1200m, often planted as an avenue tree. India, Sri Lanka, S.E.Asia and S.China.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: The stem is used in rituals and also fuel wood.



Alphonsea sclerocarpa Thwaites
ANNONACEAE

Karugkarumbai maram -lr

HABIT: A small evergreen tree.

FLOWER: In leaf-opposed cymes or extra-axillary; greenish-yellow. Flowering from March-May.

FRUIT: A globose monocarp, 3-5 in a cluster, stalked. Fruiting April onwards.

FIELD TIPS: Leaves shining above. Carpels mucicate.

MISCELLANEOUS: The bark contains high amount of alkaloids.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common along the stream banks and deciduous forests from plains to 1000m. Peninsular India and Sri Lanka.



L.Ar.



Alternate-distichous

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Lanceolate

L.Ap.



Acute

L.Ba.



Obtuse-cuneate

L.Ma.



Entire

Alseodaphne semecarpifolia Nees var.
angustifolia Meisn.

LAURACEAE

Ponnae maram -lr

Thumbaraa, Karinjikkada, Manjaya mulaamaram -Ta

HABIT: A medium sized evergreen tree.

FLOWER: In terminal or subterminal panicles; greenish-yellow. Flowering from March-April.

FRUIT: An ellipsoid berry, green when young, later dark blue; seed oblong-globular. Fruiting throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: Bark yellowish-brown with numerous lenticels. Leaves glaucous beneath, aromatic when crushed. Peduncle of the fruits enlarged and red coloured.

MISCELLANEOUS: Wood is moderately hard and used for making agricultural implements.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Common and locally abundant in the deciduous and semi-evergreen forests. Peninsular India and Sri Lanka.

L.Ar.



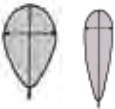
Alternate or clustered

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



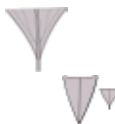
Obovate-oblong

L.Ap.



Acute

L.Ba.



Acute-cuneate

L.Ma.



Entire



Anogeissus latifolia (Roxb. ex DC.) Wall. ex Guill. & Perr.

COMBRETACEAE

Axle wood -En

Vejjai; Vellainagamaram -lr

Vekkaali, Vellainagai -Ta; Marukanchiram -Ma; Bakli -Hi

HABIT: A large deciduous tree.

FLOWER: In axillary, aggregated cymose heads; yellow. Flowering from April-July.

FRUIT: Packed in dense heads, compressed, 2-winged; seed 1. Fruiting August onwards.

FIELD TIPS: Bark grey, smooth. Leaves turning red before falling. Petals absent.

MISCELLANEOUS: Wood very hard and strong and used for agricultural implements, carts, construction and fuel. The gum and leaves are used in tanning.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: A very common tree in the deciduous forests from plains to 1100m. India, Sri Lanka and Pakistan.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: Branchlets are used as fuelwood. A piece of bark is chewed to cure high fever.



L.Ar.



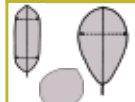
Alternate-distichous

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



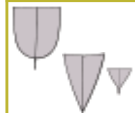
Oblong-obovate or orbicular

L.Ap.



Obtuse-rounded

L.Ba.



Rounded-cuneate

L.Ma.



Entire

Atalantia malabarica (Raf.) Tanaka
RUTACEAE

Wild Lime -En

Kurunthamaram -lr

Kattunaarangam, kattu elumichai -Ta

HABIT: A densely foliaceous, thorny tree.

FLOWER: In axillary racemes; cream; fragrant. Flowering from September-March.

FRUIT: A globose berry, green when young, later orange; seeds 4, ovoid. Fruiting throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: Branchlets with 1 or 2 axillary spines. Leaves with minute oil glands.

MISCELLANEOUS: The fruits are said to yield a warm oil used in treating chronic rheumatism by native doctors. It also grown as an avenue tree in many countries. Mature fresh fruit is made into pickles.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common in the deciduous forests from plains to 1000m. India and Sri Lanka.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: Wood used as fuel wood.

L.Ar.



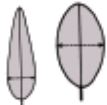
Alternate -spiral

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Lanceolate or elliptic

L.Ap.



Emarginate

L.Ba.



Obtuse -subacute

L.Ma.



Entire-crenulate



Azadirachta indica A.Juss.

MELIACEAE

Margosa, Indian Lilac -En

Veeppa maram -Ir

Veppa, Vembu -Ta; Vembu -Ma; Neem -Hi

HABIT: A medium sized deciduous tree.

FLOWER: In axillary panicles; white; fragrant. Flowering from March-April.

FRUIT: An oblong-ovoid drupe, green when young, later yellow; seed solitary. Fruiting June onwards.

FIELD TIPS: Bark dark brown, fissured longitudinally. New foliage from February-March.

MISCELLANEOUS: The tree has a cure or treatment for more than forty different diseases and medical conditions. Wood is hard and used for agricultural implements.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common around the villages. Native of India and China, widely cultivated and naturalised in the tropics.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: The young twigs are used as toothbrushes. The crushed leaves are used for deworming. The leaves are used to treat chicken-pox. Oil extracted from the seeds is used as insect repellent.



L.Ar.



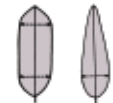
Alternate -spiral

L.Ty.



Pari or imparipinnate

L.Sh.



Oblong-lanceolate

L.Ap.



Acuminate

L.Ba.



Oblique, cuneate

L.Ma.



Serrate

Bauhinia racemosa Lam.

CAESALPINIACEAE

Burmese Silk Orchid -En

Aathimaram, Aasa mara -Ir

Archi, Aatthi -Ta; Gurial -Hi



HABIT: A small deciduous tree.

L.Ar.



Alternate -spiral

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Ovate-orbicular

L.Ap.



Obtuse-mucronate

L.Ba.



Cordate

L.Ma.



Entire

FLOWER: In axillary or terminal racemes; white or pale yellow. Flowering from March-June.

FRUIT: An oblong pod, green, pendulous, attenuate at base, obtuse and horned at apex, twisted; seeds 10, ovoid. Fruiting throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: Bark rough, black.

MISCELLANEOUS: Wood is hard and used for fuel. Decoction of the roots used as a preventive to obesity.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common along the deciduous tracts from foothills to 1000m. India and Sri Lanka.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: A good shade tree. The bark yields fibre which is used as rope. The wood is used in making agricultural implements. The fruits and leaves are eaten by cattle and elephants.



Bombax ceiba L.

BOMBACACEAE

Red Cotton Tree -En

Kattu panju -Ir

Mullilavu -Ta; Burla, Sauri -Ka; Ilavu -Ma; Simal -Hi

HABIT: A large deciduous tree.

FLOWER: Solitary, paired or clustered; blood red. Flowering from April-March.

FRUIT: A loculicidal, oblong capsule, 5-valved; seeds many, smooth, embedded in long white wool. Fruiting April onwards.

FIELD TIPS: Tree leafless when flowering. Main trunk and branchlets with sharp prickles.

MISCELLANEOUS: The wood is soft and perishable, but more durable under water, so used for the construction of catamarans and boats. The gum from the trunk is used in herbal medicine. The flower is a common ingredient in chinese herbal tea.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common along the river banks and deciduous forests from plains to 800m. Tropical Asia to New Guinea.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: Elephants feed on leaves and fruits.



L.Ar.



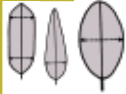
Alternate -spiral

L.Ty.



Digitate

L.Sh.



Oblong-lanceolate or elliptic

L.Ap.



Acuminate, caudate or acute

L.Ba.



Cuneate

L.Ma.



Entire

Buchanania axillaris (Desr.) Ramamoorthy
ANACARDIACEAE

Cuddapah Almond, Buchanan's Mango -En

Cheran maram -lr

Kolamaavu, Mudamaa, Pulimaa -Ta; Malamavu - Ma

HABIT: A medium-sized, deciduous tree.

FLOWER: In terminal panicles; greenish-white. Flowering from May-June.

FRUIT: A globose drupe, green when young; seed 1, acute at one end. Fruiting from June-December.

FIELD TIPS: Bark rough, deeply fissured. Galls common on the leaves.

MISCELLANEOUS: The kernel of the seeds are edible. The seeds contain 19% proteins, 59.1% fat, 3.8% fibres, 12.1% carbohydrates and minerals at the value of 3 grams per 100 grams and the calorific value of the seeds are 656 K kal/100 g.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Not common, in the deciduous forests. India and Sri Lanka.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: Sap from the branchlets can burn the skin.

L.Ar.



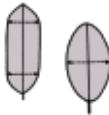
Alternate -spiral

L.Ty.



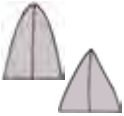
Simple

L.Sh.



Oblong-elliptic

L.Ap.



Obtuse-subacute

L.Ba.



Obtuse

L.Ma.



Entire



Butea monosperma (Lam.) Taub.

FABACEAE

Flame of Forest -En

Muthagai -Ir

Porasu -Ta; Palash, Dhak -Hi

HABIT: A medium-sized, deciduous tree.

FLOWER: In terminal or axillary fascicled racemes or panicles; orange-scarlet. Flowering from February-April.

FRUIT: An oblong, compressed pod, indehiscent; seed 1. Fruiting March onwards.

FIELD TIPS: Tree leafless when flowering. The wood is grey and soft.

MISCELLANEOUS: Bark yields good fibre. Wood is durable under water. Leaves stitched together to make plates. Red kino gum is extracted from the trunk. Bark is used in herbal preparations.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Commonly found along the deciduous forests from plains to 1000m. India, Sri Lanka and S.E.Asia.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: The roots are beaten to make paint brushes.



L.Ar.



Alternate -spiral

L.Ty.



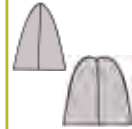
Trifoliate

L.Sh.



Rhomboid or broadly ovate

L.Ap.



Obtuse-retuse

L.Ba.



Cuneate

L.Ma.



Entire

Capparis nilgiriensis Subba Rao, Kumari & V.Chandras.
CAPPARACEAE

Kari pandil chedi -Ta

HABIT: A small tree.

FLOWER: In axillary masses or seldom solitary; white with yellow blotch inside. Flowering from March-April.

FRUIT: An oblong berry, pericarp irregularly corrugated, warty; seeds 16, reniform. Fruiting March onwards.

FIELD TIPS: Bark blackish, not fissured, short spines on old stems.

MISCELLANEOUS: Leaf decoction taken as a cure in early stages of fever. Root paste applied on wounds of cattle.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Rare along the stream banks and scrub jungles above 600m. Endemic to Peninsular India.

L.Ar.



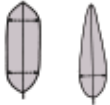
Alternate-disticious

L.Ty.



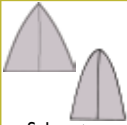
Simple

L.Sh.



Oblong-lanceolate

L.Ap.



Subacute-obtuse

L.Ba.



Subacute

L.Ma.



Entire



Cassia fistula L.

CAESALPINIACEAE

The Indian Laburnum -En

Kakkai -Ir

Sarakkonnai, Konnei -Ta; Kakke -Ka; Konna -Ma; Amaltas -Hi

HABIT: A medium-sized, deciduous tree with drooping branchlets.

FLOWER: In terminal, drooping racemes; yellow. Flowering from March-May.

FRUIT: A shortly stipitate, oblong pod, terete, indehiscent; seeds many. Fruiting May onwards.

FIELD TIPS: Bark smooth when young, later darker and rough. Tree leafless when flowering.

MISCELLANEOUS: The wood is very hard, especially used for agricultural implements. Commonly planted in gardens and along roads for ornamental purpose. The fruit pulp is a good laxative. The wood is mixed in preparations to cure dysentery.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Common in the deciduous forests from plains to 1400m. often planted along the roadsides. India, Sri Lanka and Myanmar.



L.Ar.



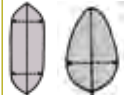
Alternate -spiral

L.Ty.



Paripinnate

L.Sh.



Oblong-broadly ovate

L.Ap.



Emarginate

L.Ba.



Subacute-cuneate

L.Ma.



Entire

Cassine glauca (Rottb.) Kuntze

CELASTRACEAE

Ceylon Tea-En

Murukkimaram, Mukarasi -Ir

Kanniramaram, Karuvali, Khiri -Ta; Kannurmara, Mookurichi -En; Jamrasi -Hi



HABIT: A medium-sized tree.

L.Ar.



Opposite-decussate

FLOWER: In axillary dichasioid corymbose cymes; green. Flowering from March-April.

FRUIT: An oblong drupe, indehiscent; seeds erect, exarillate. Fruiting throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: Bark grey, relatively thin, flesh-coloured when cut.

L.Ty.

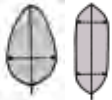


Simple

MISCELLANEOUS: Very good avenue tree. Wood is used for making furniture. The root is used as an antidote to snake bite. The powdered leaves are used to cure headaches .

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common from the plains to 1000m. India and Sri Lanka.

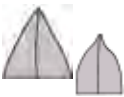
L.Sh.



Ovate-oblong

IDIGENOUS INFORMATION: Good fodder.

L.Ap.



Acute-acuminate



L.Ba.



Obtuse

L.Ma.



Serrate-crenate



Ceiba pentandra (L.) Gaertn.

BOMBACACEAE

Kapok Tree, Silk Cotton Tree -En

Panjumaram -Ir

Elavam, Ulagamaram, Panji -Ta; Panya -Ma

HABIT: A large deciduous tree.

FLOWER: In clusters at the ends of branchlets, white or whitish-yellow. Flowering January-April.

FRUIT: An ellipsoid to fusiform capsule, indehiscent, valves with silky fibres; seeds numerous, subglobose, enveloped in silky cotton.

FIELD TIPS: Stem prickly when young, later smooth, green. Branchlets drooping. Tree leafless when flowering.

MISCELLANEOUS: The cotton is used for making pillows and cushions. The roots are stimulant tonic, diuretic, emetic and antispasmodic, they have hypoglycaemic effect and are useful to treat diabetes, dysentery and gonorrhoea.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very commonly planted around the villages and roadsides. Native of Africa, now widely planted in the tropics.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: *Apis dorsata* foraging observed on the flowers during night time.



L.Ar.



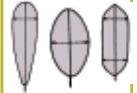
Whorled

L.Ty.



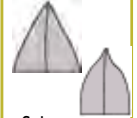
Digitate

L.Sh.



Ob lanceolate,
elliptic or oblong

L.Ap.



Subacute or
acuminate

L.Ba.



Obtuse-cuneate

L.Ma.



Entire

Celtis philippensis Blanco var.
wightii (Planch.) Soepadmo

ULMACEAE

Korlumuruکا maram, Vaelagatha maram -lr

Elumbiruthi, Kodaalimuriki -Ta; Butha -Ma

HABIT: Densely foliaceous, medium-sized tree.

FLOWER: In short panicles, male flowers at the base and female in the upper axils. Flowering from December-April.

FRUIT: An ellipsoid drupe, beaked when young; green to red. Fruiting February onwards.

FIELD TIPS: Bark pale green, covered with small lenticels. Leaves 3-nerved from base.

MISCELLANEOUS: Wood very hard, used in herbal preparations.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Common in the deciduous and semi-evergreen forests from plains to 1200m. Tropical Africa to Madagascar, India, Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Thailand, Indo-China and Malaysia to N.Australia.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: The wood is used as fuelwood.

L.Ar.



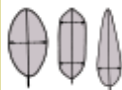
Alternate-distichous

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Elliptic, oblong-lanceolate

L.Ap.



Acute

L.Ba.



Rounded

L.Ma.



Entire



Chloroxylon swietenia DC.

RUTACEAE



Satin Wood, East Indian Satinwood -En

Porunjamaram, Purusamaram -lr

Porasu, Vaaimaram, Mammarai -Ta; Bhera -Hi



HABIT: A large deciduous tree.

FLOWER: In terminal and/or axillary panicles; cream coloured. Flowering from March-April.

FRUIT: An oblong, loculicidal capsule, 3-valved; seeds 12-15, oblong, compressed, apically winged. Fruiting from May-August.

FIELD TIPS: Bark yellowish, rough, deeply fissured. Leaves gland dotted.

MISCELLANEOUS: Wood very hard, deep yellow, used for making furniture. The dried leaves are applied to hasten the healing of wounds.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common in the deciduous forests from plains to 1000m. Pennisular India and Sri Lanka.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: The honey from the flower is bitter in taste. The wood is termite resistant and used for agricultural implements and house construction. The bark and leaves are used to stun fish while fishing.



L.Ar.



Alternate-spiral

L.Ty.



Paripinnate

L.Sh.



Lanceolate

L.Ap.



Obtuse

L.Ba.



Oblique

L.Ma.



Entire

Citrus medica L.

RUTACEAE

Citron -En

Kattu elumeachai -lr

Kattu naarthai-Ta

HABIT: A small evergreen tree.

FLOWER: Solitary or in axillary fascicles; white. Flowering from March-April.

FRUIT: An oblong or globose berry, fleshy; seeds many. Fruiting from May-July.

FIELD TIPS: Petiole often winged. Branchlets armed with spines. Leaves gland dotted.

MISCELLANEOUS: Leaves are externally used to relieve pain and inflammation. It is also used to treat skin disorders and itching.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Rare in the dry evergreen belt of hills. Endemic to Peninsular India.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: The fruits are pickled.

L.Ar.



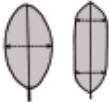
Alternate-spiral

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Elliptic-oblong

L.Ap.



Obtuse

L.Ba.



Acute

L.Ma.



Crenulate



Commiphora caudata (Wight & Arn.) Engl. BURSERACEAE

Kiliya maram -Ir

Pachaikiluvai -Ta; Konda mavu -Ka

HABIT: A medium-sized deciduous tree.

FLOWER: In axillary paniced cymes; cream; inflorescence axes red.. Flowering from April-June.

FRUIT: A globose, fleshy drupe, 2-6 valved; seed 1, black with 4 radiating wings. Fruiting throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: Bark smooth, green, peels off in thin sheets. Stout thorns on old wood.

MISCELLANEOUS: Important nesting site for *Trigona* sp. An extract of the stem bark has been found to possess antiviral properties.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common and abundant in the deciduous belts from plains to 1000m. Peninsular India and Sri Lanka.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: Commonly planted as a “green fence” around agricultural lands.



L.Ar.



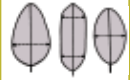
Alternate-spiral

L.Ty.



Imparipinnate

L.Sh.



Ovate-oblong or elliptic

L.Ap.



Caudate

L.Ba.



Attenuate or subacute

L.Ma.



Entire

Cordia obliqua Willd.

BORAGINACEAE

Clammy berry -En

Virimaram -Ir

Viruksham, Perunaruvuli, Masumooki -Ta; Virusham -Ma; Challe -Ka; Lasora -Hi

HABIT: A moderate sized deciduous tree.

FLOWER: In branched corymbose cymes; cream. Flowering from January-April and September-October.

FRUIT: An ovoid drupe, pulp fleshy; fruiting calyx not ribbed. seed 1. Fruiting throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: Bark thick, grey or brown.

MISCELLANEOUS: Wood moderately hard, used for various purposes.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common in deciduous and semi-evergreen forests from plains to 800m. India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and N.Africa.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: Fruits edible.

L.Ar.



Alternate-disticuous

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



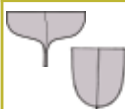
Elliptic-ovate

L.Ap.



Subacute

L.Ba.



Truncate-rounded

L.Ma.



Entire



Cryptocarya bourdillonii Gamble
LAURACEAE

Bithirikkai maram -lr

HABIT: A large evergreen tree.

FLOWER: In terminal or axillary spreading panicles; cream. Flowering from November-January.

FRUIT: A globose berry, green, smooth. Fruiting December onwards.

FIELD TIPS: Leaves bright green above, glaucous beneath.

MISCELLANEOUS: It is an important food plant of the Lion-Tailed Macaque.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Rare along the stream banks and semi-evergreen forests of above 400m. Endemic to Peninsular India.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: Children use the fruit to spin as a top.



L.Ar.



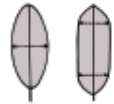
Alternate-distichous

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Elliptic-oblong

L.Ap.



Obtusely acuminate

L.Ba.



Rounded

L.Ma.



Entire



Cycas circinalis L.

CYCADACEAE

Queen Sago -En

Eendha -Ir

Madana-kaman, Katu-thuvai, Sala panai, Eentha panai -Ta; Goddu-ichel -Ka;

Kalanga, Intha -Ma; Jungli Madanmustka phul -Hi

L.Ar.



Alternate-spiral

HABIT: A small, evergreen palm-like tree.

FLOWER: Male and female flowers found in separate plants (dioecious) in the form of cones. Male cones terminal. Female cones crowded round the apex of the stem. Flowering highly variable.

FRUIT: Megasporophyll bearing ellipsoid or globose seeds, smooth, green.

L.Ty.

FIELD TIPS: Bark brown, smooth below, tessellated above by the diamond-shaped scars of fallen leaves.

MISCELLANEOUS: The leaves are woven or plaited into mats. Pith is used for medicinal preparations. The mature male cones are used as insect repellents in the paddy fields.

Pinnate

L.Sh.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Occasional in the deciduous and semi-evergreen forests from plains to 1000m. Endemic to Peninsular India.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: Leaves harvested for decoration. Tender leaves are edible. Seeds are cooked and eaten after leaching.



Acicular

L.Ap.



Caudate

L.Ba.



L.Ma.



Entire

Dalbergia lanceolaria L.f. ssp.
lanceolaria

FABACEAE



East Indian Rosewood -En
Bugurai, Ittie, Buruvai -Ir
Velangu, Erigai -Ta; Sitsal -Hi

HABIT: A large deciduous tree.

FLOWER: In axillary panicles, white; fragrant. Flowering from August-September.

FRUIT: A pod, oblong-lanceolate, prominently nerved; seeds upto 3. Fruiting from October-February.

FIELD TIPS: Bark thick, grey. Flowers and fruits in copious masses.

MISCELLANEOUS: The wood is fragrant and commands a high price for making furniture and specialised implements. Tannins from the bark are used to produce medicines for the treatment of diarrhoea, worms, indigestion, and leprosy.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Common in the deciduous forests from plains to 1300m. India, Indo-China and Malaysia.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: Bark is used in herbal preparations.



L.Ar.



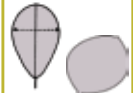
Alternate-spiral

L.Ty.



Paripinnate

L.Sh.



Obovate-orbicular

L.Ap.



Rounded-retuse

L.Ba.



Obtuse-subacute

L.Ma.



Entire

Dalbergia lanceolaria L.f ssp.
paniculata (Roxb.)Thoth

FABACEAE



Poovaraimaram -Ir

Velluruvai, Arivaagai, Panivaagai -Ta; Vetta tholi -Ma; Passi -Hi

L.Ar.

HABIT: A medium-sized deciduous tree.



Alternate-spiral

FLOWER: In terminal and/or axillary panicles; white, tinged with pink. Flowering from April-June.

FRUIT: A lanceolate pod, stipitate, green, base attenuate, faintly nerved; seed(s) 1 or 2. Fruiting May onwards.

L.Ty.

FIELD TIPS: Bark smooth, grey. Branchlets densely pubescent.



Imparipinnate

MISCELLANEOUS: Branchlets used for fuel. Leaves were used as famine food.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common on the dry slopes from 500-1000m. India and Myanmar.

L.Sh.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: Good fodder plant.



Oblong-ovate

L.Ap.



Obtuse

L.Ba.



Cuneate-obtuse

L.Ma.



Entire



Deccania pubescens (Roth) Tirveng. var.
candolleana (Wight & Arn.) Tirveng.

RUBIACEAE

HABIT: A medium sized tree.

FLOWER: In subterminal corymbs; white, fragrant. Flowering from October-December.

FRUIT: A globose berry, green; seeds many, embedded in pulp. Fruiting December onwards.

FIELD TIPS: Unarmed, bark thick, brown. Branchlets with elevated leaf scars.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Rare on the exposed slopes and rocky crevices of deciduous forests from 400-1000m. Peninsular India and Sri Lanka.



L.Ar.



Opposite
L.Ty.



Simple
L.Sh.



Orbicular-ovate
L.Ap.



Acute
L.Ba.



Attenuate
L.Ma.



Entire

Dichrostachys cinerea (L.) Wight & Arn.
MIMOSACEAE

Sicklebush, Painted Thorn Bush -En

Odavarai -Ir

Vedathalaa -Ta; Wadu -Ka; Vurtuli -Hi



HABIT: A small thorny tree.

L.Ar.



Alternate-spiral

L.Ty.

FLOWER: In solitary or paired spikes; bicoloured, upper flowers fertile, yellow, lower ones sterile, pink. Flowering April-July.

FRUIT: A flat, linear pod, coiled, indehiscent, opening from apex; seeds 4-6, ovoid, compressed. Fruiting June-September

FIELD TIPS: Bark grey or light brown. Rachis with stipitate glands, opposite to pinnac.



Bipinnate

L.Sh.

MISCELLANEOUS: Wood is very hard and rough and a good fuel. The flowers can be a valuable source of honey. The bark is highly valued for its medicinal properties. The leaves are used to treat epilepsy.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common in the scrub jungles from plains to 300m. India and Sri Lanka.



Elliptic

L.Ap.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: The bark is crushed and applied on the forehead to cure headache.



Acute

L.Ba.



Obtuse

L.Ma.



Entire



Diospyros peregrina (Gaertn.) Gurke
EBENACEAE

Vellaibensai maram -lr

Panickil, Thumbika, Benchu maram, Karimaathi -Ta;

Holetupare, Kusrta Ka, Paniccha -Ma

HABIT: A branching evergreen tree.

FLOWER: Solitary or few in axillary clusters; cream, fleshy. Flowering from March-May.

FRUIT: A ovoid-globose berry, 6cm across, reddish-tomentose when young. Fruiting April onwards.

FIELD TIPS: Branch greyish black, flaky, blaze dull red. Leaves very coriaceous with prominent nerves, unequal at base.

MISCELLANEOUS: The viscid pulp from the fruit used for caulking boats. The fruits are used for their medicinal properties.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common along the river banks from 250-750m. India, Sri Lanka, Indo-China and Malaysia.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: Seeds edible.



L.Ar.



Alternate-distichous

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



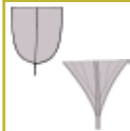
Oblong

L.Ap.



Acute

L.Ba.



Rounded-acute

L.Ma.



Entire

Drypetes sepiaria (Wight & Arn.) Pax & K.Hoffm.
EUPHORBIACEAE

Thanuvam -Ir

Vellilambu, Veerai, Kaayalakkamaram, Aadumilukkan -Ta



HABIT: A small, dioecious evergreen tree.

FLOWER: In axillary fascicles; cream. Flowering from January-April.

FRUIT: A globose drupe, green to red, epicarp crinkled; seeds arillate. Fruiting March onwards.

FIELD TIPS: Leaves unequal at base.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Common in the deciduous forests and scrub jungles from foothills to 600m. Peninsular India and Sri Lanka.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: Fruits edible. Wood preferred for fuel.

L.Ar.



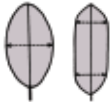
Alternate-spiral

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Elliptic-oblong

L.Ap.



Acute-retuse

L.Ba.



Rounded

L.Ma.



Entire



Ehretia pubescens Benth.

BORAGINACEAE

Aadaali -Ta

HABIT: A small, spreading tree.

FLOWER: In terminal, dichotomous cymes; white. Flowering from April-July.

FRUIT: A globose drupe, green when young, ripening red. Fruiting July onwards.

FIELD TIPS: Inflorescence dichotomously branched, hirsute-pubescent.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Common in deciduous scrub jungles from plains to 600m. Endemic to India.



L.Ar.



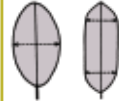
Alternate
distichous

L.Ty.



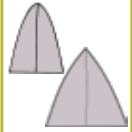
Simple

L.Sh.



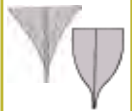
Elliptic-oblong

L.Ap.



Acute-attenuate

L.Ba.



Obtuse-
subacute

L.Ma.



Entire

Erythroxylum monogynum Roxb.

ERYTHROXYLACEAE

Red cedar - En

Sembulichan -Ir

Devadara, Sembulichan -Ta; Devadaram -Ka



HABIT: A small evergreen, bushy tree.

L.Ar.



Alternate
-distichous

FLOWER: Solitary or in axillary clusters; greenish-white. Flowering in two peaks March-July and October-December.

FRUIT: An oblong drupe, ripening red, apiculate; seed solitary. Fruiting from July-May.

FIELD TIPS: Bark dark brown, rough.

L.Ty.



Simple

MISCELLANEOUS: Wood very hard and useful for fuel. Fruits edible.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very dominant tree in the scrub jungles and deciduous forests. Peninsular India and Sri Lanka.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: The wood is termite resistant and used in the construction of houses. The hard wood is sliced and oil distilled from it is used in the treatment of knee pain.

L.Sh.



Obovate



L.Ap.



Obtuse-
emarginate

L.Ba.



Cuneate

L.Ma.



Entire

Euphorbia trigona Mill.

EUPHORBIACEAE

African Milk Weed -En

Mundukkalli -lr

HABIT: A medium-sized tree with thick trunk.

FLOWER: In dichasial cymes, many male florets surrounding a solitary female floret; yellow. Flowering from December-January.

FRUIT: A capsule of three 2-valved cocci; seeds globose, minutely carunculate. Fruiting from February-April.

FIELD TIPS: Leaves early caducous, stem 3-winged, succulent, margin with paired spines. Sap milky, abundant, acrid.

MISCELLANEOUS: Sap of the plant is used to write on stones. Some time grown as an indoor plant. Handling plant may cause skin irritation or allergic reaction.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common in the deciduous forests from foothills to 400m. Endemic to Peninsular India.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: The sap from the plant is mixed with mud from termite mounts and is applied on the blades of new knives and axes to sharpen them.



L.Ar.

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Obovate-spathulate

L.Ap.



Mucronate

L.Ba.

L.Ma.



Entire

Ficus benghalensis L.

MORACEAE

Banyan Tree, East Indian Fig -En

Aalamaram -Ir

Aalamaram -Ta; Alada -Ka; Ala -Ma; Bar -Hi

HABIT: A large tree with horizontal branches and aerial roots.

FLOWER: Male, female and gall flowers enclosed in an axillary, sessile, depressed globose figs; red when ripe. Flowering throughout the year.

FRUIT: A globose-ellipsoid achene, dark brown. Fruiting throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: Tree with numerous aerial roots, stem deeply fluted. Sap white. Leaves 3-5-nerved from base, shining.

MISCELLANEOUS: Wood is durable under water. The plant has many medicinal properties according to Ayurveda.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common tree in all kind of forests from plains to 1000m. India, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, now widely planted in the tropics.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: The young prop root is boiled with coconut oil and the mixture is applied on the hair to promote hair growth. Prop roots used as rope and tooth cleaning stick. Sap applied on the wounds in cattle to kill the maggots.

L.Ar.



Alternate-spiral

L.Ty.



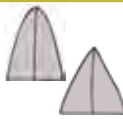
Simple

L.Sh.



Ovate-elliptic

L.Ap.



Obtuse-subacute

L.Ba.



Rounded or subcordate

L.Ma.



Entire



Ficus dalhousiae Miq.

MORACEAE

Pei-aal, Kal-aal -Ta

HABIT: A medium-sized evergreen tree.

FLOWER: Male, female and gall flowers enclosed in axillary, globose or obovoid figs; greenish.

FRUIT: A smooth achene. Fruiting September onwards.

FIELD TIPS: Leaves densely white tomentose beneath, 3-5-nerved from base.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Not common along the stream banks, rocky slopes from plains to 800m. Endemic to Peninsular India.



L.Ar.



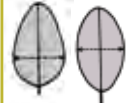
Alternate-spiral

L.Ty.



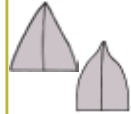
Simple

L.Sh.



Ovate-elliptic to broadly ovate

L.Ap.



Acute or acuminate

L.Ba.



Deeply cordate

L.Ma.



Entire

Ficus drupacea Thunb. var.
pubescens (Roth) Corner

MORACEAE

Mysore Fig, Brown Woolly Fig -En

Kozhimaram -Ir

Kallaala maram, Kozhi Aalamaram, Sonnai-ala -Ta; Goni-mara -Ka

L.Ar.



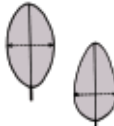
Alternate-spiral

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Elliptic-ovate

L.Ap.



Abruptly
acuminate

L.Ba.



Acute to
subcordate

L.Ma.



Entire

HABIT: A large, handsome, shade giving tree.

FLOWER: Male, female and gall flowers enclosed in axillary, sessile, ellipsoid figs; orange.

FRUIT: A smooth achene. Fruiting February onwards.

FIELD TIPS: Tree with few aerial roots. Sap white. Leaves densely tomentose beneath, 3-5-nerved from base.

MISCELLANEOUS: Occasionally found as an epiphyte. Birds eat the fruits.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Occasional along the river banks and semi-evergreen forests above 400m. India, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and Indo-China.



Ficus hispida L.f.

MORACEAE

Paeiathi -Ta

HABIT: A medium sized evergreen tree.

FLOWER: Figs on special shoots and on the branches. Male, female and gall flowers enclosed in depressed-globose figs; ripening yellow; faintly ribbed. Flowering throughout the year.

FRUIT: A lenticular achene, keeled with prominent hilum. Fruiting throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: Leaves opposite-decussate, 3-nerved from base. Figs on special shoots.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Occasional in river and stream banks from plains to 1200m. India, Sri Lanka, S.China to New Guinea.



L.Ar.



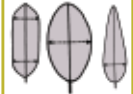
Opposite-decussate

L.Ty.



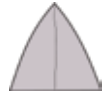
Simple

L.Sh.



Oblong to elliptic-lanceolate

L.Ap.



Abruptly acute

L.Ba.



Truncate

L.Ma.



Entire-minutely toothed

Ficus microcarpa L.f.

MORACEAE

Indian Laurel Fig -En

Kal lthi -Ir

Kal-ichchi, Pon-ichchi, Kal-atthi -Ta; Pilala, Kirugoli -Ka; Ittiyal -Ma

HABIT: A large evergreen tree, sometimes epiphytic on other trees.

FLOWER: Male, female and gall flowers enclosed in axillary, sessile, globose figs; orange.

FRUIT: A smooth achenes. Fruiting from January-April.

FIELD TIPS: Densely foliaceous tree with numerous aerial roots. Leaves coriaceous, with numerous lateral nerves. Sap white.

MISCELLANEOUS: Wood moderately hard and used for various purposes. A popular ornamental tree grown widely in many tropical regions of the world.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Commonly associated with rocks. Plains from the coast to 300m. India, Sri Lanka, S.China and Malaysia to Pacific Islands.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: Good fodder plant. The bark in combination with other herbs is used to cure boils and swellings on the limbs. Monkeys and birds eat the figs.

L.Ar.



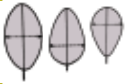
Alternate-distichous

L.Ty.



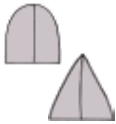
Simple

L.Sh.



Elliptic-ovate-ovobovate

L.Ap.



Rounded-acute

L.Ba.



Acute-cuneate

L.Ma.



Entire



Ficus racemosa L.

MORACEAE

Country Fig, Cluster Fig -En

Athi -lr

Atti, Vellai atthi, Nalla atthi -Ta; Atti -Ka; Atthi, Atthi-al -Ma; Goolar -Hi

HABIT: A large deciduous tree.

FLOWER: Male, female and gall flowers enclosed in globose figs, cauliflorous; greenish-white when young, ripened ones purplish-red. Flowering throughout the year.

FRUIT: A small, obscurely keeled achene.

FIELD TIPS: Tree with few short aerial roots. Branchlets and figs white-pilose. Petiole glandular at basal nerve axils. Sap white.

MISCELLANEOUS: The roots are commonly used in medicinal preparations. Fruits and leaves have astringent properties.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common along the river banks and inland forests from plains to 1500m. India, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, S.China to New Guinea and Queensland.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: Figs edible after ripening. Birds, monkeys and bears are very fond of these figs.



L.Ar.



Alternate-spiral

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Oblanceolate

L.Ap.



Acute

L.Ba.



Rounded-acute

L.Ma.



Entire

Ficus religiosa L.

MORACEAE

Sacred Fig -En

Arasa -Ir

Arasa, Arasu -Ta; Arali -Ka; Arasu, Arei-al -Ma; Pipal -Hi

HABIT: A large deciduous tree, epiphytic in early stages.

FLOWER: Male, female and gall flowers enclosed in axillary, sessile, globose figs; ripening pink to black. Figs ripening January onwards.

FRUIT: A smooth achene.

FIELD TIPS: Bark grey, smooth. Aerial roots absent. Leaves shining above, apices very long.

MISCELLANEOUS: Figs eaten by birds. The fruits, leaves, bark and even the latex are used to prepare herbal remedies.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common from plains to 1200m. Often planted by temples. India, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, Indo-China and Thailand.

L.Ar.



Alternate-distichous

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Broadly ovate

L.Ap.



Caudate

L.Ba.



Truncate

L.Ma.



Entire or wavy



Gardenia gummifera L.f.

RUBIACEAE



Kambi pisin -Ir

Kambil, Sinnakkambil, Tikkamalli, Vellapaavattaa -Ta; Chitta bike -Ka; Kikemali -Hi

HABIT: A small deciduous tree.

FLOWER: Solitary or in lax cymes; white. Flowering from January-April.

FRUIT: An oblong berry, green when young; seeds many, rugose. Fruiting March onwards.

FIELD TIPS: Bark greyish-brown, and branchlets exude a yellow resin. Leaves dark green, shining.

MISCELLANEOUS: The resin has antiseptic property. Fruits edible.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very commonly distributed in the deciduous slopes and degraded lands above 500m. Endemic to Peninsular India.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: The resin from the bark of the tree is taken off with moist/wet hands, and is applied on the forehead of children to cure headache. The resin is heated in oil, and the vapour is inhaled to cure running nose.



L.Ar.



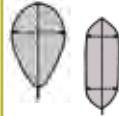
Opposite-decussate

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Obovate-oblong

L.Ap.



Obtuse

L.Ba.



Rounded

L.Ma.



Entire

Gardenia latifolia Aiton

RUBIACEAE

Indian boxwood, Ceylon boxwood -En

Kattu marikalam, Kalkottai, Kumbai -Ta; Papra -Hi

HABIT: A small deciduous tree.

FLOWER: Solitary or in lax cymes; white. Flowering February-April.

FRUIT: A globose berry, with a crown of calyx; seeds many, rugose. Fruiting throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: Domatia on the nerve axils. Flowers turn yellow by evening.

MISCELLANEOUS: Wood is useful for turning and engraving. Extract of bark used as a medicine.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common in the dry deciduous belts m 400-900m. Throughout India.

L.Ar.



Opposite-decussate

L.Ty.



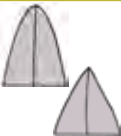
Simple

L.Sh.



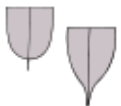
Broadly elliptic

L.Ap.



Obtuse-acute

L.Ba.



Rounded-attenuate

L.Ma.



Entire



Givotia moluccana (L.) Sreema.

EUPHORBIACEAE

White Cattamaran tree-En

Bhuthalie, Thalimaram -Ir

Vendalai, Thaala maram, Kottaitthanakku, Vellai-poothali -Ta;Betta thvare- Ka;

Kottathanukk -Ma



HABIT: A medium-sized, deciduous tree.

FLOWER: In terminal or subterminal, pendulous panicles, fulvous-tomentose. Flowering from April-July.

FRUIT: A subglobose or ellipsoid drupe, densely tomentose; seed solitary, globose or ellipsoid. Fruiting from May-June.

FIELD TIPS: Bark brown, smooth, peeling off in circular scales. Cut ends exude a blood red sap. Easily recognised by the white coloured leaves.

MISCELLANEOUS: Wood is very soft and used for making toys, carved images and catamarans.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common in the dry deciduous forests from 400-900m. Peninsular India and Sri Lanka.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: Preferred for fuel. The kernel of the seed is edible. The juice extracted from trunk is used as a cure for jaundice.



L.Ar.



Alternate-spiral

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Broadly ovate

L.Ap.



Acuminate

L.Ba.



Cordate

L.Ma.



Coarsely
dentate

Gmelina arborea Roxb.

VERBENACEAE

White Kashmir Teak -En

Kumila -Ir

Kumalaa maram, Gumadi, Umi -Ta; Shivani -Ta; Kumbil -Ma; Gumhar -Hi

HABIT: A moderate-sized deciduous tree.

FLOWER: In axillary or terminal panicles, brownish-yellow, apically crowded on the branchlets. Flowering from February-May.

FRUIT: A large drupe, fleshy, yellow; seeds 2-4, oblong. Fruiting May onwards.

FIELD TIPS: Bark smooth, white or whitish-grey. Young parts fulvous-tomentose.

MISCELLANEOUS: Wood is used for making plank, furnitures and agricultural implements. The leaves and fruits are used as fodder in many parts of India.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common in the deciduous and semi-evergreen forests from 350-900m. India, Sri Lanka and Malaysia.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: The ash from the wood is used as tooth powder.

L.Ar.



Opposite

L.Ty.



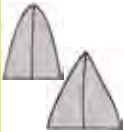
Simple

L.Sh.



Cordate

L.Ap.



Obtuse-acute

L.Ba.



Truncate-acute

L.Ma.



Entire



Grewia bracteata Roth

TILIACEAE

Kallai -Ir

pantripidukku -Ta

HABIT: A small straggling tree.

FLOWER: In axillary, terminal or leaf-opposed cymes; white, fading yellow. Flowering from June-October.

FRUIT: A broadly ovoid drupe, 4-lobed, lobes obscure or deep, rusty. Fruiting July onwards.

FIELD TIPS: Leaves 3-nerved from base, nerve axils with a tuft of hairs below.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Occasional along stream banks and degraded lands from plains to 1000m. Peninsular India, Sri Lanka.



L.Ar.



Alternate-distichous

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



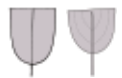
Ovate

L.Ap.



Acuminate

L.Ba.



Rotund or obtuse

L.Ma.



Irregularly serrate



Grewia emarginata Wight & Arn.

TILIACEAE

Panipidungikai -Ta

HABIT: A small ascending shrub.

FLOWER: In leaf-opposed cymes, peduncles long; white. Flowering from June-September and November-January.

FRUIT: A deeply 4-lobed drupe, subglobose, stiff pilose from warts, red. Fruiting throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: Branchlets stellate tomentose. Leaves 3-nerved from base.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common in the deciduous forests from 400-800m. Endemic to Peninsular India.

L.Ar.



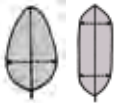
Alternate-distichous

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Ovate-oblong

L.Ap.



Abruptly acute

L.Ba.



Obtuse-subcordate

L.Ma.



Biserrate-crenate



Gymnosporia emarginata (Willd.) Thwaites

CELASTRACEAE

Thandisamaram, Mulmaram, Katna-lr

HABIT: A small spreading, spiny tree.

FLOWER: In axillary or terminal cymes; greenish-white, fragrant. Flowering December-January.

FRUIT: An obovoid-globose capsule; seeds 2 per cell, ovoid. Fruiting March onwards.

FIELD TIPS: Profusely armed shrub with spreading, interlocked branches. Bark whitish-grey. Petiole reddish.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common in the deciduous scrub forests from plains to 1000m. India, Sri Lanka, S.E.Asia and Malaysia to N.Queensland.



L.Ar.



Alternate-disticous

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Obovate

L.Ap.



Emarginate

L.Ba.



Attenuate

L.Ma.



Entire-serrate



Gyrocarpus americanus Jacq.

HERNANDIACEAE

Thanukku -lr

Vellaithanukku, Kosutthamugu, Kaatthaadi -Ta; Zaitun -Hi



HABIT: A medium-sized deciduous tree.

FLOWER: In subterminal, much branched, corymbose cymes; yellow. Flowering from January-February.

FRUIT: An obovoid-globose drupe, longitudinally ribbed, crowned by 2 spatulate wings.

FIELD TIPS: Bark thin, greyish-white with a silvery lustre. Leaves are lobed in young stage.

MISCELLANEOUS: Wood is very soft and used for making Catamarans, boxes, trays and toys.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common tree species of the deciduous forests and river banks from plains to 500m. Tropical W. & S.Africa, Tropical Asia, Polynesia and S.America.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: The bark mixed with cumin is used to treat fevers and drive away evil spirits.

L.Ar.



Alternate-spiral

L.Ty.



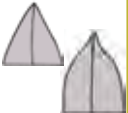
Simple

L.Sh.



Broadly ovate

L.Ap.



Acute-acuminate

L.Ba.



Truncate-subcordate

L.Ma.



Entire



Hardwickia binata Roxb.

CAESALPINIACEAE

Indian Black Wood -En

Karachi -Ir

Aacha -Ta; Kamra -Ka; Anjan -Hi

HABIT: A medium-sized deciduous tree.

FLOWER: In axillary or terminal panicles; greenish-cream. Flowering from August-October.

FRUIT: A strap-shaped pod, compressed, pendulous, with clear longitudinal veins; seed solitary, dehiscent at the apex. Fruiting September onwards.

FIELD TIPS: Bark greyish-brown, longitudinally fissured, rachis with a apical deciduous bristle. Sap reddish.

MISCELLANEOUS: Wood extremely hard and heavy, used for agricultural and many other purposes. The leaves are used as green manure. The branchlets yield very good fibre.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common element of the deciduous forests from foothills to 750m. Endemic to Peninsular India.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: The fibre from the bark is used for making ropes during honey collection. Elephant and Gaur feeds on the bark and leaves.



L.Ar.



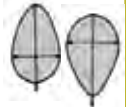
Alternate-distichous

L.Ty.



2-foliolate

L.Sh.



Obliquely ovate-obovate

L.Ap.



Emarginate-obtuse

L.Ba.



Truncate

L.Ma.



Entire

Hibiscus platanifolius (Willd.) Sweet MALVACEAE

Marathuthi -Ta

HABIT: A medium sized tree.

FLOWER: Solitary, axillary, white with purple throat. Flowering throughout the year.

FRUIT: A globose capsule, fulvous-pubescent; seeds globose, smooth. Fruiting throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: Leaves palmately 3-lobed. Flowers fading purple by noon. Epicalyx segments foliaceous.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Not common in the deciduous forests and exposed slopes from 400-1000m. Peninsular India and Sri Lanka.

L.Ar.



Alternate-spiral

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.

Palmately
3-lobed

L.Ap.



Acuminate

L.Ba.



Cordate

L.Ma.



Irregularly
dentate



Holoptelea integrifolia (Roxb.) Planch.

ULMACEAE

Indian Elm -En

Aayee maram -lr

Aavimaram, Tambachi -Ta; Thavasai -Ka; Aval -Ma; Papri -Hi

HABIT: A large deciduous tree.

FLOWER: In clusters on the scars of old shoots. Flowering from February-March.

FRUIT: A dry, winged, compressed samara, wings membranous; seed solitary, flat. Fruiting March onwards.

FIELD TIPS: Bark whitish-grey with an offensive smell when cut. Branchlets drooping.

MISCELLANEOUS: Wood is moderately hard, and used for fuel. Decoction of the bark is applied to cure rheumatism. The bark is also used in many other medicinal preparations.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common in the deciduous forests and river banks from foothills to 1100m. India, Sri Lanka, Myanmar and Indo-China.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: The bark is made into a paste and applied to cure swellings. Monkeys eat the fruits.



L.Ar.



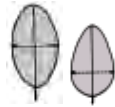
Alternate-drooping

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Elliptic-ovate

L.Ap.



Acute

L.Ba.



Rounded-Subcordate

L.Ma.



Entire



Hopea ponga (Dennst.) Mabb.

DIPTEROCARPACEAE

Kambakam, pongu -Ta; Doddele bogi, Haiga -Ka;

Kambakam, Pongu -Ma

HABIT: A large spreading tree.

FLOWER: In lax unilateral paniculate racemes; whitish-yellow. Flowering from March-May.

FRUIT: A one seeded nut, closely surrounded by the bases of the accrescent sepals. The two external sepals develop into linear or oblong wings. Fruiting April onwards.

MISCELLANEOUS: Wood is very hard and used for construction and agricultural implements.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common along the river banks from plains to 700m. Endemic to the Western Ghats.

L.Ar.



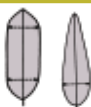
Alternate-distichous

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Oblong-lanceolate

L.Ap.



Acute

L.Ba.



Rounded

L.Ma.



Entire



Hydnocarpus pentandra (Buch.-Ham) Oken FLACOURTIACEAE

Thotti maram -lr

Attuchankalai -Ta

HABIT: A medium-sized evergreen tree.

FLOWER: In axillary fascicles; greenish-white. Flowering from May-July.

FRUIT: A globose berry, rind very hard, rusty; seeds few, embedded in pulp. Fruiting throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: Wood greyish-white. Branchlets drooping.

MISCELLANEOUS: The oil extracted from the seeds is used in the treatment of leprosy.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common along the river banks. Endemic to Peninsular India.



L.Ar.



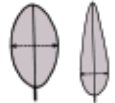
Alternate-dichotomous

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Elliptic-lanceolate

L.Ap.



Acuminate

L.Ba.



Obtuse

L.Ma.



Serrate

Lepisanthes tetraphylla (Vahl) Radlk.

SAPINDACEAE

Nehotaa, Kuhamathi -Ta

HABIT: A densely foliaceous evergreen tree.

FLOWER: In axillary panicles; whitish-yellow; foetid. Flowering from March-April.

FRUIT: A trigonous drupe, apiculate, velvety; seeds solitary, exarillate. Fruiting from April-May.

FIELD TIPS: Leaves very thick, papery. Inflorescence cauliflorous.

MISCELLANEOUS: Branches heavily lopped for green manure. The plant is used as an ingredient for dart poison. Fruits edible.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Not common in the deciduous forests and scrub lands from plains to 750m. India, Sri Lanka to Myanmar, Thailand Indo-China and Malaysia.



L.Ar.



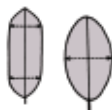
Alternate-distichous

L.Ty.



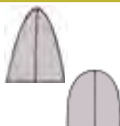
Paripinnate

L.Sh.



Oblong-elliptic

L.Ap.



Obtuse-round

L.Ba.



Cuneate

L.Ma.



Entire



Mallotus philippensis (Lam.) Mull. Arg.
EUPHORBIACEAE

Kamala tree, Red berry -En

Chenoori -Ir

Kapli, Kunnancholai, Thirisalakkai maram, Korangu manjanathi, Kundaanjaalamaram -Ta;

Manjana -Ma; Raini -Hi

HABIT: A medium-sized tree.

FLOWER: In (sub)terminal panicles, densely rusty glandular. Flowering from January-March and June-September.

FRUIT: A smooth, 3-valved, capsule, dark red, rusty granular and glandular; seeds globose, black, 3 in each capsule. Fruiting throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: Leaves 3-nerved from base.

MISCELLANEOUS: The capsules are a chief source for the extraction of orange dye (Kamela). The wood is used as fuel. The fruit and leaves are used in numerous herbal preparations.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common on slopes and shola borders and forest clearings. India, Sri Lanka to Malaysia and N.Australia.



L.Ar.



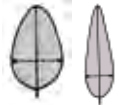
Alternate-spiral

L.Ty.



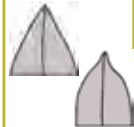
Simple

L.Sh.



Ovate-lanceolate

L.Ap.



Acute-acuminate

L.Ba.



Acute-rounded

L.Ma.



Entire to sparsely serrate

Mangifera indica L.

ANACARDIACEAE

Mango -En

Karae manga, Maamaram -Ir

Maa -Ta; Maavu -Ka; Maavu -Ma; Aam -Hi



HABIT: A large evergreen tree.

L.Ar.



Alternate-spiral

FLOWER: In terminal panicles; cream. Flowering from January-March.

FRUIT: A ovoid-oblong drupe, green when young, ripening yellow; seed solitary. Fruiting from July-August.

FIELD TIPS: Bark rough, dark grey. Sap white. Young leaves shining, reddish.

L.Ty.

MISCELLANEOUS: Wood moderately hard and used for making furniture and boats. Fruits are edible. Pickles are prepared from the immature fruits.

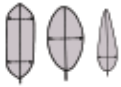


Simple

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common along the river banks and also cultivated in the homesteads. India, Myanmar, Thailand, Indo-China and Malaysia.

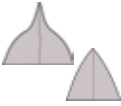
INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: The leaves are used in religious rituals. Good firewood species.

L.Sh.



Oblong
or elliptic-
lanceolate

L.Ap.



Cuneate-
subacute

L.Ba.



Acuminate

L.Ma.



Entire



Manihot carthaginensis (Jacq.) Mull. Arg. subsp.
glaziovii (Mull. Arg.) Allem

EUPHORBIACEAE

Ceara Rubber -En

Gatta rubber -Ir

Rubber -Ta

HABIT: A medium-sized tree.

FLOWER: In subterminal panicles; greenish. Flowering June-September.

FRUIT: A globose capsule in pendulous clusters, green; seed biconvex carunculate. Fruiting throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: Latex white.

MISCELLANEOUS: Latex is a source of Ceara rubber. The leaves are eaten as a vegetable, after proper leaching since it contains toxins.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Scarce in the deciduous forests from plains to 1000m. Native of N.Brazil, widely naturalised in the tropics.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: Nunapulu (earthworm) are found in abundance in areas where these trees are present.



L.Ar.

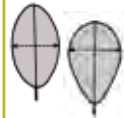


Alternate-spiral

L.Ty.

Palmitifid

L.Sh.



Elliptic-ovovate

L.Ap.



Acute

L.Ba.



Cuneate

L.Ma.



Entire

Manilkara hexandra (Roxb.) Dubard

SAPOTACEAE

Palai maram -lr

Kanupala, Ulakkaipaalai, Palla -Ta



HABIT: A small tree.

FLOWER: In axillary fascicles; white when young, brownish-red when dry; fragrant. Flowering from December-February.

FRUIT: An oblong, ellipsoid berry, slightly curved; seed solitary. Fruiting February onwards.

FIELD TIPS: Bark grey, smooth, often with conical degenerate branchlets. Sap white.

MISCELLANEOUS: Wood very hard and used for agricultural implements. Fruits edible.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Occasional in the scrub jungles from plains to 500m. India, Sri Lanka and Indo-China.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: Wood preferred for fuel.

L.Ar.



Alternate-spiral

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Broadly ovate

L.Ap.



Obtuse-emarginate

L.Ba.



Cuneate-rounded

L.Ma.



Entire



Melia dubia Cav.

MELIACEAE

Meentrai maram -lr

Malaivembu -Ta; Heb bevu -Ka

HABIT: A large deciduous tree.

FLOWER: In axillary panicles, pendulous; greenish-white, fragrant. Flowering from March-April.

FRUIT: A globose drupe, dark green, dorsally compressed with longitudinal ridges; seeds 3 or 4. Fruiting from April-July.

FIELD TIPS: Bark dark brown, fissured longitudinally.

MISCELLANEOUS: Planted as a shade tree in coffee estates. A paste made out of the green fruits is used to treat scabies and sores.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Common in the deciduous forests from plains to 750m. India, Sri Lanka, Malaysia to Australia and Angola.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: Preferred tree for firewood. The bark is made into a paste with cumin seeds and used as a cure for fever. The leaves are used to stun fish during traditional fishing activity. Many animals observed feeding on the fruits.



L.Ar.



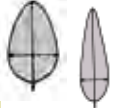
Alternate-spiral

L.Ty.



2or 3-pinnate

L.Sh.



Ovate-lanceolate

L.Ap.



Acuminate

L.Ba.



Cuneate

L.Ma.



Distally serrate

Millettia pinnata (L.) Panigrahi

FABACEAE

Indian Beech -En

Pungamaram-Ir

Pungamaram, Ponga -Ta; Pungam -Ma; Karanj -Hi



HABIT: A medium-sized deciduous tree.

L.Ar.



Alternate-spiral

L.Ty.



Imparipinnate

L.Sh.



Obovate

L.Ap.



Acuminate

L.Ba.



Obtuse-cuneate

L.Ma.



Entire

FLOWER: In pseudo racemes or panicles; pinkish-white. Flowering from February-June.

FRUIT: An oblong pod, oblique, compressed, indehiscent, woody; seed solitary, reniform. Fruiting from April-October.

FIELD TIPS: Bark greyish-brown, thick, tubercled. Leaves often with long galls.

MISCELLANEOUS: Wood moderately hard, used for cart-wheels and agricultural implements. Leaves used as green manure. Seeds yield an oil used for the preparation of medicines and biodiesel.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common along the river banks and dam areas. India, Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Malaysia to Polynesia and N.Australia.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: The leaves extensively used to decorate festival pandhals. Oil from the seed applied on the body to cure psoriasis. Young stem used as tooth stick.



Mimusops elengi L.

SAPOTACEAE

Magizhamaram, Magadam -Ta; Elengi -Ma; Malsari -Hi

HABIT: A medium-sized, densely foliaceous evergreen tree.

FLOWER: Solitary or in axillary fascicles; cream, fragrant. Flowering from March-April.

FRUIT: An ovoid, fleshy berry, yellow when ripe; seed solitary, oblong, shiny. Fruiting May onwards.

FIELD TIPS: Bark dark grey, rough, deeply fissured. Tree with a hemispherical crown. Sap white.

MISCELLANEOUS: The fruit is sweetish and edible. The fruit can also be pickled. Wood is very hard, used for construction and making agricultural implements.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Common in ravines and semi-evergreen forests above 500m. India to Hawaii, N. Australia and New Caledonia.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: Fruits edible.



L.Ar.



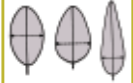
Alternate-spiral

L.Ty.



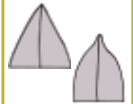
Simple

L.Sh.



Elliptic-ovate to lanceolate

L.Ap.



Acute-shortly acuminate

L.Ba.



Acute-attenuate

L.Ma.



Entire



Mitragyna parvifolia (Roxb.) Korth.

RUBIACEAE

Kadambamaram -lr

Neerkadambai; Ilukki -Ta; Kongu -Ka; Vimba -Ma; Kadam -Hi



HABIT: A large deciduous tree.

FLOWER: In terminal or axillary, globose heads; cream. Flowering from April-June.

FRUIT: A small capsule, aggregated in globose heads; seeds many, flat, winged. Fruiting June onwards.

FIELD TIPS: Bark light grey, smooth with small circular patches. Hairy domatia on the nerve axils.

MISCELLANEOUS: Wood is moderately hard and used for making furniture. The root and bark are used in medicinal preparations.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Common in deciduous forests and ravine areas from plain to 900m. India, Sri Lanka, Myanmar and Bangladesh.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: Flute is fashioned from the wood of the tree. Leaves used as fodder.

L.Ar.



Opposite-decussate

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Oblong-(sub)orbicular

L.Ap.



Obtuse

L.Ba.



Truncate-acute

L.Ma.



Entire



Morinda angustifolia Roxb.

RUBIACEAE

Maddi maram -lr

HABIT: A medium-sized tree.

FLOWER: In axillary or terminal umbellate heads; white. Flowering from March-June.

FRUIT: A syncarpous drupe, green. Fruiting April onwards.

FIELD TIPS: Stipules connate, sheathing.

MISCELLANEOUS: In Myanmar leaves are cooked with fish.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Common in the deciduous forests from plains to 400m. India, Sri Lanka, Myanmar and China.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: Wood used for agricultural implements.



L.Ar.



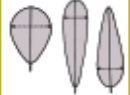
Opposite-decussate

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Obovate-oblongate or lanceolate

L.Ap.



Acuminate

L.Ba.



Acute-cuneate

L.Ma.



Entire

Murraya koenigii (L.) Spreng.

RUTACEAE

Curry tree -En

Kuruveppilai -Ir

Karivempu, Katta veppilei -Ta; Kari bevu -Ka; Katnim -Hi



HABIT: A medium-sized tree.

L.Ar.



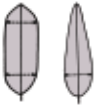
Alternate-spiral

L.Ty.



Paripinnate

L.Sh.



Oblong-lanceolate

L.Ap.



Emarginate

L.Ba.



Oblique

L.Ma.



Entire

FLOWER: In terminal panicles; white, fragrant. Flowering from March-May and July-August.

FRUIT: A subglobose berry, purplish-black when ripe; seeds upto 2. Fruiting throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: Leaves aromatic when crushed.

MISCELLANEOUS: The leaves are an important ingredient in South Indian cooking. Leaves have slight pungent taste. Regular intake of the leaves is recommended for good health.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common in the deciduous forests from plains to 1000m, often planted in the home gardens. India, Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Thailand, Indo-China, S.China and Hainan.



Murraya paniculata (L.) Jack

RUTACEAE

Satin Wood, Mock Orange -En

Shettithymaram -lr

Marchula, Kamini, Malailakkadi -Hi

HABIT: A small evergreen tree.

FLOWER: In axillary or terminal panicles; white, showy, fragrant. Flowering from March-May and August-September.

FRUIT: An ovoid berry, red when ripe; seeds upto 2, densely pubescent. Fruiting throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: Bark brownish-white, smooth. Leaves dark green, with numerous minute oil glands, unpleasant odour when crushed.

MISCELLANEOUS: Wood very hard, used for construction work and agricultural implements.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common in deciduous and semi-evergreen forests from 750-1400m. India, Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Thailand, Indo-China, Malaysia to N.Australia.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: Roots used in traditional medicine.



L.Ar.



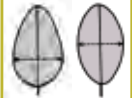
Alternate-spiral

L.Ty.



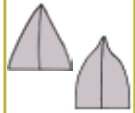
Imparipinnate

L.Sh.



Ovate to ovate-elliptic

L.Ap.



Acute to shortly acuminate

L.Ba.



oblique

L.Ma.



Entire

Naringi crenulata (Roxb.) Nicolson

RUTACEAE

Naringi mul, Okarikavela -Ir

Magavilvam -Ta; Kattunarakam -Ma



HABIT: A small, armed, deciduous tree.

FLOWER: In axillary, subumbellate racemes; white. Flowering from April-May.

FRUIT: A globose berry, gland dotted; seeds 3 or 4, ovoid. Fruiting from July-September.

FIELD TIPS: Spines straight, solitary or in pairs in the axils. Rachis broadly winged.

MISCELLANEOUS: Wood yellowish-white, hard and used for making agricultural implements.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Common in the deciduous belts from plains to 1000m. India and Myanmar.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: Wood Preferred for firewood. Leaves used as fodder.

L.Ar.



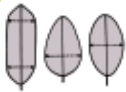
Alternate-spiral

L.Ty.



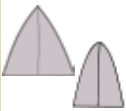
Imparipinnate

L.Sh.



Oblong-ovate
or elliptic

L.Ap.



Subacute-obtuse

L.Ba.



Subacute-obtuse

L.Ma.



Crenulate



Phyllanthus emblica L.

EUPHORBIACEAE

Gooseberry -En

Nelli -lr

Nelli -Ta; Nelli -Ma; Aonla -Hi

HABIT: A small deciduous tree.

FLOWER: In axillary fascicles, very small; reddish. Flowering from March-April.

FRUIT: A depressed-globose drupe, fleshy, indehiscent; seeds many, trigonous. Fruiting May onwards.

FIELD TIPS: Bark light grey and exfoliating. Leaf tip reddish.

MISCELLANEOUS: The fruit (Amla/Aonla) is highly medicinal and is edible fresh, pickled or cooked. It is one of the highly esteemed fruits in the Indian system of medicine and is included in many formulations. The fruit is rich in vitamin C and immuno-modulators.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Common along the exposed hill slopes of deciduous forests. Indian subcontinent, S. & S.E. Asia.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: Branchlets are used to purify the saline water.



L.Ar.



Alternate-spiral

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Oblong

L.Ap.



Apiculate

L.Ba.



Truncate-cordate

L.Ma.



Entire

Phyllanthus indofischeri Bennet

EUPHORBIACEAE

Indian Gooseberry -En
 Nelli -Ir
 Nelli -Ta; Nelli -Ma; Aonla -Hi

HABIT: A small deciduous tree.

FLOWER: In axillary fascicles; reddish. Flowering from March-April.

FRUIT: A depressed-globose drupe, fleshy, indehiscent, much larger than the former species; seeds many. Fruiting May onwards.

FIELD TIPS: Leaves and fruits larger than that of *Phyllanthus emblica*.

MISCELLANEOUS: Fruit properites similar to that of *Phyllanthus emblica*.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Scarce in the exposed hills of deciduous forests from plains to 900m. Endemic to S.India.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: Similar to *Phyllanthus emblica*.

L.Ar.



Alternate-spiral

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Elliptic-oblong

L.Ap.



Rounded-retuse

L.Ba.



Rounded

L.Ma.



Entire



Phyllanthus polyphyllus Willd.
EUPHORBIACEAE

Sirunelli -Ta; Kattunelli -Ma

HABIT: A small deciduous tree.

FLOWER: In axillary cluster or solitary; yellow, minute. Flowering from December-February.

FRUIT: A 3-valved capsule, green; seeds triquetrous. Fruiting February onwards.

FIELD TIPS: Bark brownish grey, smooth; blaze greenish.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common along the ravines and deciduous forests from plains to 900m. Peninsular India and Sri Lanka.



L.Ar.



Alternate-spiral

L.Ty.



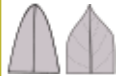
Simple

L.Sh.



Oblong

L.Ap.



Obtuse or apiculate

L.Ba.



Rounded

L.Ma.



Entire

Pleiospermium alatum (Wight & Arn.) Swingle
RUTACEAE

Morali godda -Ir

Kurnthumul thazhai -Ta

HABIT: A small, armed tree.

FLOWER: In axillary/or terminal panicles; cream, fragrant. Flowering from January-April.

FRUIT: A globose berry, dark green; seeds 4. Fruiting throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: Branchlets with axillary spines. Petioles winged. Leaflets gland dotted.

MISCELLANEOUS: Wood very hard, used for fuel.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common in the deciduous forests from foothills to 500m. Peninsular India and Sri Lanka.

L.Ar.



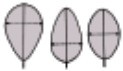
Alternate-spiral

L.Ty.



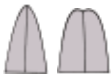
Trifoliate

L.Sh.



Obovate,
Ovate-elliptic

L.Ap.



Obtuse-retuse

L.Ba.



Cuneate

L.Ma.



Subentire



Pleurostyliya opposita (Wall.) Alston
 CELASTRACEAE

Sru piyari, karuvaali -Ta

HABIT: A small evergreen tree.

FLOWER: In axillary few flowered cymes; white. Flowering from July-November.

FRUIT: An indehiscent drupe, marked on one side by the remains of the style, green; seed solitary. Fruiting August onwards.

FIELD TIPS: Densely foliaceous tree, with compact crown. Bark fissured.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Common along the Shola borders, and exposed slopes from plains to 1400m. Peninsular India, Sri Lanka, Madagascar and Mauritius.



L.Ar.



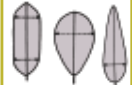
Opposite-decussate

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Oblong-ovate or lanceolate

L.Ap.



Obtuse

L.Ba.



Attenuate

L.Ma.



Entire

Premna tomentosa Willd.

VERBENACEAE

Peethaimaram -lr

Kolakattai thekku, Malai thekku -Ta; Ije -Ka

HABIT: A moderate-sized deciduous tree.

FLOWER: In terminal and axillary corymbose cymes; cream, fragrant. Flowering from January-April.

FRUIT: A globose drupe, seated on the calyx; seeds oblong. Fruiting February onwards.

FIELD TIPS: Bark light grey brown. Leaves and tender parts yellowish.

MISCELLANEOUS: Wood moderately hard preferred for fuel, leaves eaten in parts of India.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Common in the deciduous and semi-evergreen forests from foothills to 900m. Peninsular India and Sri Lanka.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: Fruits edible.

L.Ar.



Opposite-decussate

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



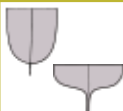
Broadly ovate

L.Ap.



Acuminate

L.Ba.



Rounded-truncate

L.Ma.



Entire-minutely toothed



Prosopis glandulosa Torr.

MIMOSACEAE

Honey Mesquite, South West Thorn -En

Dellimaram -Ir

Vaelikkaruvai -Ta & Ka; Vanni -Ma; Vilaiti Keekar -Hi

HABIT: A small armed deciduous tree.

FLOWER: In spikes, axillary clusters or solitary; yellow. Flowering from December-March.

FRUIT: A drupaceous pod, compressed, septate, slightly curved, indehiscent; seeds many, ovoid. Fruiting February onwards.

FIELD TIPS: Branchlets with axillary spines. Rachis with a gland.

MISCELLANEOUS: Wood used for fuel. Charcoal prepared from the wood.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Native of tropical America, widely naturalized in tropical Asia.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: Planted as a fence. Cattle feed on the fruits. Wood used for making wheels of bullock cart.



L.Ar.



Alternate or clustered

L.Ty.



Bipinnate

L.Sh.



Oblong

L.Ap.



Obtuse

L.Ba.



Obtuse

L.Ma.



Entire



Psydrax dicoccos Gaertn.

RUBIACEAE

Oppai, Kakrolai -Ir

Nekkini, Irambaranthan, Naluvai, Navugu -Ta



HABIT: A medium-sized evergreen tree.

FLOWER: In lax, dichasial, distinctly pedunculate cymes, greenish-white. Flowering from December-March.

FRUIT: A globose drupe, green; seeds 2, oblong. Fruiting throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: Bark dark grey, smooth. Densely foliaceous tree, leaves shining, hairy domatia on the nerve axils.

MISCELLANEOUS: Wood hard and used for agricultural implements. The stem bark and root is used in medicinal preparations.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common in the deciduous forests from the scrub jungles to 1200m on the slopes. Indian, Sri Lanka, Indo-China and Malaysia.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: Preferred fire wood species.

L.Ar.



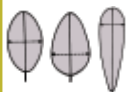
Opposite

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Elliptic-ovate or oblanceolate

L.Ap.



Acuminate, -acute

L.Ba.



Cuneate

L.Ma.



Entire



Pterocarpus marsupium Roxb.

FABACEAE



Vaengai, Ponnai -lr

Vaengai -Ta; Honne -Ka; Venga -Ma; Bigasal -Hi

HABIT: A large deciduous tree, to 18m.

FLOWER: In terminal panicles; golden yellow, very showy. Flowering from June-August.

FRUIT: An orbicular, broadly winged pod, compressed, indehiscent; seed solitary. Fruiting from July-March.

FIELD TIPS: Bark thick, grey, with vertical cracks. Cut end exudes a red sap.

MISCELLANEOUS: Wood very hard, used for building, furniture and agricultural purposes. Red “kino” resin extracted from the trunk and extensively used for indian medicines.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common in fully exposed deciduous forests from 250-1400m. Peninsular India and Sri Lanka.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: The sap from the trunk applied on children’s forehead as a ‘pottu’ and believed to keep away evil sprits. Wood used for construction of houses. The leaves fed to cattle.



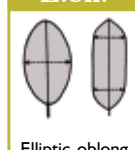
L.Ar.



L.Ty.



L.Sh.



L.Ap.



L.Ba.



L.Ma.



Rhus mysorensis G. Don

ANACARDIACEAE

Mysore sumac -En

Sipilai -Ir

Neyyi kiluvai, Chippaamaram -Ta



HABIT: A bushy small tree.

L.Ar.



Alternate-spiral

L.Ty.

FLOWER: In panicles, terminal or upper leaf axils; yellow. Flowering from November-January.

FRUIT: A globose drupe, small, compressed; seed solitary. Fruiting December onwards.

FIELD TIPS: Leaves 3-foliolate. Branchlets woolly at apices, spines upto 1.5 cm long.



Trifoliolate

L.Sh.

MISCELLANEOUS: The stem used for making fences.

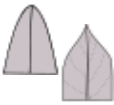
HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Common in dry slopes, and exposed rocks from 400 to 800m. Endemic to India.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: Wood used for fuel.



Obovate

L.Ap.



Obtuse-apiculate

L.Ba.



Cuneate

L.Ma.



Sinous

Santalum album L.

SANTALACEAE



Sandal -En

Ghandha, Sandanamaram -lr

Sandhanam, Srigandam -Ta; Chandan -Hi



HABIT: A small evergreen tree.

FLOWER: In axillary and terminal paniculate cymes, 3-chorotomous; brownish-purple. Flowering from December-April.

FRUIT: A globose drupe, annulate above, beaked with basal part of the style, dark black when ripe. Fruiting throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: Bark dark grey, rough. Leaves glaucous beneath.

MISCELLANEOUS: Sapwood white, scentless, heart wood yellowish-brown, strongly scented, great demand for carvings and distillation of oil.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common in the deciduous scrub forests from foothills to 1000m. Endemic to Peninsular India.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: Wood used in religious rituals.



L.Ar.



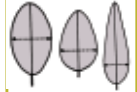
Alternate/
opposite

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



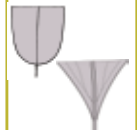
Elliptic-ovate to
lanceolate

L.Ap.



Acute

L.Ba.



Rounded-acute

L.Ma.



Entire

Sapindus trifoliatus L.

SAPINDACEAE

Soapnut Tree -En

Poocha maram -Ir

Puchaa, Poovan kottai -Ta; Aratala -Ka; Ritha -Hi



HABIT: A medium-sized deciduous tree.

L.Ar.



Alternate-spiral

FLOWER: In axillary and terminal panicles; cream, rusty tomentose. Flowering from February-April and August-December.

FRUIT: An ovoid drupe, lobed, smooth, brownish-yellow, rusty. Fruiting throughout the year.

L.Ty.



Paripinnate

FIELD TIPS: Bark grey with rough scales.

MISCELLANEOUS: Fruits used as a substitute for soap.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common in the deciduous belts from plains to 750m. Peninsular India, Sri Lanka and Myanmar.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: Mature fruits are powdered and used to shampoo hair. Wood used for fuel.

L.Sh.



Oblanceolate



L.Ap.



Emarginate or retuse

L.Ba.



Cuneate

L.Ma.



Entire



Schleichera oleosa (Lour.) Oken

SAPINDACEAE

Pulipoosa maram -Ir

Poovam -Ta; Chakota -Ka; Puvam -Ma; Kusam -Hi

HABIT: A medium-sized deciduous tree.

FLOWER: In slender panicles, pendulous, interrupted; greenish-yellow. Flowering from March-April.

FRUIT: An ovoid drupe, spiny; seed(s) 1 or 2, ovoid, with a fleshy aril. Fruiting from April-May.

FIELD TIPS: New foliage red, fast changing into green.

MISCELLANEOUS: The wood used to make rice-pounders and carts.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common in deciduous forests from plains to 750m. Tropical India, Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Thailand, Indo-China and Malaysia.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: Fruits edible. The bark used in medicinal preparations to cure fever.



L.Ar.



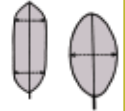
Alternate-distichous

L.Ty.



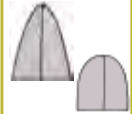
Paripinnate

L.Sh.



Oblong-elliptic

L.Ap.



Obtuse-rounded

L.Ba.



Cuneate-subcordate

L.Ma.



Entire

Sterculia urens Roxb.

STERCULIACEAE

Indian gum tragacanth -En

Senthanukku, Senthalamaram, Kavalam -Ta; Thondi -Ma; Gular -Hi

HABIT: A large deciduous tree.

FLOWER: In terminal panicles; foetid. Flowering from December-March.

FRUIT: A follicle, 4 or 5 lobed; lobes ovoid-oblong with ferruginous stiff-hairs, red turning green. Fruiting March onwards.

FIELD TIPS: Bark smooth, grey with white patches. Wood very soft, pith with red resin canals.

MISCELLANEOUS: Wood used for making toys.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Common on dry steep rocky slopes of deciduous forests from 400-800m. India, Sri Lanka, and Malaysia.

L.Ar.



Alternate-disticuous

L.Ty.



Palmate

L.Sh.



Palmate

L.Ap.



Caudate acuminate

L.Ba.

Cordate

L.Ma.



Entire



Stereospermum colais (Buch.-Ham. ex Dillwyn) Mabb.

BIGNONIACEAE

Yellow snake tree, Trumpet Flower -En

Pathiri, Patharai -Ir

Poopadiri, Paadhaalamaram -Ta; Karingkruna -Ma; Pathiri -Hi

HABIT: A large, densely foliaceous tree.

FLOWER: In axillary corymbs, bell-shaped; yellow with red veins. Flowering from April-June and July-September.

FRUIT: A terete or 4-gonous capsule, elongate, twisted with speckles; seeds many, compressed, trigonous. Fruiting throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: Bark brown. Fruit spirally twisted. Often fruit like galls found.

MISCELLANEOUS: Wood very hard, greyish-brown with darker patches.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common along the steam areas and semi-evergreen forests from 300-800m. India, Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Thailand, Indo-China and Malaysia.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: Bark used in medicinal preparations.



L.Ar.



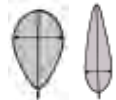
Opposite

L.Ty.



Imparipinnate

L.Sh.



Obovate-lanceolate

L.Ap.



Acuminate

L.Ba.



Acute

L.Ma.



Entire-minutely toothed

Streblus asper Lour.

MORACEAE

Sand paper tree -En

Puraamaram, Kuttipilaa -Ta; Mitli, Punjai -Ka; Pareukeu, Parava -Ma

HABIT: A medium-sized evergreen tree.

FLOWER: Male flowers in axillary, peduncled heads or spikes, female flowers in clusters; greenish-yellow. Flowering from January-March and July-September.

FRUIT: A subglobose drupe, enclosed by enlarged perianth, reflexed later. Fruiting throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: Bark soft, light grey, irregularly ribbed. Leaves very rough. Sap watery.

MISCELLANEOUS: Wood white, moderately hard, used for agricultural implements. Leaves used to polish ivory and wood. The fruit is tasty and edible. Juice from the stem and the leaves splits the milk.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common in all kind of forests from plains to 1000m. India, Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Thailand, Indo-China and Malaysia.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: Leaves are fed to cattle.

L.Ar.



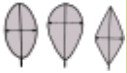
Alternate-disticuous

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Elliptic-ovate to rhomboid

L.Ap.



Acute

L.Ba.



Cuneate

L.Ma.

Bluntly toothed



Strychnos nux-vomica L.

LOGANIACEAE

Strychnine Tree, Nux-vomica -En

Yettimaram -Ir

Yetti, Kanjaram -Ta; Kanjeram -Ma; Kuchila -Hi

HABIT: A medium-sized deciduous tree.

FLOWER: In terminal or axillary cymes; greenish. Flowering from March-April.

FRUIT: A globose berry, thick shelled, orange when ripe; seeds 4, globose or compressed. Fruiting throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: Bark thin, dark grey or yellowish-grey. Leaves 3-nerved from base. Flowers and fruits emit a fenugreek smell.

MISCELLANEOUS: The seed contains a chemical called 'strychnine' extensively used for preparation of medicines.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common in the deciduous and semi-evergreen forests from plains to 1400m. India, Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Thailand, Indo-China and Malaysia.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: Sap from the bark applied to heal cracked feet. Common langur observed feeding on the fruits.



L.Ar.



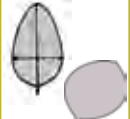
Opposite

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Ovate-orbicular

L.Ap.



Obtuse-acute

L.Ba.



Attenuate

L.Ma.



Entire

Strychnos potatorum L.f.

LOGANIACEAE

Clearing Nut Tree -En

Sillamaram -lr

Thetthamkottai, Kalkottai, Sirungamaram, Sillamaram -Ta; Nirmali -Hi

HABIT: A medium-sized deciduous tree.

FLOWER: In axillary or terminal cymes; greenish-white. Flowering from April-June.

FRUIT: A thin shelled, globose berry, dark blue when ripe; seed solitary, orbicular. Fruiting from June onwards.

FIELD TIPS: Bark brownish-black, corky, deeply cracked. Leaves 3-5-nerved from base.

MISCELLANEOUS: Seeds used to clear muddy water.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Common in the deciduous belts from foothills to 800m. Peninsular India and Sri Lanka.

NDIGENOUS INFORMATION: Seeds edible, bitter to taste. The wood is not used for fuel, as it is believed to cause disputes in the family.

L.Ar.



Opposite

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



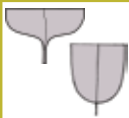
Ovate

L.Ap.



Acuminate-mucronate

L.Ba.



Truncate-rounded

L.Ma.



Entire



Syzygium cumini (L.) Skeels

MYRTACEAE

Indian Blackberry, Jambolan -En

Nagamaram -Ir

Naval -Ta; Narala -Ka; Naga -Ma; Jamun -Hi

HABIT: A medium-sized evergreen tree.

FLOWER: In axillary or terminal panicked cymes; cream, fragrant. Flowering from March-April (Plains) and June-July (Hills).

FRUIT: A globose berry, red to dark blue; seed solitary. Fruiting from June-July.

FIELD TIPS: Bark light grey, smooth, flaking off. Branchlets pendulous. Petioles reddish. Leaves with numerous veins.

MISCELLANEOUS: Fruits edible and sold in the market, highly valued for their medicinal properties. Wood very hard and used for construction and making of agricultural implements.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Common in ravines and semi-evergreen forests from plains to 1400m. India, Sri Lanka, Malaysia and N.Australia.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: The bark used for brewing locally. Fruits edible. Branchlets preferred for fuel.



L.Ar.



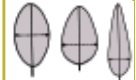
Opposite-decussate

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Elliptic-ovate to lanceolate

L.Ap.



Acuminate

L.Ba.



Cuneate-obtuse

L.Ma.



Entire

Tamarindus indica L.

CAESALPINIACEAE

Tamarind -En

Sullamaram, Puliyamaram -lr

Puliyamaram -Ta; Imli -Hi



HABIT: A large evergreen tree.

L.Ar.



Alternate-spiral

FLOWER: In terminal racemes; yellow with pink streaks. Flowering April-August.

FRUIT: An oblong pod, subcompressed, mesocarp pulpy; seeds 3-8 or more, shiny. Fruiting from December-March.

FIELD TIPS: Bark dark grey, longitudinally fissured. Branchlets warty, tomentose.

L.Ty.



Paripinnate

MISCELLANEOUS: Wood very hard and heavy used for agricultural purposes and constructions. Both unripe and ripe fruit are edible. Children are fond of eating the flowers and leaves.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Native of tropical Africa, very commonly planted in the homesteads and roadsides. Tropics.

L.Sh.



Oblong

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: The fruits are used in cooking. Wood preferred for fuel. Bark ash mixed with coconut oil and applied to heal burn wounds.

L.Ap.



Obtuse



L.Ba.



Obtuse

L.Ma.



Entire

Tectona grandis L.f.

VERBENACEAE

Teak -En

Thaekku -Ir

Thaekku, Thanagaa -Ta; Thaekku -Ma; Sagan -Hi

HABIT: A large deciduous tree.

FLOWER: In axillary/or terminal cymose panicles, dichotomously branched; whitish-yellow. Flowering from June-September.

FRUIT: A globose drupe, with a stony endocarp and spongy epicarp; seeds oblong. Fruiting throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: Bark light brown or grey. Stem quadrangular. Leaves very large, rough.

MISCELLANEOUS: Wood very hard, very valuable and great demand as for timber.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Common in the deciduous forests from plains to 800m. Often planted in the plains. Tropical Asia and Malaysia.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: Leaves used for thatching and serving plate. Wood used for house construction and making agricultural implements.



L.Ar.



Opposite-decussate

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Elliptic

L.Ap.



Obtuse-acute

L.Ba.



Rounded-acute

L.Ma.



Entire

Terminalia arjuna (DC.) Wight & Arn.
COMBRETACEAE

Arjun -En

Mathi -Ir

Vella maruthu, Kula maruthu -Ta;

Neer maruthu, Aatumaruthu, Vellamathi -Ma; Arjuna- Hi



L.Ar.



Alternate-subopposite

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Oblong-ovate to oblanceolate

L.Ap.



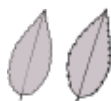
Obtuse

L.Ba.



Obtuse-subcordate

L.Ma.



Crenate-serrate

HABIT: A large handsome deciduous tree.

FLOWER: In axillary paniced spikes; cream, fragrant. Flowering from April-July.

FRUIT: A drupe, 5-angled, 5-winged, wings equal, apex notched; seed solitary. Fruiting June onwards.

FIELD TIPS: Bark pinkish-grey, smooth, flaking off into pieces. Often buttressed. Trunk exude a red sap when cut.

MISCELLANEOUS: Wood very hard and used for various purposes. Leaves often used as green manure.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common along the river banks from plains to 1000m. India and Sri Lanka.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: Wood used for making furniture. Honey bees (*Apis dorsata*), observed nesting on the branches.



Terminalia bellirica (Gaertn.) Roxb.

COMBRETACEAE

Belliric Myrobalan, Bastard myrobalan, Beach almond -En

Thandimaram -lr

Tani, Thandi, Semmaram -Ta; Thani -Ma; Bahera -Hi

HABIT: A large deciduous tree.

FLOWER: In axillary, solitary or clustered spikes; cream, fragrant. Flowering from April-May.

FRUIT: A subglobose drupe, obscurely 5-ridged, softly tomentose; seed solitary. Fruiting June onwards and matures in September.

FIELD TIPS: Bark bluish-grey with vertical cracks. Branchlets warty with persistent leaf scars. Leaves densely clustered at the ends of branchlets.

MISCELLANEOUS: Wood very hard but not durable, so little used. Fruits used in tanning. The kernel is chewed with betel nut as substitute for areca nut.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Common in the hilly areas from 900-1400m. Indian subcontinent, Thailand, Indo-China and Malaysia.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: The paste of bark used to cure paralysis. Wood preferred for fuel.



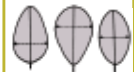
L.Ar.



Clustered
L.Ty.



Simple
L.Sh.



Ovate-ovate
to elliptic

L.Ap.



Rotund
L.Ba.



Cuneate-
attenuate

L.Ma.



Entire-
subrenate

Terminalia chebula Retz.

COMBRETACEAE

Chebolic Myrobalam -En

Aralae -lr

Kadukkaai -Ta; Harra -Hi



HABIT: A large deciduous tree.

L.Ar.



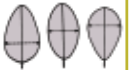
Alternate-opposite

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Ovate-elliptic-ovate

L.Ap.



Acute-obtuse

L.Ba.



Rounded

L.Ma.



Entire

FLOWER: In simple or branched axillary spikes, greenish-yellow. Flowering from March-May.

FRUIT: An obovoid or oblong-ellipsoid drupe, faintly angled, glossy, glabrous; seed solitary. Fruiting April onwards.

FIELD TIPS: Branchlets and leaves densely rusty tomentose. Petioles with 2 glands below the leaf blades.

MISCELLANEOUS: Fruits yields a valuable tanning materials and a yellow dye. Wood very hard and used for construction and making agricultural implements. The tender fruit is collected and soaked in salt water for sometime, it is then made into pickles. An important ingredient of ayurvedic medicine.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Common in the deciduous forests of above 800m. Endemic to Indian subcontinent.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: The fruits used to brew alcohol. A piece of fruit is kept in the mouth to cure cough. A tonic prepared from the fruits used to cure ulcer. A good fuel wood species.



Thespesia populnea (L.) Sol. ex Corr.

MALVACEAE

Bhendi Tree, Portia Tree, Indian Tulip Tree -En

Puvarasu -Ta; Huvarasi -Ka; Porasu -Ma

HABIT: A medium-sized evergreen tree.

FLOWER: Solitary, axillary; yellow, very showy, turning pink in the evening. Flowering throughout the year.

FRUIT: A globose capsule, indehiscent, mucronate; seeds 2-4 per cell, obovoid. Fruiting throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: Branchlets peltate scaly. Stipules subulate. Epicalyx segments 3-5. Leaves 5-7 nerved from base.

MISCELLANEOUS: Commonly cultivated as a shade tree around habitations.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Common along streams and human habitations from plains to 500m. Tropics.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: Wood used for agricultural implements.



L.Ar.



Alternate-spiral

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Ovate-orbicular

L.Ap.



Acuminate

L.Ba.



Cordate

L.Ma.



Entire

Trema orientalis (L.) Blume

ULMACEAE

Charcoal Tree -En

Ambatathi, Taeliaamaram, Tachaamaram -Ta; Gurklu -Ka;

Ratthi, Arni, Amathalai -Ma;

HABIT: A small spreading tree.

FLOWER: In axillary clusters; greenish-yellow. Flowering from January-March and August-October.

FRUIT: A globose drupe, tipped by the style at apex, black when ripe; seed ovoid-globose. Fruiting throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: Bark greyish-brown with numerous lenticels. Leaves 3-nerved from base.

MISCELLANEOUS: Bark yields fibre. Charcoal prepared from the wood.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common along the stream banks and ravine areas. Tropical Africa, Indian subcontinent, Indo-China to Malaysia and N.Australia.

L.Ar.



Alternate-distichous

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Broadly lanceolate

L.Ap.



Acuminate

L.Ba.



Oblique

L.Ma.



Serrulate



Vitex altissima L.f.

VERBENACEAE

Mehilai maram -lr

Mayilaadi, Mayilai nochi -Ta; Myrole -Ka; Maylai -Ma

HABIT: A large deciduous tree.

FLOWER: In panicles from terminal and upper leaf axils; blue to purple. Flowering from June-September.

FRUIT: A globose drupe, fleshy, purple when ripe. Fruiting from October-January.

FIELD TIPS: Bark yellowish-grey. Rachis and petioles winged in young plants.

MISCELLANEOUS: Wood very hard and used for furniture, construction and agricultural implements.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common along the river banks and deciduous forests above 600m. Endemic to Peninsular India.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: Cattle feed on the leaves. Wood preferred for fuel.



L.Ar.



Opposite-decussate

L.Ty.



3-foliolate

L.Sh.



Obovate-lanceolate to oblanceolate

L.Ap.



Acuminate

L.Ba.



Acute

L.Ma.



Entire



Ziziphus glabrata Heyne ex Roth

RHAMNACEAE

Karunkottai, Karattai -Ir

Karukaavu, Kottei -Ta; Karkala -Ma



HABIT: A small, unarmed tree.

FLOWER: In axillary cymes; greenish. Flowering from March-May.

FRUIT: A globose-obovoid drupe, rugose, orange when ripe; seed(s) 1 or 2. Fruiting from July-September.

FIELD TIPS: Branchlets tomentose. Leaves 3-nerved from base.

MISCELLANEOUS: Wood very hard and olive brown, used as fuel.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Common along stream banks and deciduous forests from plains to 750m. India to Bhutan.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: Fruits edible. Monkeys and mongooses observed eating the fruit. Wood is used in making agricultural implements and poles. The leaves are tied with flowers into a garland as an offering to the gods.

L.Ar.



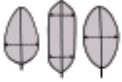
Alternate-distichous

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Ovate-oblong to elliptic

L.Ap.



Obtuse

L.Ba.



Obtuse or subcordate

L.Ma.



Crenate



Ziziphus mauritiana Lam.

RHAMNACEAE

Elanthai, Elasi -lr

Ilanthai, Yellande -Ta; Yelchi -Ka; Cherumali -Ma; Ber -Hi

HABIT: A medium-sized thorny tree.

FLOWER: In axillary cymes; cream. Flowering from July-November.

FRUIT: An oblong-globose drupe, rugose, orange when ripe. Fruiting from October-December.

FIELD TIPS: Bark dark grey, with irregular cracks. Leaves 3-nerved from base, white fulvous-tawny beneath.

MISCELLANEOUS: Wood very hard and used as fuel. The fruit is delicious and is eaten either fresh or prepared as a drink. The fruit has vitamin C, sugar, minerals, calcium, phosphorus, iron, and carotene. In addition, it has proteins 0.8%, fat 0.3%, and carbohydrates 17.0%. It is one of the indigenous forest fruits that relieves tiredness and promotes body weight.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common in the deciduous belts from plains to 500m. India, Sri Lanka and widely cultivated in the tropics.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: Fruits edible. Wood used in construction and making agricultural implements.



L.Ar.



Alternate-distichous

L.Ty.



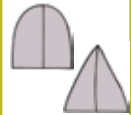
Simple

L.Sh.



Orbicular

L.Ap.



Rounded-retuse

L.Ba.



Oblique

L.Ma.



Denticulate

Ziziphus rugosa Lam.

RHAMNACEAE

Kattilandai, Suduthoratti -Ta;

Cheruthudali -Ma; Suran -Hi



HABIT: A spreading, armed tree.

FLOWER: In axillary and terminal panicles, woolly; cream. Flowering from January-April.

FRUIT: A globose or pyriform drupe; seeds obovoid, turgid. Fruiting from April-June.

FIELD TIPS: Branchlets woolly. Thorns stout, recurved. Leaves 5-nerved from base, densely hairy beneath.

MISCELLANEOUS: Fruits edible. Wood preferred for fuel.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common in the hills, exposed dry slopes of above 1000m. India, Sri Lanka and Myanmar.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: The bark used to brew alcohol and a paste from it is used to cure gastric problems. The dry leaves are used to make traditional cheroots. Seeds edible. Spotted deer observed eating the fruits.

L.Ar.



Alternate-distichous

L.Ty.



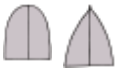
Simple

L.Sh.



Orbicular-rounded

L.Ap.



Rounded-mucronate

L.Ba.



Cordate

L.Ma.



Serrulate



Ziziphus xylopyrus (Retz.) Willd.

RHAMNACEAE

Kottai maram -lr

Kottai Elandai -Ta; Kotta -Ma; Katber -Hi

HABIT: A small spreading, armed tree.

FLOWER: In axillary cymes, divaricate, cream. Flowering from May-July.

FRUIT: A globose drupe, tomentose; seeds 2-3, oblong, sulcate in the middle. Fruiting from June-December.

FIELD TIPS: Branchlets tomentose. Leaves 3-nerved from base, densely hairy beneath. Fruits densely hairy when young, later glabrescent.

MISCELLANEOUS: Fruits edible. Wood preferred for fuel.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common in the scrub and deciduous forests from plains to 900m. India and Sri Lanka.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: Fruits edible.



L.Ar.



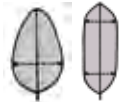
Alternate-distichous

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Ovate-oblong

L.Ap.



Rounded

L.Ba.



Subcordate/obtusate

L.Ma.



Serrulate

INDIGENOUS PEOPLE OF PILLUR VALLEY

The major groups of people living in Pillur valley include the indigenous community of Irulas, settlers like traders and employees of the Electricity Board operations at different camp sites. The major indigenous villages include Poochamarathur, Paralikadu, Nellimarathur, Sethumadai, Shengalur, Nellithurai, Situkunni, Surki, Kodyur, Neeradi, Veerakal, Anaipallam, Chinnalacombai, Thondai, Mannar and so on.



The Irula are forest dependant, practice subsistence farming and also go for wage labour. The settlements are located within forest patches or along the forest fringes. Much of their daily needs are met by the forest and very often they barter forest produce with the traders. The people also engage in agriculture which provide for some part of their food security. There are several honey gathering villages in the area. Villages like Poochamarathur and Neeradi have the highest number of honey



gatherers. Most of the elder peoples in this area have immense knowledge on forest plants. They use a wide variety of plant species for their daily sustenance and livelihood. During the ethno-botanical survey, a total of 75 plant species have been recorded as wild edibles in this area. Which have been presented in the upcoming special pages.



Abrus precatorius L.

FABACEAE

Kurukangi -Ir

Gundamani -Ta; Kunni -Ma; Gunchi -Hi

HABIT: A small, wiry straggler.

FLOWER: In terminal and/or axillary pseudoracemes, clustered around the swollen nodes of rachis; pink coloured. Flowering throughout the year.

FRUIT: An oblong pod, thinly septate, pilose, wrinkled; seeds upto 5, subglobose. Fruiting throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: Seeds blood red with a lateral black blotch around the hilum.

MISCELLANEOUS: The seeds are used for jewellers weights and to make necklaces and other ornaments. The leaves are chewed fresh.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Scarce in the scrub jungles and deciduous forests from plains to 600m. India, Sri Lanka, Pakistan and Tropical Africa.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: Seeds used as beads.

L.Ar.



Alternate-spiral

L.Ty.



Paripinnate

L.Sh.



Oblong

L.Ap.



Obtuse

L.Ba.



Obtuse

L.Ma.



Entire



Acacia caesia (L.) Willd.

MIMOSACEAE

Mandae seengai -lr

Kari indu -Ta

HABIT: A prickly climbing shrub.

FLOWER: In heads on terminal panicles; cream. Flowering from October-December.

FRUIT: A stipitate pod, thin, flat, horned; dark brown when mature; seeds more than 10. Fruiting December onwards.

FIELD TIPS: Petiole with elongate columnar glands.

MISCELLANEOUS: The flowers are used to treat menstrual disorders.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common along the stream banks, wastelands and scrub jungles from plains to 500m. India, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Malaysia.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: Preferred for fuelwood.



L.Ar.



Alternate-spiral

L.Ty.



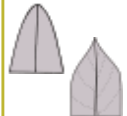
Bipinnate

L.Sh.



Oblong

L.Ap.



Obtuse-apiculate

L.Ba.



Truncate

L.Ma.



Entire



Acacia pennata (L.) Willd.

MIMOSACEAE

Kottuseengai -Ir

Vellai indu, Seengai -Ta



HABIT: A large, prickly climbing shrub.

FLOWER: In heads on axillary or terminal racemes; cream. Flowering from August-September.

FRUIT: A stipitate pod, flat, thin, obtuse at apices, sutures undulate or straight; seeds upto 10. Fruiting October onwards.

FIELD TIPS: Leaflets overlapping, margin ciliate. Petiole with a gland at base.

MISCELLANEOUS: Extensive climber forming an impenetrable thicket along the roads.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common along the roads and forest border. India, Sri Lanka, S.E.Asia, China and Malaysia.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: Tender leaves cooked and eaten.

L.Ar.



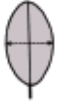
Alternate-spiral

L.Ty.



Bipinnate

L.Sh.



Elliptic

L.Ap.



Acute

L.Ba.



Truncate

L.Ma.



Entire



Acacia concinna (Willd.) DC.

MIMOSACEAE

Seeyakkai -Ir

Seeyakkaai -Ta

HABIT: A large, prickly climbing shrub.

FLOWER: In heads of terminal/axillary panicles/racemes; white. Flowering from February-April.

FRUIT: A flat pod, prominently nerved, apex acute; seeds upto 12. Fruiting from March-April.

FIELD TIPS: Leaflets not overlapping, as in *A.pennata*. Petiole sparsely prickled with a gland at base; rachis grooved.

MISCELLANEOUS: Copiously branched straggler.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common in the deciduous and semi-evergreen forests to 800m. India and Pakistan.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: Pod collected for local use as soap.



L.Ar.



Alternate-spiral

L.Ty.



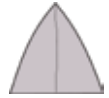
Bipinnate

L.Sh.



Elliptic

L.Ap.



Subacute

L.Ba.



Obliquely auriculate

L.Ma.



Entire



Anamirta cocculus (L.) Wight & Arn.
MENISPERMACEAE

Kallekkodi -Ir

Kakka kolyvirai -Ta

HABIT: A large climbing shrub.

FLOWER: In panicles on old wood, cauliflorous, pendent; greenish-cream. Flowering from September-March.

FRUIT: An ovoid drupe, dorsally gibbous, dark blue when ripe. Fruiting November onwards.

FIELD TIPS: Leaves shiny with tuft of hairs on the nerve axils.

MISCELLANEOUS: Crushed seeds are traditionally used to stun or kill fish and also as an insecticide.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common along the stream banks and ravines from plains to 600m. India, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Malaysia to New Guinea.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: Fibre from the stem used to make ropes for house construction. Leaves used to keep betel leaves fresh for more days and also as a serving plate.

L.Ar.



Alternate distichous

L.Ty.



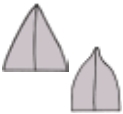
Simple

L.Sh.



Broadly ovate

L.Ap.



Acute-acuminate

L.Ba.



Truncate-subcordate

L.Ma.



Entire



Argyreia pilosa Wight & Arn.

CONVOLVULACEAE

Koppakkizhangu chedi, Paei Unnankizhangu -Ta

HABIT: A much branched vine.

FLOWER: In axillary corymbose cymes; pink, very showy. Flowering from July-September.

FRUIT: A globose berry, epicarp fleshy, ripening yellow; seeds smooth, glabrous, embedded in mealy pulp. Fruiting August onwards.

FIELD TIPS: Branchlets densely white hirsute.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Common along forests paths and clearings from 400-1100m. Endemic to Peninsular India.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: Fruits Edible.



L.Ar.



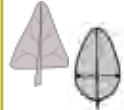
Alternate
distichous

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Deltoid-ovate

L.Ap.



Acute

L.Ba.



Truncate

L.Ma.



Entire

Aristolochia indica L.

ARISTOLOCHIACEAE

Indian birthwort-(E)

Perumarunthukodi, Thazhaisurulikodi, Kozhikkundu's, urikkalchedi -Ta

HABIT: A small slender twiner.

FLOWER: In axillary or terminal racemes, 1-lipped; greenish-purple. Flowering from December-February.

FRUIT: An oblong capsule, 6-nerved; seeds oblong, laterally winged. Fruiting throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: Leaves 3-nerved from base. Differ from all other species by its oblong leaves.

MISCELLANEOUS: Rhizome and leaves are used in medicine. It is the host plant of Southern birdwing and Common birdwing, butterflies.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Common along the wayside thickets, scrub jungles and stream banks from plains to 1000m. India, Sri Lanka, Nepal and Bangladesh.

L.Ar.



Alternate distichous

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Oblong

L.Ap.



Obtuse

L.Ba.



Truncate-subcordate

L.Ma.



Entire



Asystasia chelonoides Nees var.
quadrangularis C.B.Clarke

ACANTHACEAE

Baasatty dagu -lr

Kodikkurundhu -Ta

HABIT: A scandent shrub.

FLOWER: In solitary racemes, unilateral; purple to violet. Flowering from December-March.

FRUIT: A thinly pubescent capsule; seed angular. Fruiting January onwards.

FIELD TIPS: Corolla funnel-form, tube narrowed below, ventricose above.

MISCELLANEOUS: Sometime cultivated as an ornamental in gardens.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common in the scrub jungles and thickets from 400-1000m. Peninsular India and Sri Lanka.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: Young leaves cooked and eaten.



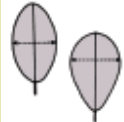
L.Ar.



Opposite
L.Ty.



Simple
L.Sh.



Elliptic-ovovate
L.Ap.



Acuminate
L.Ba.



Narrowed
L.Ma.



Entire

Basella alba L.

BASELLACEAE

Malabar Spinach -En

Paasakkeerai -Ir

Paasalaikkeerai, Paasaangalli -Ta; Poi -Hi

HABIT: A rhizomatous, succulent, twining herbs.

FLOWER: In axillary or terminal spikes; pinkish-green. Flowering from January-March.

FRUIT: A globose or lobed pseudoberry; dark black when ripe; seed solitary, subglobose. Fruiting throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: Branchlets terete, succulent, peduncles thickened when fruit ripe.

MISCELLANEOUS: The succulent mucilage is a particularly rich source of soluble fibre, thought to remove mucus and toxins from the body. The plant is also a rich source of chlorophyll.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Uncommon in the forest borders and scrub jungles from plains to 2000m. Native of tropical Africa and Asia, often cultivated in the tropics.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: Fruits edible. Leaves and stems are cooked and eaten, known to cure mouth ulcers.

L.Ar.



Alternate distichous

L.Ty.



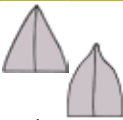
Simple

L.Sh.



Ovate-elliptic

L.Ap.



Acute to acuminate

L.Ba.



Subcordate-acute

L.Ma.



Entire-minutely crenulate



Caesalpinia bonduc (L.) Roxb.

CAESALPINIACEAE

Fever-Nut, Physic-Nut -En

Kilinji kottai -Ir

Kazharchikkaai-Ta; Kat karanj -Hi

HABIT: A large straggling, very thorny shrub.

FLOWER: In simple or branched racemes; yellow. Flowering from August-December.

FRUIT: An oblong-obovoid pod, inflated, apex beaked, densely prickled; seed(s) 1 or 2, subglobose, shiny. Fruiting October onwards.

FIELD TIPS: Branchlets downy pubescent with recurved prickles. Stipules foliaceous, lobed or pinnate. Latex milky.

MISCELLANEOUS: The seeds used to prepare a bitter tonic in Ayurvedic medicine.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Scarce. Along the stream banks and ravines from plains to 1000m. Tropics of the new and old worlds.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: Children use the seeds for games.



L.Ar.



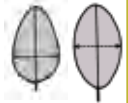
Alternate-spiral

L.Ty.



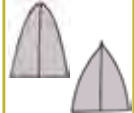
Bipinnate

L.Sh.



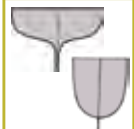
Ovate-elliptic

L.Ap.



Obtuse-mucronate

L.Ba.



Truncate-rotund

L.Ma.



Entire

Caesalpinia mimosoides Lam.

CAESALPINIACEAE

Pulinakagonrai, Pananjimullu -Ta

HABIT: An armed straggler.

FLOWER: In axillary racemes; yellow, very showy. Flowering from October-February.

FRUIT: An oblong-obovoid pod, falcate, stiff bristly, recurved; seeds 2, narrowly oblong. Fruiting December onwards.

FIELD TIPS: Branchlets with reddish, glandular bristle. Stipules scarious, subulate.

MISCELLANEOUS: Branchlets emitting a characteristic acid odour when broken.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Scarce. Along the stream banks and ravines from plains to 1000m. Peninsular India and Sri Lanka.

L.Ar.



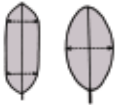
Alternate-spiral

L.Ty.



Bipinnate

L.Sh.



Oblong-elliptic

L.Ap.



Rounded

L.Ba.



Rounded

L.Ma.



Entire



Canavalia cathartica Thouars

FABACEAE

Kattu avarai, Poolavarai -Ir

Kattu Kozhi avarai, Kaattu thammattai, kattuttambattan -Ta

HABIT: A medium-sized climbing shrub.

FLOWER: In axillary racemes; purple to lilac. Flowering from October-January and July-September.

FRUIT: A pubescent pod, apically obtuse, horned; seeds 10-12. Fruiting throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: Branchlets glabrous, leaves pubescent below.

MISCELLANEOUS: The young pods are reported to be poisonous for animals.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common on the thickets, scrub jungles and wastelands from plains to 300m. India and Sri Lanka.



L.Ar.



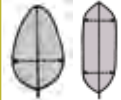
Alternate distichous

L.Ty.



3-foliolate

L.Sh.



Ovate-oblong

L.Ap.



Acute-acuminate

L.Ba.



Subacute

L.Ma.



Entire

Cansjera rheedei J.F.Gmel.

OPILIACEAE

Podhi dagu -lr

Kalimana keerai, Minnaikkali -Ta

HABIT: A straggler or liana.

FLOWER: In axillary spikes; greenish-yellow. Flowering from December-February and July-October.

FRUIT: An ovoid-oblong drupe, in groups of 3-5; orange-red; seed solitary. Fruiting throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: Branchlets lenticellate, occasionally old plants with thorns.

MISCELLANEOUS: The whole plant used for the treatment of post-natal pain.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Common in the scrub jungles and dry slopes of deciduous and semi-evergreen forests from 300-1400m. India to Malaysia and N.Australia.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: Leaves cooked and eaten.

L.Ar.



Alternate distichous

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Ovate

L.Ap.



Acuminate-caudate

L.Ba.



Obtuse

L.Ma.



Entire



Capparis sepiaria L.

CAPPARACEAE

Aanaikvisi -Ir

Kattukkathiri, Thoratti -Ta

HABIT: A large straggling, thorny shrub.

FLOWER: In corymbose sub-umbels; white. Flowering from February-April.

FRUIT: A globose berry, smooth; dark blue when ripe; seeds 2. Fruiting April onwards.

FIELD TIPS: Branchlets densely fulvous or grey-pubescent, with recurved thorns. Leaves glaucous beneath.

MISCELLANEOUS: The whole plant including the roots have to be used for medicinal purposes.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common in the scrub jungles of deciduous forests from foothills to 400m. Africa, India, Sri Lanka, Myanmar to Indo-China, Malaysia and Australia.



L.Ar.



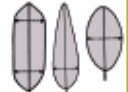
Alternate-spiral

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Oblong,
lanceolate-
elliptic

L.Ap.



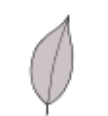
Obtuse

L.Ba.



Cuneate

L.Ma.



Entire

Capparis zeylanica L.

CAPPARACEAE

Kevisi kodi -lr

Suduthorati, Morandan, Ekkathari, Atandy -Ta

HABIT: A large, armed straggling shrub.

FLOWER: In axillary clusters; stamens cream when anthesis, red to purple in the evening. Flowering from February-April.

FRUIT: An ovoid berry, pendulous, smooth, pustulate; blood red when ripe; seeds many. Fruiting April onwards.

FIELD TIPS: Branchlets stellate tomentose, with recurved spines.

MISCELLANEOUS: Fruit pulps edible and can be pickled.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common in the deciduous forests from foothills to 400m. India, Sri Lanka to Myanmar, Thailand, Indo-China and Malaysia.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: Fruits edible. Young fruits are used to cure stomach ache.

L.Ar.



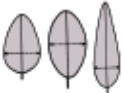
Alternate-spiral

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Ovate, elliptic
or lanceolate

L.Ap.



Obtuse-retuse
or mucronate

L.Ba.



Cuneate-obtuse

L.Ma.



Entire



Cardiospermum halicacabum L. var.
luridum (Blume) Adelb.

SAPINDACEAE

Balloon Vine -En

Sipotalie, Sitpotarai -Ir

Modakanthan keerai -Ta

HABIT: A herbaceous climber.

FLOWER: In axillary corymbose racemes; white. Flowering from July-February.

FRUIT: An obscurely 3-lobed capsule, bloated, tomentose; seeds 3, globose. Fruiting from August-March.

FIELD TIPS: The lowest pair of pedicels transformed into spiral tendrils.

MISCELLANEOUS: The leaves are applied as a poultice in the treatment of rheumatism. A tea made from them is used in the treatment of itchy skin.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common along the roadsides and open grounds in deciduous forests from plains to 400m. Tropical and subtropical Africa, America, India, Sri Lanka and Malaysia.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: The young shoots are cooked and eaten to heal knee pains.



L.Ar.

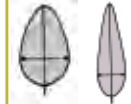


Alternate-spiral

L.Ty.

2-ternate

L.Sh.



Ovate-lanceolate

L.Ap.



Obtuse-mucronate

L.Ba.



Obtuse-truncate

L.Ma.

Irregularly deeply incised

Cardiospermum halicacabum L. var.
microcarpum (Kunth) Blume

SAPINDACEAE



Balloon Vine -En

Sipotale, Sitpotarai -Ir

Modakanthan keerai -Ta

L.Ar.



Alternate-spiral

L.Ty.

HABIT: A herbaceous climber.

FLOWER: In axillary corymbose racemes, small; white. Flowering from July-February.

FRUIT: A sharply 3-lobed capsule, winged at angles, tomentose; seeds 3, globose. Fruiting from August-March.

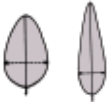
FIELD TIPS: The lowest pair of pedicels transformed into spiral tendrils.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common along the roadsides and open grounds in deciduous forests from plains to 400m. Tropical and subtropical Africa, America, India, Sri Lanka and Malaysia.

2-ternate

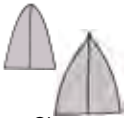
L.Sh.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: The young shoots are cooked and eaten to cure knee pains.



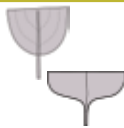
Ovate-lanceolate

L.Ap.



Obtuse-mucronate

L.Ba.



Obtuse-truncate

L.Ma.

Irregularly deeply incised



Ceropegia candelabrum L.

ASCLEPIADACEAE

Candlestick ceropegia -En

Kavilae kodi -lr

Nijota-njodien-vali, Nattunattuvalinnattunattuvalli -Ma

HABIT: A slender twiner.

FLOWER: In axillary cymes, greenish-yellow, lobes 5; purplish-green. Flowering from November-January.

FRUIT: Paired follicles, linearly cylindric, apically narrowed; seeds oblong, marginal, coma silky. Fruiting December onwards.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Common in the thickets and fences from plains to 700m. Peninsular India and Sri Lanka.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: Tubers cooked and eaten.



L.Ar.



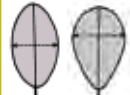
Opposite

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Elliptic to obovate

L.Ap.



Acutely apiculate

L.Ba.



Acute-rounded

L.Ma.



Entire

Ceropegia juncea Roxb.

ASCLEPIADACEAE

HABIT: A leafless twiner.

FLOWER: Solitary or in cymes; corolla brownish-purple, tube 2 cm, lobes 5, with deciduous hairs near apex. Flowering from November-January.

FRUIT: A paired follicles, linearly cylindric, apically narrowed; seeds many, coma silky. Fruiting December onwards.

FIELD TIPS: Stem often purplish-brown. Latex watery.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very rare. In the forest thickets and fences from plains to 400m. Endemic to Peninsular India.

L.Ar.

L.Ty.

L.Sh.

L.Ap.

L.Ba.

L.Ma.



Cissus pallida Planch.

VITACEAE

Malangu kodi -Ir

Nanaminukki -Ta

HABIT: A straggling, scandent shrub.

FLOWER: In leaf-opposed paniced cymes; red. Flowering from June-August.

FRUIT: A pyriform berry; seed smooth. Fruiting throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: Stem with white powdery indumentum.

MISCELLANEOUS: Stem paste is externally applied for rheumatism.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Not common. In forest thickets and wayside fences from plains to 400m. Endemic to India.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: Bark important part of rituals.



L.Ar.



Alternate
distichous

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Cordate

L.Ap.



Acuminate

L.Ba.



Cordate

L.Ma.



Serrate-crenate

Cissus quadrangularis L.

VITACEAE

Veldt grape, Devils backbone -En

Naralai kodi -lr

Pirandai -Ta; Chngalaparanda

HABIT: A succulent, rambling shrub.

FLOWER: In umbellate cymes, leaf oppossed; greenish-yellow, red tipped. Flowering throughout the year.

FRUIT: A globose berry, apiculate; green turning red when ripe; seed smooth. Fruiting throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: Stem 4-angular, winged, contracted at nodes. Leaves early caducous.

MISCELLANEOUS: Used in ayurvedic medicine to heal broken bones, injured ligaments and tendons.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common in the scrub lands and deciduous forests from plains to 500m. Africa, Arabia and India.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: The young stem and leaves are made into chutney eaten as an appetizer. Stem can be made into a rope.

L.Ar.



Alternate distichous

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Ovate-suborbicular to reniform

L.Ap.



Round

L.Ba.



Round

L.Ma.



Serrate



Clitoria ternatea L.

FABACEAE

Butterfly Bean -En

Kangu poo -Ir

Kakkattan, Sankupushpam -Ta; Khagin -Hi

HABIT: A very slender vine.

FLOWER: Solitary or in clusters; deep blue, occasionally white. Flowering from March-May.

FRUIT: A linear, oblong pod, compressed, apically beaked; seeds 10-15, reniform. Fruiting throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: Branchlets appressed-tomentose. Bracteoles very large, persistent.

MISCELLANEOUS: Roots and seeds are used in traditional medicine. An infusion or herbal tea is prepared by boiling the fresh petals in water.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Abundant in forest clearings, thickets, scrub jungles from plains to 500m. Native of tropical America, widely cultivated for its showy flower.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: A mixture of flower and milk taken orally to reduce body heat. The root paste is used as a cure for snake bite. A good fodder for cattle.



L.Ar.



distichous

L.Ty.



Imparipinnate

L.Sh.



Ovate

L.Ap.



Obtuse

L.Ba.



Obtuse

L.Ma.



Entire

Coccinia grandis (L.) Voigt

CUCURBITACEAE

Thondai -Ir

Kovai -Ta; Bhimb -Hi



HABIT: A slender scandent climber.

FLOWER: Solitary or in subcymes; white. Flowering from December–March.

FRUIT: An ovoid-oblong berry, green with white patches when young, later reddish; seeds many, oblong-ovoid, compressed. Fruiting throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: Stem deeply grooved. Tendril simple. Leaves glandular beneath.

MISCELLANEOUS: Ripe fruits are either eaten raw or cooked and highly valued for their therapeutic qualities.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common on thickets and wastelands from plains to 300m. Tropical Africa, Asia, Arabia, India, Malaysia to Fiji Islands.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: Leaves good fodder.

L.Ar.



Alternate
distichous

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.

5-angled or
lobed

L.Ap.



Obtuse-
mucronate

L.Ba.



subrotund-
cordate

L.Ma.

Lobed



Combretum ovalifolium Roxb.

COMBRETACEAE

Menthaya kodi -lr

Odaikodi, Veragai -Ta

HABIT: A large climbing shrub.

FLOWER: In terminal or axillary panicles; greenish-yellow. Flowering from February-March.

FRUIT: A globose, 4 or 5 winged drupe, wings chartaceous, 1 cm across; seed solitary. Fruiting March onwards.

FIELD TIPS: Leaves turning red before fall.

MISCELLANEOUS: The fibre from branches are used to prepare ropes to tie cattle.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common along the river banks and scrub jungles from 400-800m. Peninsular India and Sri Lanka.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: Leaves used as fodder. Stem fibre is used to scrub dishes.



L.Ar.



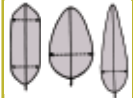
Opposite-decussate

L.Ty.



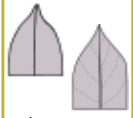
Simple

L.Sh.



Oblong or ovate-lanceolate

L.Ap.



Acuminate-apiculate

L.Ba.



Cuneate-subacute

L.Ma.



Entire



Corallocarpus gracilipes Cogn.

CUCURBITACEAE

HABIT: A very slender climber.

FLOWER: In small crowded racemes on long peduncles, minute; yellow. Flowering from December-March.

FRUIT: An ellipsoid, fleshy berry, beaked at apex, operculate, green with white marks; seeds ovoid or subglobose, smooth. Fruiting January onwards.

FIELD TIPS: Leaves shallowly 3-lobed, peduncles very slender.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Rare in the forest thickets and fences from plains to 500m. Endemic to Peninsular India.

L.Ar.



Alternate
distichous

L.Ty.

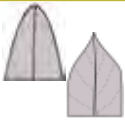
3-lobed

L.Sh.



Broadly
suborbicular

L.Ap.



Obtuse-
apiculate

L.Ba.



Cordate

L.Ma.



Irregularly
dentate



Cryptolepis buchananii Roem. & Schult.
ASCLEPIADACEAE

Wax Leaved Climber -En

Palai kodi -Ir

Paal kodi, Maattaankodi -Ta; Karanta -Hi

HABIT: A large much branched climber.

FLOWER: In axillary, umbellate racemes; greenish-white. Flowering from March-April and May-July.

FRUIT: A stout, paired follicle, pointed above, inflated at base; seeds obovoid, flat, with silky coma.

FIELD TIPS: Bark purplish-red, peeling off in papery flakes. Latex white. Seeds with white silky hairs.

MISCELLANEOUS: Stem and root powder is used to heal wounds and ulcers.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Common along the forest paths in deciduous and semi-evergreen forests from foothills to 1200m. India, Sri Lanka, Myanmar to S.&W.China.



L.Ar.



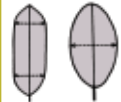
Opposite-
decussate

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Oblong-elliptic

L.Ap.



Obtusely
acuminate

L.Ba.



Acute

L.Ma.



Entire

Cynanchum alatum Wight & Arn.
ASCLEPIADACEAE

HABIT: A slender twiner.

FLOWER: In axillary umbellate cymes; purplish-white. Flowering from December-April.

FRUIT: A paired follicle, winged, apically beaked. Fruiting January onwards.

FIELD TIPS: Stipular leaves ovate-apiculate.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Occasional on exposed slopes and scrub jungles of above 400m. Endemic to Peninsular India.

L.Ar.



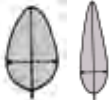
Opposite-decussate

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Ovate-lanceolate

L.Ap.



Acuminate

L.Ba.



Cordate

L.Ma.



Entire



Dalechampia velutina Wight
EUPHORBIACEAE

Maasukkodi, Pulivaalkodi -Ta

HABIT: A scandent vine.

FLOWER: In axillary, long peduncled cluster, subtended by 2, membranous, coloured, 3-lobed involucral bracts; green. Flowering from December-February.

FRUIT: A deeply, 3-lobed capsule, each 2-valved, epicarp stony with stinging hairs; seeds globose. Fruiting December onwards.

FIELD TIPS: Leaves 3(5)-lobed.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Common on wayside thickets and scrub jungles of 450-1300m. Endemic to Peninsular India.



L.Ar.



Alternate
distichous

L.Ty.



Simple, 3-lobed

L.Sh.

3-lobed

L.Ap.



Acute

L.Ba.



Cordate

L.Ma.



Entire-serrulate

Dioscorea bulbifera L.

DIOSCOREACEAE

Air potato -En

Jhaal kodi -Ir

Pannukkizhangu -Ta

HABIT: An extensive climber.

FLOWER: In axillary spikes, small. Flowering from September–November.

FRUIT: An oblong capsule, tomentose; seeds winged at base. Fruiting December onwards.

FIELD TIPS: Stem twining to the left. Leaves 7-13 nerved from base.

MISCELLANEOUS: Commonly cultivated in the tropics for the edible tubers.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Scarce in the scrub jungles and stream banks from 200-700m. Native to Africa, South Asia and northern Australia, now naturalised.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: Tubers cooked and eaten.

L.Ar.



Opposite

L.Ty.



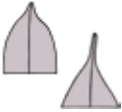
Simple

L.Sh.



Ovate-suborbicular

L.Ap.



Acuminate-shortly caudate

L.Ba.



Cordate

L.Ma.



Entire



Dioscorea oppositifolia L.

DIOSCOREACEAE

Cinnamon Vine, Chinese Yam -En

Rhea kangu -Ir

Verrolaivalli, Malayankizhangukkodi, Kavvalakodi, Thavaikatchchu -Ta; Bellarai -Ka

HABIT: An extensive twiner.

FLOWER: In axillary paniced spikes; greenish-white. Flowering from January-March and July-September.

FRUIT: An obovoid capsule, with 3-wide golden yellow wings. Fruiting throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: Leaves 3-5-nerved from base. Flowers may have a spicy fragrance similar to cinnamon.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Not common along the forest thickets, inside forests from plains to 1200m. Endemic to Peninsular India.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: Tubers cooked and eaten.



L.Ar.



Subopposite

L.Ty.



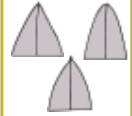
Simple

L.Sh.



Ovate-suborbicular

L.Ap.



Acute, obtuse-mucronate

L.Ba.



Obtuse-rotund

L.Ma.



Entire

Diplocyclos palmatus (L.) C. Jeffrey

CUCURBITACEAE

Vanasurakodi, Surakodi -lr

HABIT: A delicate vine.

FLOWER: In coxillary clusters, monoecious; greenish-yellow. Flowering from November-February.

FRUIT: A globose berry, with ventrical greenish and white patches; seeds ovoid, turgid. Fruiting December onwards.

FIELD TIPS: Branchlets glabrous. Leaves palmately 5-lobed.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Common on fences, thickets and river banks from plains to 1400m. Africa, India, Sri Lanka, China, Japan, Malaysia and Australia.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: Tender leaves boiled and eaten.

L.Ar.



Alternate
distichous

L.Ty.

Simple

L.Sh.

Palmate

L.Ap.



Acuminate

L.Ba.



Cordate

L.Ma.



Denticulate-
subrenate



Elaeagnus kologa Schlecht.

ELAEAGNACEAE

Kulangi, Perunkuliri -Ta

HABIT: A large climbing shrub.

FLOWER: In axillary fascicles; cream. Flowering from January-February.

FRUIT: An obovoid, ribbed nut; orange-red, winged. Fruiting March onwards.

FIELD TIPS: Leaves green above, rusty, with peltate coppery scales beneath. Nut enclosed in the fruiting perianth.

MISCELLANEOUS: Fruits edible and high on protein.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common along the ravines, shola borders and thickets. Endemic to Peninsular India.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: Fruits edible.



L.Ar.



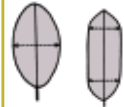
Alternate
distichous

L.Ty.



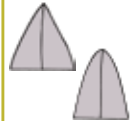
Simple

L.Sh.



Elliptic-oblong

L.Ap.



Acute-obtuse

L.Ba.



Acute-truncate

L.Ma.



Entire



Gloriosa superba L.

COLCHICACEAE

Glory Lily , Flame lily-En

Kannanopoo, Kanvalie poo kodi -Ir

Kalap-paik-kilangu, Kannuvelli -Ta; Mettonni -Ma; Karibari -Hi

HABIT: A herbaceous climber.

FLOWER: In axillary, solitary or subcorymbose; orange and scarlet to crimson. Flowering from October-November.

FRUIT: An oblong-ellipsoid capsule, torulose; seeds many, globose, warty. Fruiting seen throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: Rootstock tuberous, exposed. Leaf apex modified into tendrils.

MISCELLANEOUS: State flower of Tamil Nadu. The tubers contain toxins.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Not common in the scrub jungles and on thickets from plains to 500m. Tropical S.Africa, Madagascar, India to Indo-China and Malaysia.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: The roots are used in anti-venom preparations.

L.Ar.



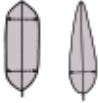
Alternate, opposite or whorled

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Oblong-lanceolate

L.Ap.



Acuminate

L.Ba.



Cordate-amplexicaul

L.Ma.



Entire



Grewia flavescens Juss.

TILIACEAE

Donkey berry - En

Kallai kodi -Ir

Semparandai -Ta

HABIT: A straggling shrub.

FLOWER: In axillary cymes; yellow, appressed-pilose. Flowering from February-May.

FRUIT: An obscurely 2-lobed drupe, wrinkled, densely stellate-tomentose. Fruiting throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: Branchlets stellate-tomentose. Leaves 3-nerved from base.

MISCELLANEOUS: Fruit are eaten by birds, especially hornbills, and also by monkeys. The stem is used to weave baskets.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common in the scrub jungles, on thickets, and stream banks from 500-900m. Tropical Africa and India.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: Fruits edible. Bees collect pollen from the flowers. Good fodder plant.



L.Ar.



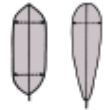
Alternate
distichous

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Oblong-
ob lanceolate

L.Ap.



Acute

L.Ba.



Obtuse-truncate

L.Ma.



Denticulate

Gymnema sylvestre (Retz.) R.Br. ex Schult.
ASCLEPIADACEAE

Chakaraiviyaathi kodi -Ir

Kannu minnayam kodi; pasaani -Ta

HABIT: A large climbing shrub.

FLOWER: In axillary umbels; greenish-yellow. Flowering from August-March.

FRUIT: A linear, paired follicle; dark green, inflated in the middle; seeds many, obovate, with brownish-white coma. Fruiting October onwards.

FIELD TIPS: Latex milky white. Seeds with silky hairs.

MISCELLANEOUS: The leaves are used to neutralize the taste of sugar.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Common along the Shola borders, scrub jungles from plains to 1500m. Tropical Africa, Peninsular India and Sri Lanka.

L.Ar.



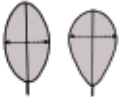
Opposite-decussate

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Elliptic to obovate

L.Ap.



Abruptly acute

L.Ba.



Obtuse

L.Ma.



Entire



Hemidesmus indicus (L.) R.Br. ex Schult.
ASCLEPIADACEAE

Indian Sarsaparilla -En

Nannaari, Suganthipaalaa -Ta

HABIT: A slender twiner.

FLOWER: In axillary fascicles, subsessile; purple, subrotate. Flowering from November-February.

FRUIT: Terete paired follicles, gradually narrowed, abruptly acuminate; seeds many, oblong, flattened, ventrally ridged, coma brownish-white. Fruiting February onwards.

FIELD TIPS: Latex milky. Leaves with white patches along the midrib on the upper side during the juvenile stage.

MISCELLANEOUS: The roots possess a combination of sweet and mild bitter taste and are included in various kinds of drinks and beverages.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common in scrub jungles and thickets from plains to 600m. India and Sri Lanka.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: Roots are used as a colouring agent for tea and also used in herbal preparation.



L.Ar.



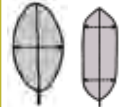
Opposite-
decussate

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Elliptic-broadly
oblong

L.Ap.



Acute

L.Ba.



Acute-rounded

L.Ma.



Entire

Heterostemma tanjorensis Wight & Arn.
ASCLEPIADACEAE

Palakeerai -Ta

HABIT: A slender twiner.

FLOWER: In axillary, short umbels; brownish-yellow. Flowering from November-February.

FRUIT: Cylindric, paired follicles; seeds many, ovate-obovoid, flattened, coma unequal, longer than seed. Fruiting December onwards.

FIELD TIPS: Leaves subsucculent. A yellow gland at the juncture of midnerve and petiole.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very rare in the forest thickets and fences from plains to 400m. Peninsular India and Sri Lanka.

L.Ar.



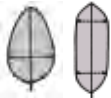
Opposite-decussate

L.Ty.



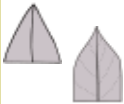
Simple

L.Sh.



Ovate-oblong

L.Ap.



Obtusely acute-apiculate

L.Ba.



Truncate

L.Ma.



Entire



Hugonia mystax L.

LINACEAE

Climbing flax -En

Vaduvakkae -Ir

Mothirakanni - Ta

HABIT: A straggling shrub.

FLOWER: In axillary and/or terminal cymes; golden yellow. Flowering from April-July and September-December.

FRUIT: A globose drupe; orange to red when ripe; seeds 5, compressed. Fruiting seen throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: Bark yellowish, corky. Peduncles hooked at base. Flowers turning white before falling.

MISCELLANEOUS: The roots have astringent properties and are used in curing fevers.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common in the scrub jungles, exposed areas of deciduous forests from plains to 500m. Peninsular India and Sri Lanka.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: Preferred for fuel wood.



L.Ar.



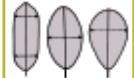
Alternate-spiral

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Oblong, elliptic
or obovate

L.Ap.



Obtuse-
subacute

L.Ba.



Tapering

L.Ma.



Entire

Ichnocarpus frutescens (L.) R.Br.

APOCYNACEAE

Black creeper -En

Kadambai kodi -Ir

Manipalaan kodi, Udarkodi -Ta



HABIT: A much branched, extensive climber.

L.Ar.



Opposite

FLOWER: In axillary or terminal paniculate cymes; cream. Flowering from November-February and August-October.

FRUIT: A paired, cylindrical follicular mericarp; seeds many, basally furrowed, apex covered by silky coma. Fruiting throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: Tender parts rusty pubescent. Latex milky.

L.Ty.

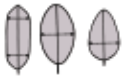
MISCELLANEOUS: The roots are used for their medicinal properties.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Common in the deciduous slopes, scrub jungles from plains to 750m. India, Sri Lanka through S.E.Asia to Australia.



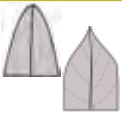
Simple

L.Sh.



Oblong or elliptic-ovate

L.Ap.



Obtuse-apiculate

L.Ba.



Acute-attenuate

L.Ma.



Entire



Ipomoea eriocarpa R.Br.

CONVOLVULACEAE

HABIT: A slender twiner.

FLOWER: In subsessile capitate cluster, aggregated, very small; pink with a deeper throat. Flowering from December-February.

FRUIT: A capsule, epicarp pubescent below, thin; seeds minutely pitted. Fruiting January onwards.

FIELD TIPS: Branchlets hirsute with long and short hairs. Flowers very small.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Occasional on stream banks, thickets and exposed slopes from 250m-1000m. Tropical Africa, Madagascar through tropical Asia to N.Australia.



L.Ar.



Alternate distichous

L.Ty.



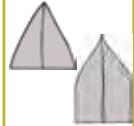
Simple

L.Sh.



Oblong

L.Ap.



Acute-apiculate

L.Ba.



Hastate or cordate

L.Ma.



Entire

Ipomoea hederifolia L.

CONVOLVULACEAE

Red Star Glory -En

Mookuthichedi -Ir

Kanavalikkodi -Ta

HABIT: A weak, slender twiner.

FLOWER: In axillary, few-flowered cymes; dark red. Flowering from September-December.

FRUIT: A globose or ovoid capsule; seeds 4, oblong, black. Fruiting October onwards.

FIELD TIPS: Branchlets pubescent. Calyx lobes half united, aristate at apex.

MISCELLANEOUS: Planted in gardens for its showy flower.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Common around the forest settlements and disturbed lands. Native of tropical America, now widely naturalized in the tropics.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: The whole plant is used in indigenous medicine.

L.Ar.



Alternate
distichous

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Cordiform

L.Ap.



Acuminate

L.Ba.



Cordate

L.Ma.



Entire



Ipomoea nil (L.) Roth

CONVOLVULACEAE

Morning glory - En

HABIT: A slender vine.

FLOWER: Solitary or in cymes; pink-purple. Flowering from November-February.

FRUIT: A globose capsule, dehiscent; seeds subtrigonous. Fruiting throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: Leaves 3-lobed.

MISCELLANEOUS: Occasionally grown in gardens for its showy flowers.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Native of North America, widely introduced in the tropics.



L.Ar.



Alternate
distichous

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.

L.Ap.



Acute

L.Ba.



Cordate

L.Ma.



Entire

Ipomoea obscura (L.) Ker- Gawl.

CONVOLVULACEAE

Lesser Glory -En

Speaker poo, mukuthi kodi -Ir

Siruthaali -Ta

HABIT: A slender, annual twiner.

FLOWER: In solitary or sub-umbellate cymes; white or yellow, tinged pink. Flowering throughout the year.

FRUIT: A subglobose capsule, apically beaked; seeds thinly pubescent. Fruiting throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: Leaves cordiform, puberulous on both sides.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common in fences, arable lands and scrub jungles from plains to 1000m. Africa, Madagascar, Tropical Asia to Formosa Islands.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: Leaves are crushed and mixed with saliva and applied to cure sprains.

L.Ar.



Alternate
distichous

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Cordiform

L.Ap.



Acuminate

L.Ba.



Cordate

L.Ma.



Entire



Ipomoea staphylina Roem. & Schult.
 CONVULVULACEAE

Ugina kodi, Sunang kodi, Unang kodi -lr
 Onaankodi -Ta

HABIT: A large straggling shrub.

FLOWER: In axillary or subterminal panicles; white with purple throat. Flowering from December-March.

FRUIT: A subglobose capsule; seeds oblong, subtrigonal, hairy at top. Fruiting January onwards.

FIELD TIPS: Leaf often with whitish-yellow galls. Flowers in crowded showy clusters.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common along the fences, deciduous thickets and scrub jungles from plains to 900m. India, Sri Lanka through China.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: Stem made into rope. Tubers cooked and eaten.



L.Ar.



Alternate
 distichous

L.Ty.



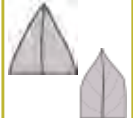
Simple

L.Sh.



Deltoid, elliptic-
 ovate (broadly)

L.Ap.



Acute-apiculate

L.Ba.



Truncate-
 subcordate

L.Ma.



Entire



Jasminum trichotomum B.Heyne ex Roth
OLEACEAE

Kattumalli -lr

HABIT: A stiff climbing shrub.

FLOWER: In axillary or terminal dichasial cymes; white, fragrant. Flowering from March-May.

FRUIT: A obovoid-ellipsoid berry; dark purple when ripe; seeds oblong-globose. Fruiting April onwards.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Scarce along the forests paths and scrub jungles from foothills to 800m. Endemic to Peninsular India.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: The tender leaves are cooked and eaten to improve digestion.

L.Ar.



Opposite

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



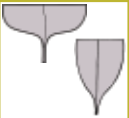
Elliptic-oblong

L.Ap.



Acute-apiculate

L.Ba.



Truncate-attenuate

L.Ma.



Entire



Loeseneriella obtusifolia (Roxb.) A.C.Sm.
HIPPOCRATEACEAE

Poraikodi -Ir

Menthakkodi -Ta

HABIT: An extensive climber.

FLOWER: In axillary, extensive panicles; green. Flowering from December-March.

FRUIT: Obovoid samaroid, obtuse-emarginate, dorsiventrally compressed; seeds 6 per cell, subfalcate, wing membranous. Fruiting February onwards.

FIELD TIPS: Fruits in three's, flat, heavy with horny green fruit walls that match with the foliage leaves.

MISCELLANEOUS: Good fodder for cattle.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Occasional along the forest thickets and scrub jungles from 250-600m. Peninsular India, Malaysia, China, Australia and tropical Africa.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: The leaves are part of the smokers that are lit during honey collection, they are believed to have bee repelling properties.



L.Ar.



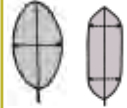
Opposite-decussate

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Elliptic-oblong

L.Ap.



Acute-acuminate

L.Ba.



Obtuse to subacute

L.Ma.



Crenate

Maclura cochinchinensis (Lour.) Corner MORACEAE

Emmullu -Ir

Kattanimullu, Koratti, Paal kaattaanchi, Venninkodi, Parankolachedi, Ekkinmullu -Ta;
Bendaka -Ka

HABIT: A large thorny straggling shrub.

FLOWER: In axillary, pedunculate capitate clusters, sessile; cream. Flowering from March-April.

FRUIT: An angled syncarp, irregularly shaped, enclosing a few anthocarp. Fruiting from July-September.

FIELD TIPS: Bark thin, orange coloured with long and stout thorns. Latex milky.

MISCELLANEOUS: The heart wood yields yellow dye.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Occasional along the forest borders and scrub jungles from foothills to 1300m. Peninsular India and Sri Lanka.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: The thorny branches are made into a broom which is used to sweep up grains from the threshing floor.

L.Ar.



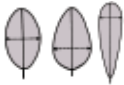
Alternate
distichous

L.Ty.



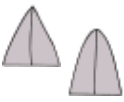
Simple

L.Sh.



Elliptic-ovate to
oblanceolate

L.Ap.



Acute to obtuse

L.Ba.



Acute

L.Ma.



Entire



Maerua oblongifolia (Forsk.) A.Rich.

CAPPARACEAE

Necklace Berried Caper - En

Mulmurandai, Boomichakarai, Mochukkodi -Ta

HABIT: A large woody climber.

FLOWER: In terminal corymbose racemes; greenish-white. Flowering from January-March.

FRUIT: A moniliform berry, twisted; seeds many, globose, tuberculate. Fruiting from February-June.

FIELD TIPS: Branchlets unarmed, glabrous. Fruits look like beads.

MISCELLANEOUS: It is an important ayurvedic drug.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Not common in scrub jungles and thickets from plains to 500m. Endemic to Indian subcontinent.



L.Ar.



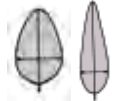
Alternate distichous

L.Ty.



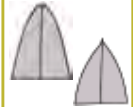
Simple

L.Sh.



Ovate or lanceolate

L.Ap.



Obtuse-mucronate

L.Ba.



Obtuse

L.Ma.



Entire

Merremia aegyptia (L.) Urb.

CONVOLVULACEAE

HABIT: A slender climber.

FLOWER: In axillary, diachasial cymes; white. Flowering from December-February.

FRUIT: A capsule, covered by silky, sericeous calyx lobes. Fruiting February onwards.

L.Ar.



Alternate
distichous

L.Ty.



Palmately
compound

L.Sh.



Obovate

L.Ap.



Shortly
acuminate

L.Ba.



Acute

L.Ma.



Entire

FIELD TIPS: Branchlets sericeous. Leaves palmately compound.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Occasional along the roadsides and scrub jungles from plains to 400m. Pantropical.



Merremia hederacea (Burm.f.) Hallier f.
CONVOLVULACEAE

Yelikkaadhu thazhai -Ta

HABIT: A profusely branched twiner.

FLOWER: Solitary, rarely cymose; yellowish with a purple throat. Flowering from December-January.

FRUIT: A globose capsule, epicarp thin, irregularly dehiscent; seeds pubescent. Fruiting January onwards.

FIELD TIPS: Stamens glandular hairy below.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Occasional on thickets by banks of rivers, and dams from plains to 400m. Old world tropics.



L.Ar.



Alternate
distichous

L.Ty.

Simple-3-lobed

L.Sh.



Cordiform

L.Ap.



Acuminate

L.Ba.



Cordate

L.Ma.



Entire-crenate

Meyenia hawtayneana (Wall.) Nees
ACANTHACEAE

HABIT: A small climbing shrub.

FLOWER: Solitary or paired, axillary, pedicellate; blue-purple, throat yellow, very showy. Flowering from March-April.

FRUIT: A subglobose capsule, with a long, solid, apical beak; seeds 4, orbicular. Fruiting throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: Leaves 3-nerved from base.

MISCELLANEOUS: Occasionally cultivated in the garden for its showy flowers.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very rare in the forest floor and borders of above 800m. Peninsular India and Sri Lanka.

L.Ar.



Opposite

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Elliptic-ovate to
deltoid

L.Ap.



Apiculate

L.Ba.



Subcordate-
auriculate

L.Ma.



Entire



Mimosa diplotricha Sauvalle

MIMOSACEAE

Kattu seekkaikodi -Ir

Kattu seekkai -Ta; Shiah-kanta -Hi

HABIT: A large, prickly climbing shrub.

FLOWER: In heads of terminal racemes; pink. Flowering from July-February.

FRUIT: A falcate, stipitate pod, spinous along margins, strongly nerved, horned at apex; seeds 5-7, flat, ovoid. Fruiting throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: Branchlets, petioles and rachis with short prickles.

MISCELLANEOUS: Often planted as a fencing plant. Whole plant is used in medicinal preparations.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Commonly found in scrub jungles and thickets from foothills to 1000m. Africa, Afghanistan, India through Asia.



L.Ar.



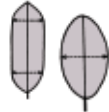
Alternate-spiral

L.Ty.



Bipinnate

L.Sh.



Oblong-elliptic

L.Ap.



Obtuse-acute

L.Ba.



Truncate

L.Ma.



Entire

Naravelia zeylanica (L.) DC.
RANUNCULACEAE

Sethari kodi -lr

HABIT: A straggling shrub.

FLOWER: In axillary and/or terminal panicles; greenish-yellow. Flowering from November-January.

FRUIT: A spirally twisted achene, stipe clavate, feathery. Fruiting from January-March.

FIELD TIPS: Leaf base 3-5-nerved from base. Terminal leaflet modified into tendril.

MISCELLANEOUS: The stem and roots have a strong penetrating smell and are used in folk medicine.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common on the forest thickets, cleared lands and scrub jungles from 400-800m. India, Sri Lanka to Myanmar and C.& W.China.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: The young branchlets are used to make ropes.

L.Ar.



Opposite-decussate

L.Ty.



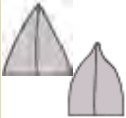
2-3-foliolate

L.Sh.



Ovate

L.Ap.



Acute-acuminate

L.Ba.



Rounded-obtuse

L.Ma.



Entire



Ormocarpum senoides (Willd.) DC.
FABACEAE

Elumbotti -Ta

HABIT: A straggling shrub.

FLOWER: In axillary racemes, 3-5-flowered; yellow. Flowering from December-January.

FRUIT: A pod, longitudinally striate, prickly, warted; seeds oblong. Fruiting January onwards.

FIELD TIPS: Branchlets and pods warty.

MISCELLANEOUS: The leaves are eaten fresh or prepared into medicines.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Rare in the scrub jungles from plains to 400m. Peninsular India and Sri Lanka.



L.Ar.



Alternate-spiral

L.Ty.



Imparipinnate

L.Sh.



Obovate

L.Ap.



Retuse

L.Ba.



Cuneate

L.Ma.



Entire

Pachygone ovata (Poir.) Diels

MENISPERMACEAE

Fish berry -En

Varingkodi -Ir

Kattukkodi -Ta

HABIT: A medium-sized straggling shrub.

FLOWER: In a solitary racemes or 2 to 3 in a cluster; yellow. Flowering from February-April.

FRUIT: A reniform drupe; green when young, later orange, style scar subbasal. Fruiting April onwards.

FIELD TIPS: Woody yellowish pubescent. Leaves 3-nerved from base.

MISCELLANEOUS: Stems used to make ropes.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Common in scrub jungles, thickets in deciduous forests from plains to 900m. India, Sri Lanka, Malaysia and N.Australia.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: Fruits edible.

L.Ar.



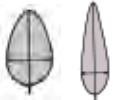
Alternate-distichous

L.Ty.



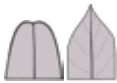
Simple

L.Sh.



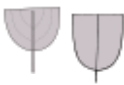
Ovate-lanceolate

L.Ap.



Retuse-mucronate

L.Ba.



Obtuse-rounded

L.Ma.



Entire



Passiflora foetida L.

PASSIFLORACEAE

Bush passion fruit -En

Soddalie -lr

Mosukkattan, Poonaipiduku -Ta

HABIT: A slender climbing shrub.

FLOWER: Solitary, axillary; white, fragrant. Flowering from November-May.

FRUIT: A subglobose berry; orange when ripe; seeds many, ellipsoid, deeply pitted. Fruiting February onwards.

FIELD TIPS: Bracts and bracteoles deeply pinnatisect, glandular pubescent, totally cover the fruits.

MISCELLANEOUS: Young leaves and plant tips are edible. Dried leaves are used in tea in Vietnamese folk medicine.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common along roadsides, thickets and water courses from plains to 750m. Native of tropical America, now widely naturalized the tropics.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: Fruits edible.



L.Ar.



Alternate
distichous

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Orbicular

L.Ap.



Acute

L.Ba.



Cordate

L.Ma.



Dentate

Pergularia daemia (Forsk.) Chiov.

ASCLEPIADACEAE

Kokkichi, Vaelipparuthi -Ir

Vaelipparuthi, Seendhalkodi, Belaparti -Ta



HABIT: A slender climbing shrub.

FLOWER: In axillary umbelliform racemes; greenish-white, densely villous. Flowering from July-January.

FRUIT: A paired follicle, curved, basally swollen, softly echinate; seeds many, obovate, with silky coma. Fruiting throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: Stem white hispid. Latex white.

MISCELLANEOUS: Leaves foetid when crushed.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common on the fences, forest thickets and scrub jungles from plains to 800m. Tropical Africa, Asia, India, Sri Lanka, Myanmar and Malaysia.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: The leaf extract is mixed with ragi flour and applied on the head to reduce body heat. The leaves are crushed and rubbed over the head when infants cry intensively. The fumes from the leaves inhaled to cure cough.

L.Ar.



Opposite-decussate

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Cordiform

L.Ap.



Acute

L.Ba.



Cordate

L.Ma.



Entire



Pterolobium hexapetalum (Roth) Santapau & Wagh
CAESALPINIACEAE

Indu, Sundrikkodi -Ir

Karu indu -Ta

HABIT: An armed, extensive straggler.

FLOWER: In axillary and/or terminal racemes; white, buds reddish. Flowering from April-July.

FRUIT: An oblong, samaroid pod; dark green above with reddish wing, indehiscent; seed solitary, obovoid. Fruiting throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: Branchlets stellate tomentose, with strong, recurved thorns. Pods winged apically.

MISCELLANEOUS: The sap from the leaves is used in veterinary medicine.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common in deciduous forests, scrub jungles, forest paths from foothills to 600m. Endemic to Peninsular India.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: Cattle feed on the tender shoots. Honey made from these flowers is very fragrant.



L.Ar.



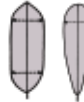
Alternate-spiral

L.Ty.



Bipinnate

L.Sh.



Oblong-oblancoelate

L.Ap.



Obtuse

L.Ba.



Cuneate-truncate

L.Ma.



Entire



Sarcostemma intermedium Decne.
ASCLEPIADACEAE

Kodikalli -Ta

HABIT: A leafless straggling shrub.

FLOWER: In terminal umbels, 8-10-flowered; cream. Flowering from July-September.

FRUIT: A paired follicle, linear, cylindric, tapering towards the apex; seeds many, margined. Fruiting March onwards.

FIELD TIPS: Branchlets terete, jointed and green. Latex milky.

MISCELLANEOUS: The stem is sour in taste and is edible.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Common along the forest borders and exposed slopes of deciduous forests above 300m. Endemic to Peninsular India.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: The stem used in the preparations of veterinary medicines.



L.Ar.

L.Ty.

L.Sh.

L.Ap.

L.Ba.

L.Ma.

Scutia myrtina (Burm.f.) Kurz

RHAMNACEAE

Cat thorn -En

Sodalie -Ir

Kokkimullu, Tuvadi -Ta

HABIT: An armed straggler

FLOWER: In axillary umbellate clusters, 5-20 flowers per cluster; greenish-yellow. Flowering from June-August.

FRUIT: A subglobose-obovoid drupe, apiculate; dark blue when ripe; seeds 2-4, subglobose, compressed. Fruiting July onwards.

FIELD TIPS: Branchlets glaucous, with recurved spines. Leaves shining above.

MISCELLANEOUS: The branches are cut for making dry hedges.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common along the forest borders, scrub jungles from plains to 1000m. Africa, Madagascar, Mascarene Islands, India, Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Thailand and Indo-China.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: Fruits edible.



L.Ar.



Opposite-subopposite

L.Ty.



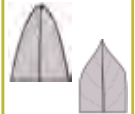
Simple

L.Sh.



Ovate-orbicular

L.Ap.



Obtuse-apiculate

L.Ba.



Cuneate

L.Ma.



Entire

Secamone emetica (Retz.) R.Br. ex Schult.
ASCLEPIADACEAE

Koriikodi -lr

Angaaravalli, Siruaattaankodi, Nilamarandaikodi -Ta

HABIT: A much branched, wiry climbing shrub.

FLOWER: In axillary 3-chotomous cymes; greenish-yellow. Flowering from July-October.

FRUIT: A cylindric, paired follicle; seeds many, oblong, with sliky white coma. Fruiting November onwards.

FIELD TIPS: Bark brown, thick, corky and deeply cleft. Latex white.

MISCELLANEOUS: The root and leaves are used in medicinal preparations.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Scarce in the scrub jungles, and deciduous forests from foothills to 1000m. Peninsular India and Sri Lanka.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: The fibre from the stem is used for the construction of houses.

L.Ar.



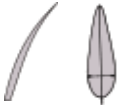
Opposite

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Linear-lanceolate

L.Ap.



Acutely apiculate

L.Ba.



Attenuate-cuneate

L.Ma.



Entire



Solanum seaforthianum Andrews
SOLANACEAE

Potato Creeper, Brazilian Nightshade -En

HABIT: A scandant climbing shrub.

FLOWER: In terminal or leaf-opposed panicles, pendulous; violet. Flowering throughout the year.

FRUIT: A small globose berry; blood red; seeds many, pubescent. Fruiting throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: Leaves subsessile, pinnatifid, without spines.

MISCELLANEOUS: Sometimes cultivated as an ornamental plant in gardens.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Rare on roadsides and wastelands from plains to 1000m, native of Brazil, widely naturalised in the tropics.



L.Ar.



Opposite

L.Ty.

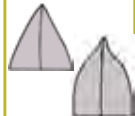
Pinnatifid

L.Sh.



Ovate-ovobovate

L.Ap.



Acute-shortly
acuminate

L.Ba.



Oblique-
decurrent

L.Ma.



Entire

Spatholobus parviflora Roxb.

FABACEAE

Pilacchivalli -Ta; Athambu -Ma; Maula -Hi

HABIT: A large climbing shrub.

FLOWER: In axillary or terminal panicles; cream. Flowering from November-February.

FRUIT: An oblong pod, base flat, wing like, reticulate, indehiscent; seed solitary, compressed. Fruiting January onwards.

FIELD TIPS: Bark brown, rough. Branchlets appressed, velvety-tomentose. Leaflets ciliate along margin.

MISCELLANEOUS: The bark gives a coarse fibre. The gum from the bark is a powerful astringent.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Scarce in the deciduous and semi-evergreen forests from 800-1500m. India and Sri Lanka.

L.Ar.



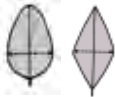
Alternate-spiral

L.Ty.



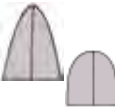
3-foliolate

L.Sh.



Broadly ovate-rhomboid

L.Ap.



Obtuse-rounded

L.Ba.



Truncate

L.Ma.



Entire



Thunbergia alata Bojer ex Sims

ACANTHACEAE

Black Eyed Susan -En

HABIT: A scandant climbing shrub.

FLOWER: Solitary or paired; yellow with purple throat; calyx bowl-shaped. Flowering throughout the year.

FRUIT: A depressed-globose capsule, with a long apical peak; seeds 4, globose. Fruiting throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: Leaves corsdate,5-nerved from base.

MISCELLANEOUS: Often cultivated as an ornamental in gardens and homesteads.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Occasional along the forest edges. Native of Africa, cultivated elsewhere.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: Cultivated for its showy flower.



L.Ar.



Opposite-
decussate

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Hastate-
sagittate

L.Ap.



Mucronate

L.Ba.

Hastate

L.Ma.



Entire

Thunbergia fragrans Roxb.

ACANTHACEAE

Kaasanangai, Vellachedi, Thannikkodi -Ta

HABIT: A slender twiner.

FLOWER: Solitary, axillary; white, fragrant. Flowering throughout the year.

FRUIT: A depressed-globose capsule, scabrid, extended into a sword-shape apical beak; seeds 4, globose, reticulate. Fruiting throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: Branchlets sparsely sericeous. Leaves 3-5-nerved from base.

MISCELLANEOUS: Occasionally grown in the garden for its showy white flowers.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common along forest borders, roadsides and scrub jungles from 400-1200m. India, Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Nepal, Indo-China and W.China.

L.Ar.



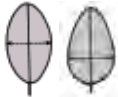
Opposite-decussate

L.Ty.



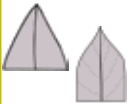
Simple

L.Sh.



Broadly elliptic-ovate

L.Ap.



Acute-apiculate

L.Ba.



Truncate-subcordate

L.Ma.



Entire-distantly serrate



Toddalia asiatica (L.) Lam.

RUTACEAE

Orange climber -En

Erikonthai -lr

Kindu mullu -Ta

HABIT: An armed straggling shrub.

FLOWER: In terminal or axillary panicles; yellowish-white. Flowering from July-October.

FRUIT: A subglobose berry; orange when ripe; seeds 3 or 4, subreniform. Fruiting from December-February.

FIELD TIPS: Branchlets with recurved prickles. Petioles and midrib beneath not prickled. Leaves gland dotted.

MISCELLANEOUS: The fruit, leaves and roots are used in herbal preparations.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common along shola borders and forest thickets above 1000m. India to China and Malaysia.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: The crushed leaves are applied on the skin to cure skin diseases. Fruits edible.



L.Ar.



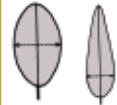
Alternate -spiral

L.Ty.



3-foliolate

L.Sh.



Elliptic-lanceolate

L.Ap.



Obtuse-acute

L.Ba.



Cuneate

L.Ma.



Entire

Trichosanthes cucumerina L.

CUCURBITACEAE

Snake Gourd -En

Peppadal -Ta

HABIT: A slender vine.

FLOWER: Male flowers in axillary racemes, lax; white, female flowers solitary. Flowering from December-February.

FRUIT: An ovoid-fusiform, beaked at apices; white striped, turning orange-red. Fruiting January onwards.

FIELD TIPS: Corolla long fimbriate. Tendrils branched.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Common in the lower hill slopes and scrub jungles from plains to 600m. India, Sri Lanka, Malaysia, Polynesia and N.Australia.

L.Ar.



Alternate distichous

L.Ty.

Simple-3-5-lobed

L.Sh.



Orbicular-reniform

L.Ap.



Acute

L.Ba.



Cordate

L.Ma.



Distantly denticulate



Tylophora indica (Burm.f.) Merr.

ASCLEPIADACEAE

Kurinja -Ir

Nangilaipirattai, Paalaaikerai -Ta; Adumutadhagida -Ka

Vallipaala -Ma; Antamul -Hi

HABIT: A large climbing shrub.

FLOWER: In axillary umbels, compound; greenish-yellow outside, purple inside. Flowering from February-April and July-October.

FRUIT: A cylindric follicle, acute at both ends; seeds many, ovate, flat, coma silky white. Fruiting throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: Leaves glossy. Latex watery.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Common along the wayside thickets, scrub jungles and wastelands from plains to 800m. India, Sri Lanka to S.E.Asia.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: The leaves are crushed with water and given orally to cure asthma.



L.Ar.



Opposite-decussate

L.Ty.



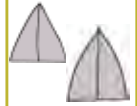
Simple

L.Sh.



Cordiform, Oblong-lanceolate

L.Ap.



Acute-obtusely mucronate

L.Ba.



Truncate-cordate

L.Ma.



Entire

Ziziphus oenoplia (L.) Mill.

RHAMNACEAE

Soolikodi -Ir

Chooraimullu, Kottei -Ta; Mulli -Ma; Makoh -Hi



HABIT: A large, thorny, straggling or climbing shrub.

FLOWER: In axillary umbellate cymes; greenish. Flowering from July-November.

FRUIT: A globose drupe; black when ripe, woody, rugose; seed solitary, ovoid. Fruiting from October-January.

FIELD TIPS: Branchlets densely tomentose with recurved thorns. Leaves 3-nerved from base.

MISCELLANEOUS: The branchlets are used for fencing.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common in scrub jungles, forest thickets and deciduous slopes from foothills to 900m. India, Sri Lanka and Malaysia to Australia.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: The fruit is very much liked by children, birds and animals.

L.Ar.



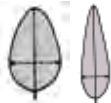
Alternate distichous

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Ovate-lanceolate

L.Ap.



Acute-acuminate

L.Ba.



Oblique, acute-obtuse

L.Ma.



Denticulate



Notes:

L.Ar.

L.Ty.

L.Sh.

L.Ap.

L.Ba.

L.Ma.

EDIBLE TUBERS, RHIZOMES AND YOUNG SHOOTS FROM THE FORESTS

Wild edible tuber, rhizome and young shoot species are an important source of food in the diets of indigenous communities. They not only enrich the diet of the people but also possess medicinal properties. Many species are used in the preparation of stimulants, tonics, carminatives and expectorants. A few of the major wild edible tuber, rhizome and young shoot species used by the Irula people of Pillur are presented in the photographs.



Most collections of plant products depend on the season of availability and so also with the tubers, rhizomes and shoots. The indigenous people know the correct time to harvest and have various indicators to gauge if the below ground parts like roots, tubers and rhizomes are mature for harvest. Usually a corbar is used to dig for the tuber. Many of the tubers have to be processed before they can be cooked and consumed.

1. *Dioscorea oppositifolia* - Rhea
2. *Dioscorea tomentosa* - Noorai
3. *Asparagus racemosus* - Neervekkae
4. *Ipomoea staphylina* - Ugina
5. *Bambusa arundinacea* - Perumoonga
6. *Phoenix loureiroi* - Eachum
7. *Hemidesmus indicus* - Nannari



In the case of young tender shoots the people also decide carefully on how much can be removed since indiscriminate harvest would hamper the growth of the plant. In the case of tubers many of the traditional harvesters make it a point to leave behind a portion of the tuber in the soil to ensure regeneration. In this way they are also sure where they should look for the tuber in the subsequent season! Tubers, rhizomes and shoots which are a part of the indigenous diet are rarely sold in the market. They maybe exchanged between households but they are delicacies which are less abundant. The Irula people of Pillur are concerned that the knowledge of the use of these plant products is declining and many of the younger generation are hesitant to gather from the wild.

Abutilon indicum (L.) Sweet

MALVACEAE

Country Mallow -En

Suluku poo -Ir

Thuthi -Ta



HABIT: A medium sized shrub.

L.Ar.



Alternate-spiral

L.Ty.

FLOWER: Solitary, axillary; yellow coloured. Flowering from November-January.

FRUIT: A globose schizocarp, green when young, later black; mericarps 15-20, stellate hairy; seeds 3 per cell, ovoid to suborbicular, warty. Fruiting throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: Leaves glaucous beneath.



Simple

L.Sh.

MISCELLANEOUS: Leaves made into a chutney, when consumed helps to relieve indigestion. Fresh leaves fried in ghee and consumed with cooked rice to cure piles.

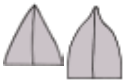
HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common in wastelands. Foothills to 900m. Widely distributed throughout the tropics and sub tropics.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: The leaves are crushed and applied to heal sprains.



Cordate

L.Ap.



Acute-Acuminate

L.Ba.



cordate

L.Ma.



Crenate-Dentate

Abutilon ramosum (Cav.) Guill. & Perr.

MALVACEAE

Thuthi chedi -lr

HABIT: A tall, perennial shrub.

FLOWER: Solitary or rarely racemose paniculate or umbellate; yellow coloured. Flowering from December-April.

FRUIT: A globose schizocarp, mericarps upto 8, densely stellate hairy; seeds reniform. Fruiting throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: Leaves cordate, white hairy throughout.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very commonly found as an understory plant of deciduous forests from plains to 500m. India and Tropical Africa.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: Good fodder plant.



L.Ar.



Alternate-spiral

L.Ty.



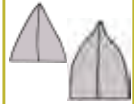
Simple

L.Sh.



Cordate

L.Ap.



Acute-acuminate

L.Ba.



Cordate

L.Ma.



Crenate-serrate

Acalypha fruticosa Forssk.

EUPHORBIACEAE

Birch-leaved Acalypha -En

Cheennai soppu, Seenaichedi, Segarai -lr

Aathaathzhai, Seethathzhai, Sotthaachedi, Kuppaimeni -Ta

HABIT: A medium-sized shrub.

FLOWER: In axillary spikes, female flowers at the base, male flowers terminating the spikes. Flowering from July-September.

FRUIT: A capsule of 3, bivalved cocci, hardly enlarged. Fruiting throughout the year.

MISCELLANEOUS: Used as green manure.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common along the roadsides, wastelands and scrub jungles from foothills to 600m. Tropical Africa, Arabia, Peninsular India and Myanmar.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: A mixture of dried leaves and coconut oil applied on wounds hastens the healing process. Monitor lizards observed eating the flowers.

L.Ar.



Alternate-spiral

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



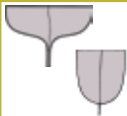
Ovate

L.Ap.



Gradually acuminate

L.Ba.



Truncate-rounded

L.Ma.



Crenate-dentate



Allophylus serratus (Hiern) Kurz

SAPINDACEAE

Siruvalli, Perakudikkai -Ta

HABIT: A large shrub.

FLOWER: In axillary racemes; pale yellow. Flowering from August-December.

FRUIT: An indehiscent, 1 or 2 lobed schizocarp; green when young, orange when mature; seed 1, arillate. Fruiting from December-January.

FIELD TIPS: Leaves 3-foliolate, leaf axils with hairy domatia.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Not common in the deciduous forests from plains to 750m. India and Sri Lanka.



L.Ar.



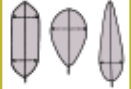
Alternate-spiral

L.Ty.



Trifoliolate

L.Sh.



Oblong or obovate-lanceolate

L.Ap.



Obtuse

L.Ba.



Obtuse

L.Ma.



Serrate-crenate

Asclepias curassavica L.

ASCLEPIADACEAE

Scarlet milkweed -En

Neer poo -lr



HABIT: A perennial shrub.

FLOWER: In umbellate cymes; bright red coloured. Flowering throughout the year.

FRUIT: A fusiform follicle, tapering at both ends; seeds flattened, winged, ending in a silky coma. Fruiting throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: The flowers have an additional ring of appendages that sits above the corolla like a crown.

MISCELLANEOUS: Rarely grown as an ornamental plant in gardens. The flower attracts butterflies for nectar.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Native of tropical America, now widely distributed in the old world tropics.

L.Ar.



Decussate or whorled

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Lanceolate

L.Ap.



Acute

L.Ba.



Acute

L.Ma.



Entire



Barleria acuminata Wight ex Nees
ACANTHACEAE

Vellaibalagai -Ir

Vellai kurinji -Ta

HABIT: An unarmed shrub.

FLOWER: In terminal or axillary 1-sided racemes, subsessile; pink. Flowering from November-January.

FRUIT: An elliptic-obovoid capsule, pointed at both ends; seeds 4, ovoid. Fruiting December onwards.

FIELD TIPS: Branchlets and leaves tawny-pubescent. Bracts glandular pubescent.

MISCELLANEOUS: The whole plant is used in traditional medicine.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common along the forest edges and scrub jungles from plains to 600m. Endemic to Peninsular India.



L.Ar.



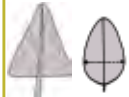
Opposite-
decussate

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



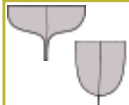
Deltoid-ovate

L.Ap.



Acute

L.Ba.



Truncate-
rounded

L.Ma.



Entire

Breynia vitis-idaea (Burm.f.) C.E.C.Fisch.
EUPHORBIACEAE

Mountain coffee bush, Indian Snowberry -En

Manipullaanthi, Sithuruvum, Seppulaa -Ta

HABIT: A large, much branched shrub.

FLOWER: In axillary, solitary, male flowers usually upper, pendulous. Flowering from February-April.

FRUIT: A subglobose capsule, obscurely 6-lobed, fruiting perianth hardly enlarged; seeds subtrigonus. Fruiting throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: Leaves are egg shaped.

MISCELLANEOUS: The low altitude replacement of *Breynia retusa*.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Common along the river and stream banks and scrub jungles from plains to 750m. India, Sri Lanka, Nepal, S.E.Asia, China and Malaysia.



L.Ar.



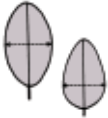
Alternate-distichous

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Elliptic-ovate

L.Ap.



Subacute

L.Ba.



Rounded

L.Ma.



Entire

Calotropis gigantea (L.) R.Br.

ASCLEPIADACEAE

Giant Milk Weed -En

Yerukkuchedi -Ir

Yerukku -Ta; Erikku -Ma; Mudar, Ak -Hi

HABIT: A tall erect shrub.

FLOWER: In terminal or lateral panicles, purple or lilac or dull white. Flowering throughout the year.

FRUIT: A follicle, Oblong, inflattened; seeds oblong to ovate, ending in a silky coma. Fruiting throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: Leaves sessile, auriculate at base, densely white powdery.

MISCELLANEOUS: Used as a green manure in many places.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common along the roadsides, wastelands and dry exposed areas from plains to 900m. India, Sri Lanka, China and Malaysia.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: The whole plant is used as an insect repellent during the *Sesamum* seed harvest. Young fruits are boiled in water and a paste prepared which is applied on the body to remove blood clots.



L.Ar.



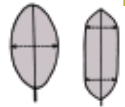
Opposite-decussate

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Elliptic-oblong

L.Ap.



Acute

L.Ba.



Auriculate

L.Ma.



Entire

Canthium coromandelicum (Burm.f.) Alston
RUBIACEAE

Bellakarai -Ir

Mullukarai, Theravai, Sengarai, Theranai -Ta



HABIT: A medium sized, armed shrub.

FLOWER: In axillary, decussate, lax cymes; greenish. Flowering from May-August.

FRUIT: A globose drupe; orange when ripe; pyrenes furrowed. Fruiting July onwards.

FIELD TIPS: Spines supra-axillary. Fruit flattened with a longitudinal groove.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Common in scrub jungles from plains to 750m. India, Indo-China, W&S.China and Malaysia.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: Fruits edible.

L.Ar.



Opposite-decussate

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Elliptic-ovate to obovate

L.Ap.



Subacute

L.Ba.



Attenuate

L.Ma.



Entire



Carissa carandas L.

APOCYNACEAE

Bengal currant, Christ`s thorn -En

Kalakkai -Ir

Kalaaha, Kilaakkaai, Kila -Ta; Karaunda -Hi

HABIT: A large thorny shrub.

FLOWER: In terminal or axillary, 2 to 3-chotomous cymes; white, showy. Flowering from March-April.

FRUIT: An ellipsoid berry; tinged red, ripening dark blue; seeds 4, ellipsoid, glabrous. Fruiting April onwards.

FIELD TIPS: Bark yellowish-brown. Latex white. Simple spines at alternate nodes.

MISCELLANEOUS: Immature fruits are pickled. The thorny branches are used for fencing.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Not common in the deciduous forest from plains to 900m. India, Sri Lanka and Myanmar.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: Fruits edible.



L.Ar.



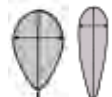
Opposite-decussate

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Obovate or oblanceolate

L.Ap.



Obtuse or emarginate

L.Ba.



Acute to cuneate

L.Ma.



Entire

Carissa spinarum L.

APOCYNACEAE

Kalakkodi -Ir

Sirukilaa -Ta; Karaunda -Hi

HABIT: A spreading, spiny shrub, to 4m.

FLOWER: In terminal or axillary cymes; white. Flowering from February-April.

FRUIT: A globose berry; green tinged red, dark blue when ripe; seeds 4, ellipsoid. Fruiting throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: Branchlets with forked spines. Latex white.

MISCELLANEOUS: Unripe fruits are pickled. Regular intake of the tender fruits helps to cure mouth ulcers.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION:Very common in the deciduous forests and scrub jungles from plains to 900m. India, Sri Lanka and Myanmar.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: Fruits edible.

L.Ar.



Opposite-decussate

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Elliptic-ovate

L.Ap.



Acute

L.Ba.



Acute

L.Ma.



Entire



Carmona microphylla (Lam.) G.Don
BORAGINACEAE

Kurangu vethilai, kurinjaa chedi, Kuruvichippazham -Ta

HABIT: A small shrub.

FLOWER: Solitary, axillary; cream coloured. Flowering January-March and July-September.

FRUIT: A globose drupe; red when ripe; seeds 4. Fruiting throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: Leaves very thick, and easily brittle, white glandular above.

MISCELLANEOUS: The fruit is edible. The seeds are included as an ingredient in traditional formulations. Leaves dried in shade are prepared as a herbal tea (infusion).

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very commonly found as an understory plant of dry deciduous forests. Native to India, South East Asia and Southern China.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: Some time grown as a hedge plant in the gardens.



L.Ar.



Alternate or clustered

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Obovate-spathulate

L.Ap.



Obtuse-truncate

L.Ba.



Cuneate

L.Ma.

Bluntly toothed

Catunaregam spinosa (Thunb.) Tirveng. RUBIACEAE

Kaarai -Ir

Mathukkaarai, Maarivalam, Attadikaarai, Maalankaarai, Marakkalam-Ta

HABIT: A large shrub.

FLOWER: In axillary fascicles or solitary; white turning yellow. Flowering from January-July.

FRUIT: A globose berry; yellow, with a crown of enlarged calyx-lobes; seeds numerous, smooth, embedded in fleshy pulp.

FIELD TIPS: Stem with 2cm long spines.

MISCELLANEOUS: The branches are used for thorn fences. Leaves used to prepare medicine for fever. Roots mixed with oil applied for relief from body pains.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common in the foothill scrub jungles to 500m. India, Sri Lanka, East tropical Africa and Malaysia.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: Fruits are used as fish poison.

L.Ar.



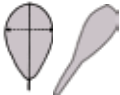
Opposite-decussate

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



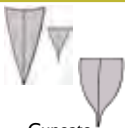
Obovate-spathulate

L.Ap.



Obtusely apiculate

L.Ba.



Cuneate-attenuate

L.Ma.



Entire



Cereus pterogonus Lem.

CACTACEAE

Sentinel Cactus, Columnar Cactus -En

Anaikkalli -Ir

Sippaai Kathaalai -Ta; Poochamullu - Ma

HABIT: A columnar shrub.

FLOWER: Solitary, lateral, sessile, to 15 cm across; greenish white outside, white inside, turns violet on fading. Flowering March-July.

FRUIT: Berry spiny or bristly; seeds many. Fruiting April onwards.

FIELD TIPS: Leafless greenish shrub, stem 3-9-winged, densely echinate.

MISCELLANEOUS: Often used for fencing since it forms an impenetrable thicket.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Native of tropical America, introduced to old worlds and now widespread.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: Fruits edible. Flowers cooked and eaten.



L.Ar.

L.Ty.

L.Sh.

L.Ap.

L.Ba.

L.Ma.

Chromolaena odorata (L.) R.M.King & H.Rob.
ASTERACEAE

Devil weed, Common floss flower, Siam weed- En

Madras poo, Naadukadi chedi -Ir

HABIT: An aromatic, erect shrub.

FLOWER: In much branched, corymbose panicles; capitula white. Flowering from December-March.

FRUIT: An achene, scaly without, angles thickened. Fruiting throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: Leaves 3-nerved from base.

MISCELLANEOUS: The leaf extract used in the treatment of soft tissue wounds, burns and skin infections.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common along the roadsides and waste places from plains to 1000m. Native of tropical America, naturalized widely in tropical Asia.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: The sap from the crushed leaves applied on cut wounds for quick healing.

L.Ar.



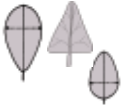
Opposite-decussate

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Obovate to deltoid-ovate

L.Ap.



Acute

L.Ba.



Acute to truncate

L.Ma.



Coarsely serrate



Cipadessa baccifera (Roth) Miq.

MELIACEAE

Pulippanchedi, Savattuchedi -Ta; Sidigolii; Chedubeera, Bettada bevu; Adusoge-Ka; Kaipantarangi; Potti, Pulippanchedi -Ma; Nal bila -Hi

HABIT: A medium-sized spreading shrub.

FLOWER: In axillary corymbose panicles; white. Flowering from March-April and July-August.

FRUIT: A globose drupe, 5-lobed, red when ripe; seeds 5, ovoid. Fruiting throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: Branchlets terete, lenticellate and tomentose.

MISCELLANEOUS: Leaves have powerful anti venom properties, especially for the treatment of cobra poison.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common in the semi-evergreen and moist deciduous forests above 750m. Peninsular India, Sri Lanka and Java.



L.Ar.



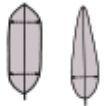
Alternate-distichous

L.Ty.



Imparipinnate

L.Sh.



Oblong-lanceolate

L.Ap.



Acuminate

L.Ba.



Cuneate

L.Ma.



Entire to distally serrate

Clerodendrum infortunatum L.

VERBENACEAE

Glorytree -En

Upputti -Ir

Vattakkanni -Ta; Paragu, Vatta perivilam -Ma; Bhant -Hi

HABIT: A large, tawny-villous shrub.

L.Ar.



Opposite-decussate

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Ovate to orbicular

L.Ap.



Acuminate

L.Ba.



Cordate

L.Ma.



Denticulate

FLOWER: In terminal panicles of pedunculate cymes; white. Flowering throughout the year.

FRUIT: A globose drupe, black, enveloped in a persistent pink calyx. Fruiting throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: Branches 4-angled and tomentose.

MISCELLANEOUS: Very frequently used in Indian medicine.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common along river banks and wet areas from plains to 1500m. India, Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Indo-China and Malaysia.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: Leaves used as platter.



Crotalaria verrucosa L.

FABACEAE

Blue Rattlesnake -En

Kolingi -lr

Salangaichedi -Ta

HABIT: A much branched, annual shrub.

FLOWER: In terminal and/or lateral racemes; blue. Flowering throughout the year.

FRUIT: An oblong-terete pod, sparsely pubescent, exceeding the calyx; seeds upto 15. Fruiting throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: Stem 4-angled, appressed-pubescent.

MISCELLANEOUS: Leaf paste is applied to cure headaches.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common along the roadsides and river banks from plains to 600m. Pantropical.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: The roots and seeds are said to be very poisonous.



L.Ar.



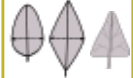
Alternate

L.Ty.



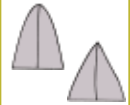
Simple

L.Sh.



Ovate or
rhomboid-
deltoid

L.Ap.



Obtuse-acute

L.Ba.



Attenuate

L.Ma.



Entire

Debregeasia longifolia (Burm.f.) Wedd.
URTICACEAE

Manalie chedi -Ir

Kaattu nochchi -Ta

HABIT: A large dioecious shrub.

FLOWER: In axillary, globose, paniculate clusters. Flowering from November-January.

FRUIT: An ellipsoid or globose achene; orange coloured; seed erect. Fruiting December onwards.

FIELD TIPS: Branches rough with warty excrescences and scars of fallen leaves. Leaves dark green above, white glaucous beneath, 3-nerved from base.

MISCELLANEOUS: Wood is used for making charcoal, fibres used for fishing-lines.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common along the riversides, wet areas from plains to 1000m. India, Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Indo-China, W.China and Malaysia.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: Fibre extracted from bark is used for house construction.

L.Ar.



Alternate-spiral

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Lanceolate

L.Ap.



Acuminate

L.Ba.



Acute to rounded

L.Ma.



Crenate



Dodonaea angustifolia L.f.

SAPINDACEAE

Hop bush - En

Manthiri chedi -lr

Viraali, Vilaari -Ta; Vrali -Ma; Bhandaru -Ka; Sanatta -Hi

HABIT: A stiff, medium sized shrub.

FLOWER: In terminal or axillary racemes or panicles; green. Flowering from August-November and February-April.

FRUIT: A winged capsule, strongly nerved, yellowish-brown; seeds globose, 1-3. Fruiting throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: Bark thin, grey.

MISCELLANEOUS: The stem is very hard and used for making walking sticks and tool handles.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common from plains to 1500m. Most aggressive colonizer on disturbed ground. S.Africa, Madagascar, tropical Africa, Arabia, S. Asia, Malaysia to Pacific Islands and Australia.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: The young leaves are soaked in hot water and the water used to massage the body to relieve body pain.



L.Ar.



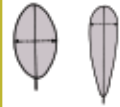
Alternate-spiral

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Elliptic-oblongeolate

L.Ap.



Obtuse-acute

L.Ba.



Attenuate

L.Ma.



Entire

Euphorbia tortilis Rottler ex Ainslie
EUPHORBIACEAE

Spiral Cactus -En

Thiruhukalli -Ir

Thiruhukalli -Ta

HABIT: A large fleshy shrub,.

L.Ar.

FLOWER: In axillary, paired cyathia, in groups of 3 or 4; yellow. Flowering from May-August.

FRUIT: A tri-gonous capsule, greenish; seeds 4-angled, smooth. Fruiting July onwards.

L.Ty.

FIELD TIPS: The branchlets 3-winged, twisted. Fruits green coloured.

MISCELLANEOUS: Commonly planted along the agricultural lands as a fence.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Common in the open scrub jungles and exposed rocky areas. Peninsular India and Sri Lanka.

L.Sh.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: The white sap is applied on the wounds of cattle to remove maggots.

L.Ap.

L.Ba.

L.Ma.



Flueggea leucopyrus Willd.
EUPHORBIACEAE

Bush weed, Indian snowberry -En

Poolie -Ir

Madhuppullaanthi, Vellaipoolaa -Ta; Hartho -Hi

HABIT: A large stiff straggling shrub.

FLOWER: In fascicles on the branchlets; greenish-white. Flowering from February-May.

FRUIT: A globose capsule; white. Fruiting from April-November.

FIELD TIPS: The ends of branchlets sharply spinous.

MISCELLANEOUS: The greenish-white flowers attract honey bees. Slender lorises eat the fruits. The fruit and seeds are edible. It is also used to feed grazing animals.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very commonly distributed in the deciduous forests from foothills to 500m. India, Sri Lanka and Myanmar.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: The fruit and seeds are edible.



L.Ar.



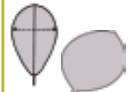
Alternate-distichous

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Obovate or orbicular

L.Ap.



Emarginate

L.Ba.



Attenuate

L.Ma.



Entire



Glycosmis pentaphylla (Retz.) DC.

RUTACEAE

Maelai kuluki -Ir

Kula pannai -Ta; Panal -Ma; Ban nimbu -Hi

HABIT: A large shrub.

FLOWER: In axillary or terminal panicles; greenish-white, fragrant. Flowering from February-April.

FRUIT: A pulpy berry; white to reddish; seeds 1-3, globose, depressed. Fruiting March onwards.

FIELD TIPS: Leaves shiny, with numerous oil glands.

MISCELLANEOUS: Shade tolerant plant.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common in the stream banks, wet areas from plains to 900m. India, Sri Lanka to S.E.Asia and Malaysia.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: Fruits edible. Root is used to cure stomach ache.

L.Ar.



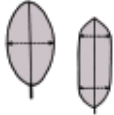
Alternate -spiral

L.Ty.



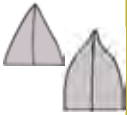
Imparipinnate

L.Sh.



Elliptic-oblong

L.Ap.



Acute -
acuminate

L.Ba.



Acute

L.Ma.



Entire to
subdentate-
subcrenate



Gmelina asiatica L.

VERBENACEAE

Nilakkumalaa, Sirukumalaan, Mul kumizh -Ta

HABIT: A large straggling shrub.

FLOWER: In axillary or terminal racemes; golden yellow. Flowering from March-May.

FRUIT: An ellipsoid-globose drupe; yellow; seeds 2-4, oblong. Fruiting from April onwards.

FIELD TIPS: Branches armed with spines. Leaves glaucous beneath.

MISCELLANEOUS: Wood very hard used for fuel wood and fencing material.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Common in the deciduous forests and scrub jungles from plains to 500m. Peninsular India, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh.



L.Ar.



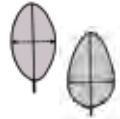
Opposite-decussate

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Elliptic-ovate

L.Ap.



Obtuse-acute

L.Ba.



Cuneate

L.Ma.



Entire

Grewia hirsuta Vahl

TILIACEAE

Kallai -Ir

Kalunnu -Ta



HABIT: A straggling shrub.

FLOWER: In axillary cymes; white. Flowering from June-August.

FRUIT: A globose, obscurely 4-lobed drupe; red when ripe, densely hirsute. Fruiting September onwards.

FIELD TIPS: Leaves 3-nerved from base, stellate pubescent above, woolly below.

MISCELLANEOUS: The fruit is used for making sherbets.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common on the hills, especially on the drier slopes. Peninsular India and Sri Lanka.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: Fruits edible.

L.Ar.



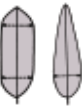
Alternate-disticuous

L.Ty.



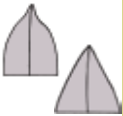
Simple

L.Sh.



Oblong or lanceolate

L.Ap.



Acuminate or acute

L.Ba.



Oblique, rounded or subcordate

L.Ma.



Denticulate



Grewia orbiculata Rottler

TILIACEAE

Maakkalai -lr

HABIT: A medium sized shrub.

FLOWER: In axillary or leaf-opposed cymes; greenish-yellow. Flowering from November-March.

FRUIT: An entire or obscurely 4-lobed drupe, stiff-villous, coppery. Fruiting December onwards.

FIELD TIPS: Branchlets rusty-velvety. Leaves 5-nerved from base.

MISCELLANEOUS: It is useful in treatment of foot and mouth disease and in case of retained afterbirth in cattle.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common in the deciduous forests and scrub jungles from plains to 600m. India, Pakistan, tropical Africa, Arabia, Egypt and E.Indies.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: Fruits edible.



L.Ar.



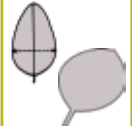
Alternate
-distichous

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Ovate-orbicular

L.Ap.



Rounded-obtuse

L.Ba.



Cordate

L.Ma.



Crenate-
serrulate

Gymnosporia heyneana (Roth) M.A.Lawson CELASTRACEAE

Nandu narai -Ta

HABIT: A medium-sized armed shrub.

FLOWER: In axillary or terminal cymes; white. Flowering from January-February and July-December.

FRUIT: An obcordate capsule; red; seeds 2 per cell, aril fleshy. Fruiting throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: Branchlets with sharp axillary spines.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common along the slopes, Shola border and deciduous forests from plains to 800m. Endemic to Peninsular India.



L.Ar.



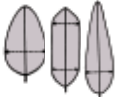
Alternate-spiral

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Ovate, oblong-lanceolate

L.Ap.



Acute

L.Ba.



Obtuse-subacute

L.Ma.



Serrate



Helicteres isora L.

STERCULIACEAE

East Indian Screw Tree -En

Kavarampattai -Ir

Valampuri, Idampuri, Kaiva -Ta; Marorphal -Hi

HABIT: A large shrub.

FLOWER: In axillary cymes; red, fading to lead colour. Flowering from September-December.

FRUIT: A beaked, spirally twisted follicle, stellate tomentose; seeds numerous, wrinkled, truncate. Fruiting from December-March.

FIELD TIPS: Leaves obliquely cordate, 3-nerved from base.

MISCELLANEOUS: The bark gives a coarse fibre and wood for fuel.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Common on the deciduous forests from 400-1200m. Indian subcontinent, Malay Peninsula and Australia.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: The fruits are used to prepare medicines for children. Fibre is extracted from the young branches to make cattle ropes.



L.Ar.



Alternate
-distichous

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Obovate or
orbicular

L.Ap.



Rotund-subacute

L.Ba.



Subcordate-
subacute

L.Ma.



Irregularly
serrulate

Hibiscus canescens B. Heyne ex Wight & Arn.
MALVACEAE

Lemon yellow rose mallow- En

Poomparuthi -Ir

HABIT: A medium sized shrub.

FLOWER: Solitary, axillary; yellow with purple base. Flowering from November-January.

FRUIT: A oblong capsule, villous. Fruiting December onwards.

FIELD TIPS: Branchlets densely stellate pubescent. Leaves 7-nerved from base.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Occasional along river banks and hill slopes from plains to 500m. South Asia and Africa.

L.Ar.



Alternate-spiral

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Cordate-ovate

L.Ap.



Acuminate

L.Ba.



Cordate

L.Ma.



Minutely serrate



Hibiscus furcatus Willd.

MALVACEAE

Pulii-elai-Ma

HABIT: A prickly trailing shrub.

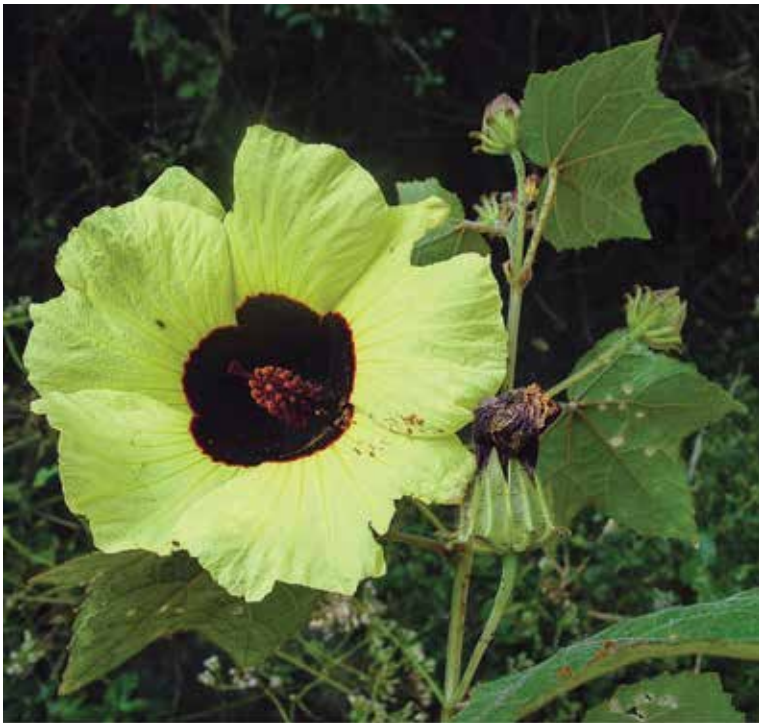
FLOWER: Solitary, axillary; bright yellow, inner base pink. Flowering throughout the year.

FRUIT: A globose capsule, bristly, hairy; seeds numerous, 3-gonous, warty, glandular. Fruiting throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: Stem, leaves and flowers densely prickly. Epicalyx segments appendaged.

MISCELLANEOUS: Leaves are reported to have medicinal properties. The leaf juice mixed with honey is used in the treatment of eye diseases.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common along the river banks and stream areas. India, Sri Lanka, Tropical and South Africa and Asia.



L.Ar.



Alternate -spiral

L.Ty.



Palmately lobed

L.Sh.



Lanceolate

L.Ap.



Acuminate

L.Ba.



Obtuse

L.Ma.



Serrate

Homonoia riparia Lour.

EUPHORBIACEAE

Vanjimaram -Ir

Aatthu inchi -Ta; Kat-allari -Ma

HABIT: A large evergreen shrub.

FLOWER: In axillary spikes, shorter than leaves. Flowering from April-August.

FRUIT: A subglobose capsule of 3, bivalved cocci; seeds biconvex to globose. Fruiting May onwards.

FIELD TIPS: Leaves glandular scaly below.

MISCELLANEOUS: In the southern part of the Philippine archipelago this species is used, like sarsaparilla, and a decoction of the roots is used in medicine.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common shrub on river beds and stream banks from plains to 1000m. India, S.E.Asia, S.China, Malaysia to E.New Guinea.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: Leaves and fruits used for fishing. Young stem used as tooth sticks.

L.Ar.



Alternate

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Linear-lanceolate

L.Ap.



Acute

L.Ba.



Cuneate

L.Ma.



Entire



Jatropha curcas L.

EUPHORBIACEAE

Kattukkottai -Ta

HABIT: A large shrub.

FLOWER: In terminal or axillary diachasial cymes; greenish-yellow. Flowering from April-July.

FRUIT: A globose or ellipsoid capsule, rugose when dry. Fruiting April onwards.

FIELD TIPS: Bark greenish-white, smooth, peeling off in thin flakes. Leaves entire to shallowly 5-lobed.

MISCELLANEOUS: Reported to have more than 1600 uses. The seed cakes, produced as a by-product of pressing the oil, make an excellent organic fertilizer or protein-rich livestock feed. The oil from the seed used as climatic protection, varnishes, illuminants, soap, organic insecticide, and medicine for skin diseases

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Native of new world tropics, planted in other tropical areas.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: Often planted along the borders of agricultural fields.



L.Ar.



Alternate-spiral

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Cordiform

L.Ap.



Acute

L.Ba.



Truncate-cordate

L.Ma.



Entire



Jatropha gossypifolia L.

EUPHORBIACEAE

Barbados Nut or Physic-Nut -En

Karkkottai -Ir

Vellaikaattukottai-Ta



HABIT: A medium-sized shrub.

L.Ar.



Alternate-spiral

L.Ty.

FLOWER: In axillary or terminal diachasial cymes; reddish-brown. Flowering throughout the year.

FRUIT: A 3-lobed capsule; seeds ovoid or oblong, carunculate. Fruiting throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: Leaves and stem reddish-brown, densely glandular hairy. Old branches with leaf scars.



Simple

L.Sh.

MISCELLANEOUS: Seeds used for the preparation of bio-diesel. Some time cultivated as an ornamental.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common along the roads and scrub jungles from plains to 400m. Tropical Africa, India and Sri Lanka.

3-5-lobed

L.Ap.



Shrotly acuminate

L.Ba.



Subcordate

L.Ma.



Serrate



Justicia betonica L.

ACANTHACEAE

Hill Justicia, White Shrimp Pant, Squirrel's Tail -En

Vella balaga -Ir

Velimungil -Ta; Vellakurinji -Ma; Hadpat, Mokander -Hi

HABIT: A gregarious shrub.

FLOWER: In terminal or subterminal spikes, sessile; white with purple lines outside and throat of deeper colour. Flowering throughout the year.

FRUIT: A pubescent capsule; seeds spinulose. Fruiting throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: Bracts large, nerves conspicuously green.

MISCELLANEOUS: Honey bees forage on these flowers. Leaves are used as antidotes for venomous stings, bites, etc.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common along roads, thickets and stream banks from plains to 900m. Throughout the old world tropics.



L.Ar.



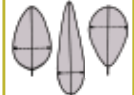
Opposite-
decussate

L.Iy.



Simple

L.Sh.



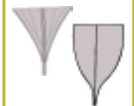
Ovate-
lanceolate, to
obovate

L.Ap.



Acuminate

L.Ba.



Acute-attenuate

L.Ma.



Entire-crenate

Lantana camara L.

VERBENACEAE

Lantana -En

Unni chedi, Nandhana chedi, Paralai chedi -Ir

Unni chedi -Ta



HABIT: A large bushy shrub.

L.Ar.



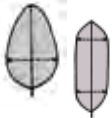
Opposite-
decussate

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Ovate-oblong

L.Ap.



Acute

L.Ba.



Cuneate,
rounded,
cordate

L.Ma.



Crenulate-
crenate

FLOWER: In axillary dense spikes; brick red (plains) to pink (hills). Flowering throughout the year.

FRUIT: A globose drupe, ripening dark black or blue; seed 1, reticulate. Fruiting throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: Stem 4-angular, prickly.

MISCELLANEOUS: Flower attracts butterflies and moths. Birds disperse the seeds.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Most aggressive weed of disturbed ground. plains from the coast to the hills. Native of tropical America, widely naturalised in tropics and subtropics.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: The young stem is used as toothsticks. Fruits edible. Young leaves are used to cure fever. Sloth bear and monkeys observed eating the fruits.



Lantana veronicifolia Hayek

VERBENACEAE

Vellaipparalai -lr

HABIT: A woody shrub.

FLOWER: In axillary dense, stalked spikes; white. Flowering from September-February.

FRUIT: A fleshy, globose drupe; seed 1, reticulate. Fruiting throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: Stem 4-angled, very pale coloured.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Not common in the deciduous forests from plains to 500m. Endemic to Peninsular India.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: The leaves are infused in boiling water and the steam inhaled to cure fever.



L.Ar.



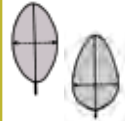
Opposite-decussate

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



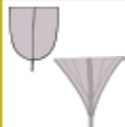
Elliptic-ovate

L.Ap.



Subacute

L.Ba.



Rounded-acute

L.Ma.



Crenulate

Milium montana Gardner ex Hook.f. & Thomson.
ANNONACEAE

Siru oogai -lr

HABIT: A small erect shrub.

FLOWER: Solitary, axillary; flesh-coloured, pendulous. Flowering throughout the year.

FRUIT: In a cluster of 5-6 monocarps, globose, subsessile; reddish, orange when ripe, glabrous; seed solitary. Fruiting throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: Branchlets drooping, new foliage coppery.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Scarce in the stream banks and semi-evergreen forests from 500m to 900m. India and Sri Lanka.

L.Ar.



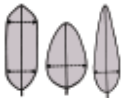
Alternate-distichous

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Oblong or ovate-lanceolate

L.Ap.



Acute

L.Ba.



Obtuse-subcordate

L.Ma.



Entire



Opuntia monacantha (Willd.) Haw.

CACTACEAE

Drooping prickly pear -En

Dorai kalli -lr

Kalli -Ta



L.Ar.

FLOWER: Solitary, sessile; yellow with suffused pink in the middle of each perianth. Flowering throughout the year.

FRUIT: An obovoid berry with spiny areoles; seeds numerous. Fruiting throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: Stem jointed, fleshy, flattened. Spines 1-3 per areoles. Leaves lanceolate, early caducous.

MISCELLANEOUS: Fruits edible.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Common in wastelands and open grounds. Plains from the coast to 1200m. Native of America, naturalized in the old world tropics.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: Eating the fruit increases appetite.

L.Ty.

L.Sh.

L.Ap.

L.Ba.

L.Ma.



Opuntia dillenii (Ker Gawl) Haw.

CACTACEAE

Prickly Pear -En

Mullu kalli -lr

Chappathi kalli -Ta; Nagphana -Hi



HABIT: An armed, succulent shrub.

L.Ar.

FLOWER: Solitary, sessile; yellow. Flowering throughout the year.

FRUIT: An obovoid berry; purple when ripe; seeds many. Fruiting throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: Stem jointed, fleshy, flattened. Spines 5-7 per areoles. Leaves early caducous.

L.Ty.

MISCELLANEOUS: The orange-red coloured fruits are edible after the spines have been carefully removed. Often planted as a fence.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Common in wastelands and roadsides. Plains from the coast to 900m. Native of America, introduced into oldworld, now in the wild.

L.Sh.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: Fruits are edible and helps to increase appetite. Excessive amounts may cause diaorrhoea. Flowers are used to treat heat boils. Fruits eaten by peacocks, squirrels and hares.

L.Ap.

L.Ba.

L.Ma.



Phoenix loureiroi Kunth

ARECACEAE

Mountain date palm -En

Seemarpul -Ir

Malai eecham, Chiru eecham, Inji -Ta

HABIT: A stout shrub.

FLOWER: Enclosed in much branched spadix, in spikes. Flowering from October-December.

FRUIT: An oblong drupe; green, orange to black; seed 1, grooved ventrally. Fruiting from March-May.

FIELD TIPS: Stem densely covered with the bases of petioles. Leaves fascicled, more or less 4-farious.

MISCELLANEOUS: The fruit is sweet and edible.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common on bare exposed slopes of scrub jungles and deciduous forests. Endemic to Indian subcontinent.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: The leaves are plaited into mats and broomsticks. The tender shoot just above the ground is edible.



L.Ar.



Clustered

L.Ty.



Imparipinnate

L.Sh.



Linear

L.Ap.



Acuminate-spinous

L.Ba.



Sheathing

L.Ma.



Entire

Phyllanthus reticulatus Poir.

EUPHORBIACEAE

Black honey shrub -En

Pula, Pullaanthi, Karunelli, Soolaketti -Ta; Panjuli -Hi

HABIT: A scandent, bushy shrub.

FLOWER: In axillary fascicles, small, pendulous; reddish. Flowering throughout the year.

FRUIT: A globose berry; dark blue. Fruiting throughout the year.

MISCELLANEOUS: Fruits edible.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Rare in scrub jungles, river banks and fences from plains to 500m. Tropical Africa, India, Sri Lanka, S.E.Asia, S.China and Malaysia.

L.Ar.



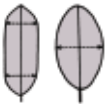
Alternate-disticous

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Oblong-elliptic

L.Ap.



Acute

L.Ba.



Acute

L.Ma.



Entire



Pisonia aculeata L.

NYCTAGINACEAE

Ottu chedi -lr

Kodi kuttippadatti, Marukalli, Selamaranjaan -Ta

HABIT: An armed scandent shrub, to 6m.

FLOWER: In axillary aggregated, stalked umbels; greenish-creamy. Flowering from January-May.

FRUIT: A oblong anthocarp, 5-angled, with 5-rows of 2-seriate, stipitate, viscid glands. Fruiting February onwards.

FIELD TIPS: Branchlets with axillary prickles. Anthocarp with viscid glands.

MISCELLANEOUS: Root extracts have been used in herbal medicine and extracts from leaves and bark are used to treat arthritis.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Rare along the forest paths, stream banks and scrub jungles from plains to 800m. Tropical America, Africa, Madagascar, to India, Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Thailand, Indo-China and Malaysia.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: During the grain harvest the prickly branches are used to separate grains and husk.



L.Ar.



Opposite

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



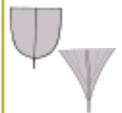
Elliptic-ovate

L.Ap.



Acute

L.Ba.



Rounded-acute

L.Ma.



Entire

Pouzolzia auriculata Wight

URTICACEAE

HABIT: A gregarious, scabrid shrub.

FLOWER: In axillary, subsessile clusters; yellow. Flowering from June-October.

FRUIT: An achene, not winged. Fruiting throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: Stem and leaf stalk red tinged.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Common along the stream banks and rocky slopes from foothills to 1200m. Peninsular India and Sri Lanka.

L.Ar.



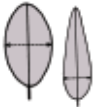
Alternate -spiral

L.Ty.



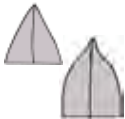
Simple

L.Sh.



Elliptic-lanceolate

L.Ap.



Acute-rounded

L.Ba.



Acute-acuminate

L.Ma.



Entire



Senna auriculata (L.) Roxb.

CAESALPINIACEAE

Aveeramaram -Ir

Aavaram -Ta; Tarwar -Hi

HABIT: A large shrub.

FLOWER: In terminal or axillary, corymbose racemes; bright yellow coloured. Flowering throughout the year.

FRUIT: A long, stipitate, turgid pod, mucronate at apex; seeds 6 or more, ovoid. Fruiting throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: Stipule foliaceous. Rachis with linear, erect stipitate glands opposite to all leaflets.

MISCELLANEOUS: Indigenous source of tannin. Roots, leaves, bark, flowers and fruits collected in equal quantities in weight, are dried and prepared to fine powder, made as a decoction and consumed to help strengthen the body.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very commonly found along the roadsides and wastelands from plains to 500m. India, Sri Lanka and Myanmar.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: Flowers used for religious rituals. Buds crushed and applied on the head of children to cure head ache.



L.Ar.



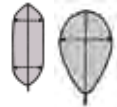
Alternate-spiral

L.Ty.



Paripinnate

L.Sh.



Oblong-ovate

L.Ap.



Obtuse-retuse
or mucronate

L.Ba.



Cuneate-
truncate

L.Ma.



Entire

Senna montana Heyne ex Roth
CAESALPINIACEAE

Ponnaavarai -Ir

Malai Aavaram -Ta

HABIT: A large shrub,

FLOWER: In terminal or axillary corymbose panicles; yellow. flowering throughout the year.

FRUIT: A compressed pod, shortly stipitate, strongly nerved, apex mucronate; seeds 20, ovoid. Fruiting throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: Rachis and petiole eglandular. Branchlets angled.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Common on the barren lands, scrub jungles of deciduous forests from plains to 900m. Endemic to Peninsular India.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: Commonly used as green manure.

L.Ar.



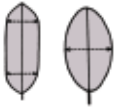
Alternate-distichous

L.Ty.



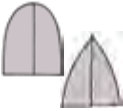
Paripinnate

L.Sh.



Oblong-elliptic

L.Ap.



Obtuse-mucronate

L.Ba.



Obtuse

L.Ma.



Entire



Senna hirsuta (L.) H.S. Irwin & Barneby
CAESALPINIACEAE

Karuthagarai -lr

Thagarai -lr

HABIT: A medium sized shrub.

FLOWER: In axillary, corymbose panicles; yellow, densely hairy. Flowering throughout the year.

FRUIT: A sessile, subterete, ribbed pod, densely hirsute; seeds many, transverse. Fruiting throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: Leaves white hirsute. Petiole glandular at base.

MISCELLANEOUS: In Java the leaves are used medicinally for treating herpes. A decoction of the leaves is used against irritations of the skin in Thailand.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Native of tropical America, now distributed throughout the old world tropics.



L.Ar.



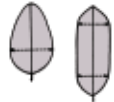
Alternate-spiral

L.Ty.



Paripinnate

L.Sh.



Ovate-oblong

L.Ap.



Caudate

L.Ba.



Obtuse

L.Ma.



Entire

Solanum erianthum D. Don

SOLANACEAE

Karum peethai -Ir

Aanai Sundaikaai -Ta

HABIT: A large shrub or small tree.

FLOWER: In terminal or axillary corymboid panicles; white or pink. Flowering throughout the year.

FRUIT: A globose berry; green when young, later yellow; seeds numerous, triangular or circular. Fruiting throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: Bark grey, smooth. Branchlets and leaves fulvous-tomentose.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Common along the riverbanks and forest paths from 500-800m. India, Malaysia, N. Australia and America.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: Fruits are used during the rituals of puberty.

L.Ar.



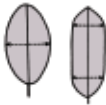
Alternate-spiral

L.Ty.



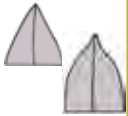
Simple

L.Sh.



Elliptic-oblong

L.Ap.



Acute-acuminate

L.Ba.



Obliquely acute

L.Ma.



Entire



Solanum pubescens Willd.

SOLANACEAE

Kattu sundai -lr

HABIT: A medium-sized, fulvous-pubescent shrub.

FLOWER: In axillary racemes; purple-violet. Flowering from December–February.

FRUIT: A globose berry, shining; orange when ripe; seeds many, minutely scaly. Fruiting January onwards.

FIELD TIPS: Branchlets and leaves densely fulvous-tomentose. Leaves with spines along margin.

MISCELLANEOUS: The unripe fruits are edible.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common on the exposed barren lands, rocky cliffs and river banks from plains to 600m. Peninsular India and Sri Lanka.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: The dried fruits are cooked and eaten.



L.Ar.



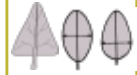
Opposite

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Deltoid to
elliptic-ovate

L.Ap.



Acute

L.Ba.



Obliquely
truncate-(sub)
cordate

L.Ma.

Sinuate

Solanum torvum Sw.

SOLANACEAE

Turkey Berry, Devil's Fig, Prickly Nightshade, Wild Eggplant, Pea Eggplant -En

Bed sundai -Ir

Sundai -Ta

HABIT: A large shrub.

L.Ar.



Opposite

L.Ty.

FLOWER: In extra-axillary corymbose cymes; white. Flowering in two peaks February-April and August-November.

FRUIT: A globose berry; green; seeds numerous, smooth, circular. Fruiting throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: Stem and leaves densely white stellate pubescent.

MISCELLANEOUS: Extracts of the plant are reported to be useful in many treatments. The fruit is bitter in taste and is cooked and eaten.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common along the roads and wastelands from plains to 700m. Sometimes cultivated in kitchen gardens. Tropical.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: Fruits are edible. The seeds are removed and cooked with lentils.

Simple

L.Sh.



Ovate

L.Ap.



Acute

L.Ba.



Obliquely
subcordate-
truncate

L.Ma.



Sinate

Tarennia asiatica (L.) Kuntze ex K.Schum.

RUBIACEAE

Dharani -Ir

Thaerani, Kura -Ta

HABIT: A large evergreen shrub.

FLOWER: In terminal corymbose cymes, 3-chotomous; cream, fragrant. Flowering from December-April.

FRUIT: A globose berry, with a crown of calyx lobes, dark brown when dry. Fruiting throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: Leaves dark glossy green above, dull beneath.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common in forest thickets, scrub jungles and deciduous forests above 400m. Peninsular India, Sri Lanka and Malaysia.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: Stems are termite resistant, used for fencing. Ripened fruits edible.



L.Ar.



Opposite-decussate

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Oblong-oblancheolate

L.Ap.



Acute

L.Ba.



Truncate

L.Ma.



Entire



Withania somnifera (L.) Dunal

SOLANACEAE

Amikkilai -lr

Amukkilaachedi, Karappaan thazhai -Ta; Ashwagandha -Hi

HABIT: A medium-sized shrub.

FLOWER: In axillary fascicles, yellow. Flowering from April-July.

FRUIT: A globose berry, orange, overtopped by the inflated, accrescent calyx; seeds discoid, trigonous. Fruiting from July-December.

FIELD TIPS: Branchlets hoary tomentose. Opposite leaves unequal.

MISCELLANEOUS: Highly used in the Aurvedic medicine preparations. A unique herb with anti-stress adaptogenic action that leads to a better physical fitness and helps cope with life's daily stress.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Rare in the homestead areas, often cultivated in the home garden. Mediterranean, Canary Islands Cape of Good Hope and India.

L.Ar.



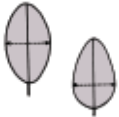
Alternate-spiral

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



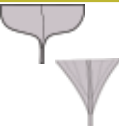
Elliptic-ovate

L.Ap.



Acute

L.Ba.



Truncate-acute

L.Ma.



Entire



UNCULTIVATED LEAFY GREEN VEGETABLES

Green leafy vegetables are rich sources of many nutrients and form a major category of vegetable groups that have been designated as 'nature's anti-aging wonders'. They are a rich source of minerals (including iron, calcium, potassium, and magnesium) and vitamins, including vitamins K, C, E, and many of the B vitamins. They also contain various medicinal and therapeutic agents. There are large arrays of laxatives, sedatives and soporifics or sleep inducing plants in the vegetable kingdom. Certain leafy vegetables are highly beneficial in the treatment of various diseases. Little information is available on the nutritional status of uncultivated leafy greens. In an inventory made for the region of Pillur a total number of 24 species were recorded.

Many of the tropical plants produce leaves throughout the year in moderate and even in low rainfall conditions. The constant supply of leaves offers nutritional continuity to the people. In drier conditions, some drought resistant plants continue to retain edible leaves, becoming a source of food. So, these are the constant food for the local indigenous communities. A few of the major uncultivated edible green vegetable species of Pillur region are



1. *Solanum nigrum* - Kakke
2. *Acacia pennata* - Seengai
3. *Cissus quadrangularis* - Naralai
4. *Alternanthera sessilis* - Ponnaganni
5. *Amaranthus spinosus* - Mullukeerai
6. *Senna tora* - Tagarai
7. *Oxalis corniculata* - Pulicheerai
8. *Cardiospermum halicacabum* - Sipotalie
9. *Cycas circinalis* - Enthu
10. *Basella alba* - Vasallae
11. *Boerhavia diffusa* - Saerandai



Collection of leafy vegetable remains a women's role amongst the indigenous community. Though leaves are available all through the year on most plants, the gathering may happen only in certain seasons. Certain leaves have to be eaten only in a certain season otherwise they can cause health problems. Many of them have to be processed before they are cooked and many have to be eaten in combination with other leaves or pulses. All this knowledge still exists with the indigenous people and is in practice till today.



Abutilon crispum (L.) Medik.

MALVACEAE

Siruthuthi -Ta

HABIT: A scandent subshrub.

FLOWER: Solitary; pale yellow. Flowering from November–December.

FRUIT: A globular schizocarp, nodding, turgid, stellate pubescent; mericarps 10, rounded at base and apex, without mucro; seeds reniform. Fruiting throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: Branchlets densely stellate-pubescent, intermingled with simple hairs. Schizocarp wall membranous, transparent.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Occasional in dry crevices of rocks and hill slopes from plains to 500m. America to Malaysia.

L.Ar.



Alternate distichous

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Ovate

L.Ap.



Acuminate

L.Ba.



Cordate

L.Ma.



Crenate



Acalypha capitata Willd.

EUPHORBIACEAE

Alder leaved cat tail-En

HABIT: A medium sized undershrub.

FLOWER: Male flowers in cylindric, elongate spike in the lower axils, female flowers in short, subterminal spikes; brown. Flowering from February-April and July-September.

FRUIT: A capsule of 3, bivalved cocci, hardly enlarged; seeds subglobose. Fruiting throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: Stem and leaves densely hispid.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common in scrub jungles and exposed slopes from foothills to 750m. Endemic to Peninsular India.



L.Ar.



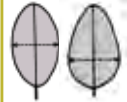
Alternate
distichous

L.Ty.



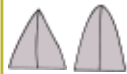
Simple

L.Sh.



Elliptic-ovate

L.Ap.



Acute to obtuse

L.Ba.



Rounded

L.Ma.



Crenate-serrate

Acalypha ciliata Forssk.

EUPHORBIACEAE

HABIT: A small subshrub.

FLOWER: In axillary short spikes, male flowers in the upper half, minute, female flowers few, in the lower half; greenish-yellow. Flowering November onwards.

FRUIT: A capsule of 3, bivalved cocci, hardly enlarged. Fruiting December onwards.

FIELD TIPS: Branchlets striate, strigose. Petiole as long as leaf blade.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Occasional along roadsides and scrub jungles from foothills to 400m. Tropical Africa, Arabia, India and Sri Lanka.

L.Ar.



Alternate distichous

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Ovate

L.Ap.



Abruptly acuminate

L.Ba.



Rounded

L.Ma.



Serrate



Acalypha indica L.

EUPHORBIACEAE

Indian Acalypha -En

Kuppagida -lr

Kuppaimeni, Poonamayakki, Naaikurungu -Ta; Chalmari -Ka; Kuppamani -Ma;

Khokli, Kuppi -Hi

HABIT: An erect, spreading herb.

FLOWER: In axillary spikes, male flowers above middle, female flowers below the middle; greenish. Flowering throughout the year.

FRUIT: A capsule, bivalved, hardly enlarged; seeds subglobose. Fruiting throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: Leaves often greenish with yellow blotches, long petiolate.

MISCELLANEOUS: The leaf paste is taken as a cure for asthma and bronchitis.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common along the roadsides, waste lands and forest edges from plains to 750m. Tropical Africa, Sri Lanka, India to Malaysia and Timor.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: The leaf paste is applied on the body as a cure for skin diseases.



L.Ar.



Alternate

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



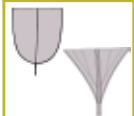
Broadly ovate

L.Ap.



Acute

L.Ba.



Rounded-attenuate

L.Ma.



Crenate-serrate

Acanthospermum hispidum DC.
ASTERACEAE

Goat`s head, Horn spine -En

Ganthimul -Ir

Kombumul, Mullichedu -Ta

HABIT: A small hispid herb.

FLOWER: In axillary, solitary capitulum; disc florets yellow, ray florets creamy white. Flowering from January-June.

FRUIT: A compressed achene, smooth, enclosed within echinate inner phyllaries. Fruiting throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: Plant hairy. Fruit with 2 spiny horns at apex.

MISCELLANEOUS: Very aggressive colonizer on disturbed lands. It is used for the treatment of scorpion sting. The whole plant is used in medicinal preparations.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common along roadsides and disturbed fallow fields from plains to 1000m. Native of tropical America, widely naturalized in the old world tropics.

L.Ar.



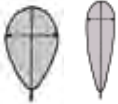
Opposite

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Obovate-oblongate

L.Ap.



Acute

L.Ba.



Cuneate-decurrent

L.Ma.



Coarsely serrate



Achyranthes aspera L.

AMARANTHACEAE

Prickly Chaff Flower , Devil`s horse whip-En

Irumpuli, Naiyurivi, Annaidumudi -Ir

Naayuruvi, Naagarkaaimullu -Ta;Kadaladi; Katalati - Ma; Uttaraneer-Ka

HABIT: An erect or straggling herb.

FLOWER: In axillary or terminal spikes; yellowish-white. Flowering throughout the year.

FRUIT: An urticle, falling off with bracteoles and perianths; seed solitary. Fruiting throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: The fruit easily sticks to clothes and animal skin.

MISCELLANEOUS: The slender roots serve as a tooth stick to clean teeth. Fresh leaves together with other spinach greens are cooked and eaten. Seeds are also cooked and eaten believed to suppress hunger.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common along roadsides, and fallow lands from plains to 1400m. India, South Andamans, widespread in Sri Lanka, Tropical Asia, Africa, Australia and America.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: The crushed leaves are used to treat dog bites. The stems tied together are used as coarse brooms.



L.Ar.



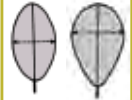
Opposite-decussate

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Elliptic-ovate

L.Ap.



Obtuse-acute

L.Ba.



Cuneate

L.Ma.



Entire

Aerva javanica (Burm.f.) Juss. ex Schult.

AMARANTHACEAE

Kapok bush, desert cotton -En

HABIT: A small tomentose subshrub.

FLOWER: In terminal panicle spikes; white. Flowering from December-February.

FRUIT: A thin-walled urticle, irregularly rupturing; seed lenticular to reniform. Fruiting January onwards.

FIELD TIPS: Branchlets velvety to woolly.

MISCELLANEOUS: The plant is used in many medicinal applications. The flowers and seeds are externally applied as paste for skin diseases. The seeds are used for stuffing pillows, use of which is believed to cure rheumatism and headaches.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common in poor, gravelly soil, scrub jungles and fallows from plains to 400m. Drier parts of the tropics and subtropics of the old world.

L.Ar.



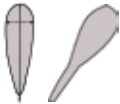
Alternate distichous

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Oblongate-spathulate

L.Ap.



Obtusely apiculate

L.Ba.



Cuneate-attenuate

L.Ma.



Entire



Aerva lanata (L.) Juss.

AMARANTHACEAE

Mountain knot grass- En

Polaidaagu, kappuchedi, pongalpoo -Ir

Poolaipoo, Koolappoo -Ta; Cherula -Ma; Bilesuli - Ka

HABIT: A much-branched undershrub.

FLOWER: In axillary spicate clusters; white. Flowering from November-April.

FRUIT: A membranous urticle; seed inverse. Fruiting December onwards.

FIELD TIPS: Leaves stalkless. Tiny clusters of two or three flowers grow in the leaf axils

MISCELLANEOUS: The plant is used in medicinal preparations.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common along the roads, wastelands and exposed areas from plains to 900m. Drier parts of tropics and subtropics of the old world.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: The whole plant is used in religious rituals, especially during the festival of Pongal.



L.Ar.



Alternate distichous

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Ovate-orbicular

L.Ap.



Obtusely apiculate

L.Ba.



Attenuate-cuneate

L.Ma.



Entire

Ageratum haustorianum Mill. ASTERACEAE

Goat Weed, Flossflower, Blueweed, Bluemink-En

Appae chedi -Ir

Vaadaichedi -Ta, Nayitulasi -Ka; Visadodi -Hi

HABIT: An annual herb.

FLOWER: In terminal corymbs; blue Flowering from September- January.

FRUIT: An achene, linear-long, black, 5 -ribbed. Fruiting January onwards.

FIELD TIPS: Stem and leaves softly white hairy, strong-scented when crushed.

MISCELLANEOUS: High altitude replacement of *A. conyzoides*.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: A common gregarious weed of fallow lands, arable lands upto 1400m. Native to Central America and adjacent parts of Mexico, a pan tropic weed.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: The crushed young leaves and lime mixture applied to heal cuts and wounds.

L.Ar.



Decussate

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Ovate

L.Ap.



Acute

L.Ba.



Truncate-cordate

L.Ma.



Closely serrate



Alternanthera tenella Colla
AMARANTHACEAE

Ragi pottu mullu -lr

Thevadiyaal mul, Ottara mul -Ta

HABIT: A compact perennial herb.

FLOWER: In axillary, globose, compact spike, white. Flowering December onwards.

FRUIT: An urticle, circumscissile. Seed erect, compressed, aril copular, 2 lobed.

FIELD TIPS: Branchlets angular and villous.

MISCELLANEOUS: The leaf is used in medicinal preparations.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Common along the stream and riverbanks and dams from plains to 1000m. Native to Brazil, now widely naturalised throughout the tropics.



L.Ar.



Opposite-decussate or clustered

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



(Obliquely) elliptic-(sub)orbicular

L.Ap.



Obtusely apiculate

L.Ba.



Attenuate-cuneate

L.Ma.



Entire

Alternanthera sessilis (L.) R.Br. ex DC.
AMARANTHACEAE

Tangle Mat -En

Ponnankanni dagu -Ir

Ponnaankannikkeerai -Ta; Honagone soppu -Ka; Jaljambo -Hi

HABIT: A spreading herb.

FLOWER: In axillary spikes, sessile; white. Flowering from August -December.

FRUIT: A cordiform urticle, strongly compressed; seed orbicular. Fruiting December onwards.

FIELD TIPS: Branchlets rooting at nodes. Flowers in sessile spike, bract and bracteoles shiny white.

MISCELLANEOUS: The leaves and young shoots are cooked and used as a vegetable. Medicinal qualities of the leaves are believed to be many; highly recommended for breast-feeding mothers as it increases lactation.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common along the banks of fresh water streams, canals and ponds from plains to 1500m. Tropics and subtropics of old and new worlds.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: Leaves are cooked and eaten.

L.Ar.



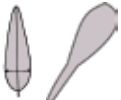
Opposite-decussate or clustered

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Lanceolate to spatulate

L.Ap.



Obtuse to acute

L.Ba.



Cuneate to attenuate

L.Ma.



Entire



Alysicarpus sp.

FABACEAE

HABIT: A small subshrub.

FLOWER: In terminal or axillary racemes, 3-5-flowered clusters; white to lilac. Flowering from November-February.

FRUIT: A moniliform pod, lower margin deeply undulate, broadly oblong; seeds 5-7. Fruiting December onwards.

FIELD TIPS: Branchlets sericeous. Leaves 1-foliolate.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Common along the foot paths and scrub jungles from plains to 1400m. Tropical Africa, India, Sri Lanka, S.E.Asia, China, Malaysia and Australia.



L.Ar.



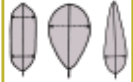
Alternate distichous

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Oblong-obovate or lanceolate

L.Ap.



Acute-apiculate

L.Ba.



Obtuse-subacute

L.Ma.



Entire

Amaranthus spinosus L.

AMARANTHACEAE

Prickly Amaranth -En

Mulkeerai -Ir

Mullukkeerai -Ta; Mullu harive soppu -Ka; Mullen cheera -Ma; Kanta nutiya -Hi



HABIT: An erect spinous herb.

L.Ar.



Alternate-spiral

FLOWER: In axillary or aggregated terminal panicles; greenish-white. Flowering throughout the year.

FRUIT: An orbicular urticle, compressed. Fruiting throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: Stem reddish. Spines axillary, paired or clustered.

L.Ty.



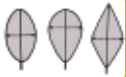
Simple

MISCELLANEOUS: Leaves and tender stems are cooked and eaten. This spinach is believed to be excellent for people suffering from calcium and vitamin A deficiency.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common in fallow and cultivable lands from plains to 1500m. Cosmopolitan.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: The leaves are cooked and eaten.

L.Sh.



Elliptic-ovate to rhomboid

L.Ap.



Acutely emarginate

L.Ba.



Acute

L.Ma.



Entire



Andrographis paniculata (Burm.f.) Wall. ex Nees
ACANTHACEAE

Nangai chedi -lr

Nila vaambu, Siriya nangai -Ta; Nelaberu -Ka; Nelavepu -Ma; Kalpanath -Hi

HABIT: A spreading subshrub.

FLOWER: In terminal or axillary racemose panicles, zigzag; white with pink tinge. Flowering from December-March.

FRUIT: An oblong capsule, compressed, minutely hairy; seeds many. Fruiting January onwards

FIELD TIPS: Branchlets 4-angular. Anthers and filaments bearded.

MISCELLANEOUS: The plant extract has many medicinal applications. The plant has a bitter taste.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Common in fallows and homesteads from plains to 400m. Peninsular India and Sri Lanka.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: Leaves are used to make antivenoms. The leaf extract taken orally to cure stomach ache.



L.Ar.



Opposite-
decussate

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Linear-obovate

L.Ap.



Acuminate

L.Ba.



Acuminate

L.Ma.



Entire

Anisomeles malabarica (L.) R.Br. ex Sims
LAMIACEAE

Kannu thumbai -Ir

Aruvaachadachi -Ta

HABIT: A large herb.

FLOWER: In terminal and axillary spikes; purple. Flowering throughout the year.

FRUIT: A small nutlet, basilar. Fruiting throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: Branchlets tawny-tomentose, obtusely 4-gonous.

MISCELLANEOUS: The whole plant, especially the leaves and roots are used in medicinal preparations.

L.Ar.



Opposite-decussate

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Oblanceolate

L.Ap.



Acute

L.Ba.



Acute

L.Ma.



Serrate



Argemone mexicana L.

PAPAVERACEAE

Mexican Poppy -En

Mulluumathai -Ir

Piramathanda, Virumalakachi -Ta

HABIT: A strong branched, prickly, annual herb.

FLOWER: In terminal, solitary; golden yellow, showy. Flowering throughout the year.

FRUIT: An oblong capsule, spinous, apically dehiscent by 3-7 valves; seeds many, black, pitted. Fruiting throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: Stem white glaucous. Leaf variegated with white, margin spine-tipped. Sap yellow.

MISCELLANEOUS: The yellow sap used to cure eye infection. Seeds are sometime used as adulterant of mustard.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Common along the roadsides, disturbed vegetation and human habitations. Native of W.Indies, now widely naturalized in the tropics.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: The yellow flowers are used to cure heat boils.



L.Ar.

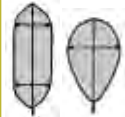


Alternate

L.Ty.

Pinnatifid

L.Sh.



Oblong-
obovate

L.Ap.



Acuminate

L.Ba.

Subamplexicaul

L.Ma.



Spinulose-
dentate

Bacopa monnieri (L.) Wettst.

SCROPHULARIACEAE

Indian pennyworth -En

Neerpirami, Nilappachai -Ta, Ka, Hi; Nirbrahmi -Ma

HABIT: A prostrate succulent herb.

FLOWER: Solitary, axillary, ebracteate; white with violet and green bands inside the throat. Flowering throughout the year.

FRUIT: An oblong-globose capsule, septicial; seeds oblong. Fruiting throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: Stem rooting at nodes. Leaves succulent.

MISCELLANEOUS: The whole plant is highly valued for its medicinal properties.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Common in fallow fields, marshy places and water courses from plains to 1400m. Pantropical.

L.Ar.



Opposite-decussate

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Oblong

L.Ap.



Obtuse

L.Ba.



Cuneate

L.Ma.



Entire



Barleria buxifolia L.

ACANTHACEAE

Box leaved Barleria -En

Chulli mullu -lr

Rose mullippoondy -Ta

HABIT: A spiny, erect herb.

FLOWER: In axillary, solitary; pink to violet. Flowering from November-March and July-October.

FRUIT: An ellipsoid capsule; seeds many, appressed hairy. Fruiting throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: Branchlets hispid. Leaves spiny tipped, ciliate along margin.

MISCELLANEOUS: The leaves mixed with pepper are used for relief from toothaches.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common as an understory of dry deciduous forest and roadsides from plains to 500m. Endemic to Peninsular India.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: A paste of the root applied to heal inflammations and boils.



L.Ar.



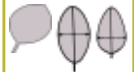
Opposite-decussate

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Orbicular to elliptic-ovate

L.Ap.



Spinous-mucronate

L.Ba.



Cuneate

L.Ma.



Entire

Barleria cuspidata B. Heyne ex Nees
ACANTHACEAE

Spiny Barleria -En

Meemmul chedi -Ir

Kadanculi -Ta; Vellaimuli - Ma

HABIT: A small prickly undershrub.

FLOWER: Solitary, axillary, sessile; yellow. Flowering from November-January.

FRUIT: An ovoid capsule, beaked at apex; seeds 2, suborbicular, appressed hairy. Fruiting throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: Leaf and bract apex spine tipped.

MISCELLANEOUS: The leaves mixed with pepper are used for relief from toothaches. Roots and leaves are used to treat cough and bronchitis.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common along the roadsides and homestead from plains to 500m. Tropical Africa, Asia, Sri Lanka through India to Malaysia.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: The leaves and roots are used in traditional medicines.

L.Ar.



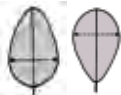
Opposite-decussate

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Ovate-ovobate

L.Ap.



Obtuse or acute

L.Ba.



Attenuate

L.Ma.



Entire-ciliate



Barleria prionitis L.

ACANTHACEAE

Kaattu kanagaambaram, Semmulli -Ta

HABIT: An armed subshrub.

FLOWER: Solitary or in cymose clusters in the lower axils, subsessile; golden yellow-orange. Flowering from November-January.

FRUIT: An ovoid capsule, beaked; seeds 2, suborbicular, appressed hairy. Fruiting January onwards.

FIELD TIPS: Bracts spine tipped.

MISCELLANEOUS: Often cultivated in the garden for its showy flower.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Common in scrub jungles and wayside thickets from plains to 500m. Tropical Africa, tropical Asia, Sri Lanka, India through Malaysia.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: Flowers are used in garlands.



L.Ar.



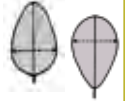
Opposite-decussate

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Ovate-ovobovate

L.Ap.



Obtuse or acute

L.Ba.

Attenuate

L.Ma.



Ciliate

Bidens pilosa L.

ASTERACEAE

Spanish needle, Cobbler`s peg -En

Paimullu, Kothimullu -Ir

Mukkuthi -Ta



HABIT: An erect or prostrate herb.

L.Ar.



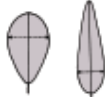
Opposite

L.Ty.



3-foliolate

L.Sh.



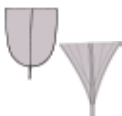
Obovate-lanceolate

L.Ap.



Acuminate

L.Ba.



Rounded-acute

L.Ma.



Crenate-serrate

FLOWER: In solitary or paired capitula; yellow. Flowering from October-April.

FRUIT: A linear achene, black, ending with awns. Fruiting December onwards.

FIELD TIPS: Branches annular. Branchlets striate.

MISCELLANEOUS: A gregarious weed of fallow fields. The achene adhere to clothes with the help of barbellate awn.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common along the roadsides, forest paths and disturbed lands from 400-1000m. Pantropical.



Blepharis maderaspatensis (L.) B. Heyne ex Roth
ACANTHACEAE

Creeping Blepharis -En

Adukku chedi -Ir

Kozhimookkan, Kooravaalchedi -Ta

HABIT: A creeping, wiry undershrub.

FLOWER: In axillary clusters; white with pink nerves. Flowering from November-February.

FRUIT: An ellipsoid capsule, compressed, shining; seeds 2, orbicular, flattened. Fruiting December onwards.

FIELD TIPS: Stem prostrate, rooting at nodes. Leaves and flowers clustered at the nodes.

MISCELLANEOUS: Tubers edible.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common on the rocks, bare grounds, and stream banks from plains to 750m. Tropical Africa to India.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: During the harvest of pulses, a bunch of leaves along with leaves of *Leucas indica* and salt is placed in the field in a belief that the yield will increase.



L.Ar.



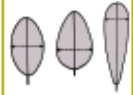
Whorled

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Elliptic-ovate to
oblanceolate

L.Ap.



Acutely
apiculate

L.Ba.



Acute-cuneate

L.Ma.



Entire to
toothed in the
upper half

Boerhavia diffusa L.

NYCTAGINACEAE

Common Hog Weed -En

Saerandai dagu -Ir

Mookkaratti, Saarai -Ta; Gadahpurna -Hi



HABIT: A spreading, prostrate herb.

L.Ar.



Opposite

L.Ty.

FLOWER: In terminal or axillary panicles of umbellate or capitate clusters; pink. Flowering from January-April.

FRUIT: A club-shaped anthocarp, glandular hairy. Fruiting throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: Branchlets swollen at base, reddish-brown, appressed hairy. Pedicels articulate.



Simple

L.Sh.

MISCELLANEOUS: The leaves are used in herbal remedies for liver ailments.

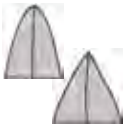
HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common by the waysides, wastelands, river banks and hedges from plains to 500m. Pantropical.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: Young shoots and leaves are cooked and eaten. Wild boar have been observed eating the roots.



Ovate-cordiform

L.Ap.



Obtuse-acute

L.Ba.



Truncate-cordate

L.Ma.



Entire



Byttneria herbacea Roxb.

STERCULIACEAE

Common Hog Weed -En

Vipuri chedi -lr

HABIT: A prostrate to ascending herb.

FLOWER: In axillary or terminal umbellate cymes; purple, free, apex appendaged. Flowering throughout the year.

FRUIT: A globose capsule, shortly prickled, apically horned, septicidally 5-valved; seeds 5, ovoid, angular, muricate. Fruiting throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: Branchlets minutely stellate pubescent. Leaves 3-nerved from base, with a linear gland at base on lower side of midrib.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common on bare slopes, by rocks and under thickets from 800-1100m. Endemic to Peninsular India.



L.Ar.



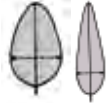
Alternate
distichous

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Ovate-lanceolate

L.Ap.



Acuminate

L.Ba.



Obtuse or
subcordate

L.Ma.



Dentate

Canscora diffusa (Vahl) R.Br. ex Roem. & Schult.
GENTIANACEAE

Poolaikkada -lr

HABIT: A small, slender, annual herb.

FLOWER: In terminal or axillary panicles; pink to whitish. Flowering from January-April.

FRUIT: An oblong-compressed capsule; seeds many, rounded or angular, minutely rugose. Fruiting March onwards.

FIELD TIPS: Stem narrowly 4-winged. Pedicels terete.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common along the river banks, fallow fields from plains to 800m. Tropical Africa, S. & S.E.Asia to Australia.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: Leaves cooked and eaten.

L.Ar.



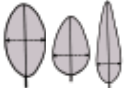
Opposite

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Elliptic to ovate-lanceolate

L.Ap.



Acute

L.Ba.



(Sub)cordate

L.Ma.



Entire



Caralluma adscendens (Roxb.) R.Br.
ASCLEPIADACEAE

Ekkae chedi -lr

Muyal kombu chedi, Kallimulaiyan -Ta

HABIT: A small succulent herb.

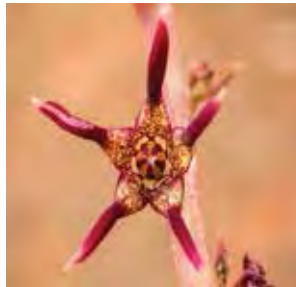
FLOWER: Solitary or terminal racemes; brown to dark purple. Flowering November-March.

FRUIT: An oblong-linear follicle, apically beaked; seeds oblong-obovate, with brownish coma. Fruiting December onwards.

FIELD TIPS: Branchlets obtusely angled, tapering at apex, latex watery.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Occasional on bare slopes and stony grounds from plains to 600m. India and Sri Lanka.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: Young stems are eaten fresh.



L.Ar.

L.Ty.

L.Sh.

L.Ap.

L.Ba.

L.Ma.

Catharanthus roseus (L.) G. Don
APOCYNACEAE

Madagascar Periwinkle, Rosy periwinkle -En

Paldail chedi -Ir

Nithyakalyani -Ta

HABIT: A small, erect herb.

FLOWER: In axillary, solitary or paired; white or pink. Flowering throughout the year.

FRUIT: A cylindrical, paired mericarp, finely ribbed; seeds many, oblong, truncate at both ends. Fruiting throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: Leaves shining, sometime with axillary glands.

MISCELLANEOUS: Exported in bulk for preparing drugs. Leaves hallucinogenic.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common along roadsides and fallows. Native of Madagascar, widely naturalized in the tropics.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: The roots are said to be poisonous.

L.Ar.



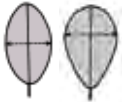
Opposite-decussate

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Elliptic-ovovate

L.Ap.



Obtusely apiculate

L.Ba.



Acute-cuneate

L.Ma.



Entire



Chamaecrista absus (L.) H.S.Irwin & Barneby
CAESALPINIACEAE

Karungkollu -Ta

HABIT: A medium sized subshrub.

FLOWER: In terminal or leaf-opposed racemes; reddish to flame coloured. Flowering from November-February.

FRUIT: A short, stipitate pod, ligulate, falcate, flat, strigose; seeds 6, ovoid, longitudinal. Fruiting December onwards.

FIELD TIPS: Leaflets in 2 pairs, digitate. Rachis with subsessile glands between leaflets.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Common in scrub jungles and disturbed grounds from plains to 1000m. Old world tropics.



L.Ar.



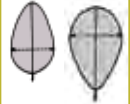
Alternate
distichous

L.Ty.



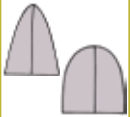
Paripinnate

L.Sh.



Ovate-obovate

L.Ap.



Obtuse-rotund

L.Ba.



Cuneate

L.Ma.



Entire

Cleome monophylla L.

CAPPARACEAE

Velaichedi -Iṛ

Ellukku sakkalathi -Ṭa

HABIT: A small, erect herb.

FLOWER: In terminal racemes; pink. Flowering from July-October.

FRUIT: A capsule, strongly ribbed, ribs glandular; seeds many, pubescent. Fruiting from August-January.

FIELD TIPS: The only species with simple leaves in the genus *Cleome*.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Common in arable lands, fallow fields and agricultural lands from plains to 900m. Tropical Africa and India.

L.Ar.



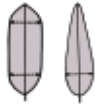
Alternate spiral

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Oblong-lanceolate

L.Ap.



Acute

L.Ba.



Truncate

L.Ma.



Entire-ciliate



Cleome viscosa L.

CAPPARACEAE

Yellow Spider Flower -En

Vaelaichedi -Ir

Naivelai, Naikadugu -Ta; Naibela -Ka; Ariavala -Ma; Hurkur -Hi

HABIT: A small erect herb.

FLOWER: In terminal racemes; yellow. Flowering throughout the year.

FRUIT: A terete capsule, ribs oblique, glandular hairy; seeds many, glabrous. Fruiting throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: Branchlets viscid to glandular.

MISCELLANEOUS: The leaves and seeds are used in medicinal applications.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common along roads and wastelands from plains to 400m. Native of old world, from tropical Africa and Arabia to tropical Australia.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: Leaf extract used to cure earache.



L.Ar.



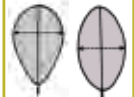
Alternate-spiral

L.Ty.



3-5 foliate

L.Sh.



Obovate or elliptic

L.Ap.



Acute

L.Ba.



Cuneate

L.Ma.



Entire

Commelina benghalensis L.

COMMELINACEAE

Garden Commelina -En

Kayinai -Ir

Kanavazhai -Ta; Kanchara -Hi

HABIT: A small, prostrate, spreading herb.

FLOWER: In bifid cymes; blue. Flowering throughout the year.

FRUIT: An ellipsoid capsule, 3-celled; seeds 5, pitted. Fruiting throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: Leaves sheathing at base, asymmetrical, ciliate along margin.

MISCELLANEOUS: The young leaves used as a vegetable and a paste derived from the plant is used to treat burns.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common along streams, thickets, scrub jungles, arable lands from plains to 500m. Africa, India to China, Japan and Malaysia.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: Leaves are cooked and eaten. The juice from the stem used to remove the dust from the eyes. Good fodder plant.

L.Ar.



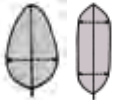
Alternate-spiral

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Ovate or
oblong-ovate

L.Ap.



Acute-obtuse

L.Ba.



Subtruncate

L.Ma.



Entire-ciliate



Commelina erecta L.

COMMELINACEAE

HABIT: A medium-sized spreading herb.

FLOWER: In terminal clusters; blue. Flowering throughout the year.

FRUIT: A 3-celled capsule, 2-valved; seeds 3, ashy, adnate to the capsule wall. Fruiting throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: Leaves and spathes ciliate along margin.

MISCELLANEOUS: Good fodder. Flowers relatively large for the genus.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Common along water courses, moist places from plains to 1000m. Africa, India and Australia.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: Cattle graze on the plant.



L.Ar.



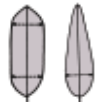
Alternate-spiral

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Oblong-lanceolate

L.Ap.



Acuminate

L.Ba.



Obliquely obtuse

L.Ma.



Entire-ciliate

Commicarpus chinensis (L.) Heimerl NYCTAGINACEAE

Diffuse Hog Weed -En

Sattathanai -Ta

HABIT: A small diffuse, scandent herb.

FLOWER: In axillary, dichotomous umbels; pink. Flowering from November-January.

FRUIT: An oblong-fusiform anthocarp, 10-ribbed, wart like appendages many, sessile. Fruiting January onwards.

FIELD TIPS: Leaf stalk velvety. Differs from *Boerhavia* by its 10-ribbed anthocarp with wart like appendages.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Rare along the stream banks and wastelands from plains to 750m. India, Pakistan, S. China, Malay Peninsula and Islands, Thailand, Vietnam and Africa.

L.Ar.



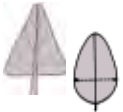
Opposite

L.Ty.



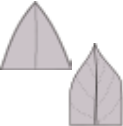
Simple

L.Sh.



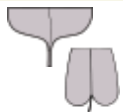
Triangular-ovate

L.Ap.



Acute-apiculate

L.Ba.



Truncate-subcordate

L.Ma.

Shallowly lobed



Corchorus aestuans L.

TILIACEAE

East Indian Mallow -En

HABIT: A much branched subshrub.

FLOWER: In leaf-opposed cymes, 3-flowered, yellow. Flowering throughout the year.

FRUIT: A terete capsule, angular, 3-winged, beak 3-fid, radiating; seeds numerous, truncate. Fruiting throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: Leaves 3-4-nerved from base, basal serrature filiform.

MISCELLANEOUS: A common weed of cultivable lands.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common in arable lands, fallow fields and agricultural lands from plains to 1000m. C.America, tropical Africa, India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Indo-China, Malaysia and Australia.



L.Ar.



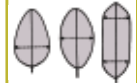
Alternate
distichous

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Ovate-elliptic or
oblong

L.Ap.



Obtuse-
subacute

L.Ba.



Obtuse-
subacute

L.Ma.



Serrate

Corchorus tridens L.

TILIACEAE

HABIT: An erect subshrub.

FLOWER: In leaf-opposed cymes, 2-5-flowered; yellow. Flowering throughout the year.

FRUIT: A terete capsule, not winged, beak 3-fid, spreading; seeds many, truncate. Fruiting throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: Leaves 3 or 4-nerved from base, leaf base with serrated appendages.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Common in fallow lands from plains to 600m. Tropical and subtropical countries of Africa, Asia and N.Australia.



L.Ar.



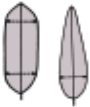
Alternate distichous

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Oblong-lanceolate

L.Ap.



Acuminate

L.Ba.



Cuneate

L.Ma.



Serrate



Crossandra infundibuliformis (L.) Nees ACANTHACEAE

Firecracker flower -En

Kattukanagaambaram -lr

Kanagaambaram -Ta, Ma; Kanagaambara - Ka

HABIT: A small undershrub.

FLOWER: In terminal or axillary spikes; orange-scarlet with red or yellow throat. Flowering January onwards.

FRUIT: An oblong capsule; seeds 4, orbicular, with fimbriate scales. Fruiting February onwards.

FIELD TIPS: Leaves glossy, wavy margined.

MISCELLANEOUS: Commonly planted in gardens and temples for its colourful flowers.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common in the scrub jungles, forest thickets and slopes from foothills to 1000m. India and Sri Lanka.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: Flowers offered to temple deities and also used to adorn women's hair.



L.Ar.



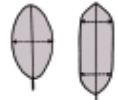
Opposite
or whorled

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Elliptic-oblong

L.Ap.



Acute

L.Ba.



Acute

L.Ma.



Entire

Crotalaria micans Link

FABACEAE

Kilukiluppai -Ta

HABIT: A large subshrub.

FLOWER: In terminal racemes; yellow. Flowering from July-August.

FRUIT: An oblong-terete pod, transversely nerved, densely pubescent, much exceeding the calyx; seeds 3-5. Fruiting throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: Branchlets sericeous. Leaves 3-foliolate.

MISCELLANEOUS: Used as a green manure.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common along fallows and stream banks from plains to 1200m. Native of tropical America, now naturalized to the tropics.

L.Ar.



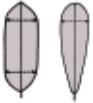
Alternate-spiral

L.Ty.



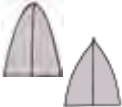
Trifoliate

L.Sh.



Oblong-oblancoelate

L.Ap.



Obtuse-mucronate

L.Ba.



Cuneate

L.Ma.



Entire



Croton bonplandianus Baill.

EUPHORBIACEAE

Soraikuruvi poo -lr

Rail pindu, Aathuppoondu -Ta

HABIT: A small, scandent herb.

FLOWER: An axillary or terminal racemes; greenish-white. Flowering throughout the year.

FRUIT: A subglobose capsule of 3, bivalved cocci; seeds oblong. Fruiting throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: Young parts with white warty outgrowths. Latex watery.

MISCELLANEOUS: Fruits edible.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common along roadsides, fallows from plains to 500m. Native of tropical America, naturalized throughout the Indian subcontinent.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: Leaves used in medicinal preparations. Spotted dove observed eating the fruits.



L.Ar.



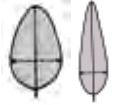
Alternate-spiral

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Ovate-lanceolate

L.Ap.



Gradully acute

L.Ba.



Acute

L.Ma.



Serrulate

Curculigo orchioides Gaertn.

HYPOXIDACEAE

Black Musale -En

Nilappannai -lr

Nilappannai Kizhangu -Ta; Nelayygadda - Ka; Kali musli -Hi

HABIT: A small rhizomatic herb.

L.Ar.



Clustered

FLOWER: In racemes, solitary or 3-5; yellow. Flowering peak during May-September.

FRUIT: An oblong capsule, terete; seeds 8, globose, glossy, beaked. Fruiting throughout the year, hidden among the dry leafbases.

L.Ty.



Simple

FIELD TIPS: Leaves radical, plicate, strongly nerved; basal sheath densely imbricate.

MISCELLANEOUS: Rhizome is used in traditional medicines.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common on the forest floors, scrub jungles and the exposed rocky cliffs from plains to 1600m. India, Sri Lanka to Japan, Malaysia and Australia.

L.Sh.



Lanceolate

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: The rhizome mixed with curd and taken orally for 3 days is believed to increase sperm count.

L.Ap.



Acuminate

L.Ba.



Attenuate

L.Ma.



Entire



Datura innoxia Mill.

SOLANACEAE

Thorn apple, Moon flower -En

HABIT: A large herb.

FLOWER: Solitary, axillary; white. Flowering throughout the year.

FRUIT: A globose capsule, spines long, weak, sharp; seeds many, circular, compressed, rugose. Fruiting throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: Parts of the plant emit a foul odor similar to rancid peanut butter when crushed or bruised

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Common weed of fallows and borders of foot paths from plains to 200m. Native of new world, introduced in the old world tropics.



L.Ar.



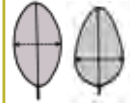
Alternate
distichous

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Elliptic-ovate

L.Ap.



Acute

L.Ba.



Unequally
truncate to
rounded

L.Ma.



Entire
to shallowly
lobed

Datura metel L.

SOLANACEAE

Devil`s trumpet-En

Umathai - Ir

Karu-Oomatthai -Ta; Dhatura -Hi



HABIT: A large, spreading subshrub.

L.Ar.



Alternate-spiral

L.Ty.

FLOWER: In axillary, solitary; white with purple tinged within. Flowering throughout the year.

FRUIT: A globose, armed capsule; green when young, later brown; seeds many, circular, compressed, rugose. Fruiting throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: Leaves very long, unequal at base, frequently lobed. Fruits spiny.

MISCELLANEOUS: The dried flowers are smoked to cure asthma.



Simple

L.Sh.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Common along the roadsides and fallows from plains to 1500m. Tropical and subtropical Asia and Africa, now widely cultivated in the warmer regions.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: The shoots, roots and seeds are sown before sowing pulses, so that the yield will increase.



Ovate

L.Ap.



Acuminate

L.Ba.



Obliquely truncate

L.Ma.



Frequently lobed-entire

Desmidorchis umbellata (Roxb.) Decne.
ASCLEPIADACEAE

Kal ekkae -lr

Kallimulaiyaam -Ta

HABIT: An erect, succulent herb.

FLOWER: In terminal umbels; purplish brown with yellow bands. Flowering from March-April.

FRUIT: A cylindric follicle; green with small dark spots, hooked at apex; seeds many, oblong, with silky coma. Fruiting June onwards.

FIELD TIPS: Stem and branches 4-angled. Latex watery. Leaves early caducous, leaving scars.

MISCELLANEOUS: Tender stems pickled or made into chutneys.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common on exposed rocks from foothills to 1000m. India, Sri Lanka and Nepal.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: Tender stem edible.



L.Ar.

L.Ty.

L.Sh.

L.Ap.

L.Ba.

L.Ma.

Dicliptera cuneata Nees

ACANTHACEAE

Karungurundhu -Ta

HABIT: A slender, erect herb.

FLOWER: In axillary, subcapitate, peduncled cymes, 3-5, (sub)capitate; pink. Flowering from November-February.

FRUIT: An ellipsoid capsule; seeds 4, orbicular-ovate, glochidiate. Fruiting January onwards.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Occasional along river banks and slopes above 900m. Endemic to Peninsular India.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: Good fodder plant.

L.Ar.



Opposite-decussate

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



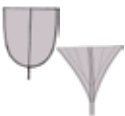
Obovate

L.Ap.



Acuminate

L.Ba.



Rounded-acute

L.Ma.



Entire



Digera muricata (L.) Mart.

AMARANTHACEAE

False amaranthus -En

Theyya dagu -Ir

Sunnaambukkeerai -Ta; Chenchali soppu, Goraji playa, Kankali soppu -Ka;

Latmahuria, Lesua-Hi

HABIT: A small, ascending herb.

FLOWER: In axillary or terminal, lax thyriform spikes, slender; pink. Flowering from November-March.

FRUIT: An indehiscent, hard, verrucose nutlet; seed solitary. Fruiting January onwards.

FIELD TIPS: Flowers are borne on slender spike-like racemes

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common along stream banks, pasture lands and a weed of cultivable lands from plains to 800m. Tropical Africa, Madagascar, Asia from tropical Arabia, India and Malaysia.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: The young leaves and stems are cooked with lentils and eaten.



L.Ar.



Alternate-spiral

L.Ty.



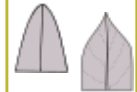
Simple

L.Sh.



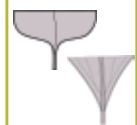
Deltoid to elliptic-ovate

L.Ap.



Obtuse-acutely apiculate

L.Ba.



Truncate-acute

L.Ma.



Entire

Ecbolium viride (Forssk.) Alston

ACANTHACEAE

Neelaambaram, Pacchaambaram, Adukkukurungu -Ta

HABIT: An erect subshrub.

FLOWER: In terminal or axillary spikes; bluish-green. Flowering throughout the year.

FRUIT: An ovoid capsule, compressed; seeds 2, orbicular, tuberculate. Fruiting throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: Branchlets 4-angular. Bracts leafy, green.

MISCELLANEOUS: Sometime cultivated in the garden as an ornamental.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common in the scrub jungles as an understory plant from plains to 1000m. Africa, India, Sri Lanka to Malaysia.

L.Ar.



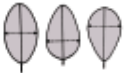
Opposite-decussate

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Elliptic-ovate to obovate

L.Ap.



Acute

L.Ba.



Attenuate

L.Ma.



Entire



Eclipta prostrata (L.) L.

ASTERACEAE

False daisy -En

Karisilaanganni, Kaiyaanthavarai -Ta

HABIT: An annual herb.

FLOWER: In axillary or terminal 1-3 capitula; white. Flowering from December-May.

FRUIT: An oblong achene, 3-quetrous, hairy above. Fruiting January onwards.

FIELD TIPS: Stem strigosely hirsute, rooting at nodes.

MISCELLANEOUS: The young leaves are used as a cure for scorpion sting. The leaves are cooked and eaten as greens. The plant is believed to have anti aging properties.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common in moist grounds, paddy fields, drainages and watercourses from plains to 750m. Pantropical.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: The young leaves are crushed and applied on cuts and wounds for quick healing.



L.Ar.



Opposite

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Lanceolate

L.Ap.



Acute

L.Ba.



Cuneate

L.Ma.



Serrate-dentate

Euphorbia cristata B. Heyne ex Roth
EUPHORBIACEAE

HABIT: A small prostrate annual herb.

FLOWER: In terminal or axillary cyathia, within the imbricate leaves. Flowering from December-March.

FRUIT: A pubescent capsule; seeds white, 4-angled, prominently furrowed. Fruiting January onwards.

FIELD TIPS: Leaves reddish. Flowers crowded among foliaceous bracts.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Common on the arable lands and roadsides from plains to 750m. India and Sri Lanka.

L.Ar.



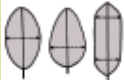
Opposite

L.Ty.



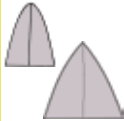
Simple

L.Sh.



Elliptic to ovate-oblong

L.Ap.



Obtuse-subacute

L.Ba.



Obliquely truncate-cordate

L.Ma.



Serrulate



Euphorbia hirta L.

EUPHORBIACEAE

Common Spurge -En

Pacchaikuthu chedi -Ir

Amman pacharisi -Ta; Dudhi -Hi

HABIT: A small prostrate herb.

FLOWER: In axillary, clustered cyathia; greenish-yellow. Flowering throughout the year.

FRUIT: A small capsule, pubescent; seeds 4-angled, minutely furrowed. Fruiting throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: Stem hispid. Leaves 3-nerved from base. Latex milky.

MISCELLANEOUS: The whole plant is used in medicinal preparations. The tender fruit as well as the flowers are edible.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common along roadsides, fallows and cultivable lands from plains to 1000m. Pantropical.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: Children use the latex for making tattoos.



L.Ar.



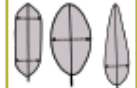
Opposite-decussate

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Oblong, elliptic-lanceolate

L.Ap.



Obtuse-acute

L.Ba.



Obliquely truncate

L.Ma.



Serrulate-serrate



Evolvulus alsinoides (L.) L.

CONVOLVULACEAE

Little Glory -En

Vishnu chakaram -Ir

Vishnukiranthi -Ta; Vishnukrantha -Ka; Vishnuclandi -Ma; Vishnukrantha -Hi



HABIT: A small, prostrate or ascending herb.

L.Ar.



Alternate-distichous

FLOWER: In axillary, solitary; blue with white throat. Flowering throughout the year.

FRUIT: A conical or depressed-globose capsule; seeds glabrous. Fruiting throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: Leaves fulvous-hirsute, very variable. Flowers fading by noon.

L.Ty.



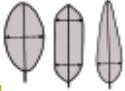
Simple

MISCELLANEOUS: Highly valued medicinal plant.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common in open areas, scrub jungles and exposed slopes from plains to 1500m. Tropical and subtropical regions of both hemispheres.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: Birds have been observed taking the young stems to build their nests.

L.Sh.



Elliptic, oblong-lanceolate



L.Ap.



Obtusely apiculate

L.Ba.



Acute

L.Ma.



Entire

Evolvulus nummularius (L.) L.

CONVOLVULACEAE

Roundleaf Bindweed-En

HABIT: A small, prostrate herb.

FLOWER: In axillary, solitary or paired; white. Flowering throughout the year.

FRUIT: A conical capsule. Fruiting throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: Stem prostrate, rooting at nodes.

MISCELLANEOUS: Grown in gardens as ornamental plant.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common along the roadsides, wastelands and grass turfs from plains to 500m. Native of new world tropics, naturalized in India and Nepal.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: A good soil binder.



L.Ar.



Alternate-distichous

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Orbicular

L.Ap.



Obtuse

L.Ba.



Subcordate-truncate

L.Ma.



Entire

Heliotropium bracteatum R.Br.

BORAGINACEAE

HABIT: An erect herb.

FLOWER: In subterminal racemes, sparingly branched; white. Flowering from March-July.

FRUIT: A rounded nutlet, smooth, sparsely hirsute. Fruiting April onwards.

FIELD TIPS: Branchlets softly sericeous. Leaf margin revolute.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Common on exposed slopes and scrub jungles from 400-1000m. Peninsular India, Sri Lanka, Malaysia and Australia.

L.Ar.



Alternate distichous

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Linear-lanceolate

L.Ap.



Acute

L.Ba.



Cuneate

L.Ma.



Entire



Hibiscus lobatus (Murray) Kuntze

MALVACEAE

Lobed leaf Mallow -En

HABIT: A small subshrub.

FLOWER: Solitary or in lax terminal racemes; white. Flowering from December-February.

FRUIT: An ovoid capsule, shortly beaked, hispid, wrinkled; seeds many, subreniform or ovoid, glabrous. Fruiting January onwards.

FIELD TIPS: Basal leaves entire, upper leaves 3-lobed.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common in scrub jungles and forests paths, from plains to 900m. Tropical Africa, Madagascar, India, S.E. Asia and Malaysia.



L.Ar.



Alternate distichous

L.Ty.



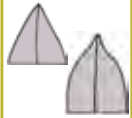
Simple or 3-lobed

L.Sh.



Orbicular-ovate

L.Ap.



Acute-acuminate

L.Ba.



Truncate-cordate

L.Ma.



Crenate-serrate

Hibiscus micranthus L.f.

MALVACEAE

Tiny Flower hibiscus -En

Pillai thenkai -Irr

HABIT: A slender branching undershrub.

FLOWER: Solitary; white. Flowering from March-May.

FRUIT: A globose capsule, puberulous; seeds many, hairy. Fruiting throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: Branchlets stellate-tomentose. Leaves 5-nerved from base.

MISCELLANEOUS: It has significant anti-inflammatory, antipyretic and neuromuscular blocking properties.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common in scrub jungles, roadside thickets and wastelands from plains to 300m. Tropical Africa, Arabia, India and Sri Lanka.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: Fruits edible.

L.Ar.



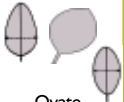
Alternate-disticous

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Ovate, suborbicular or elliptic

L.Ap.



Acute

L.Ba.



Subcordate

L.Ma.



Serrate



Hybanthus enneaspermus (L.) F.Muell.
VIOLACEAE

Spade Flower, Pink ladies slipper -En

Orilai thamarai -Ta

HABIT: A small prostrate herb.

FLOWER: Solitary, axillary; pink, unequal. Flowering throughout the year.

FRUIT: A subglobose capsule; seeds ribbed, 2mm. Fruiting throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: The conspicuous rose petal has linings of a deeper hue.

MISCELLANEOUS: Highly used in the Indian medicine.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Not common along the rocky areas and wastelands from plains to 900m. Africa, Madagascar, India, Sri Lanka, S.E.China, Indo-China, Malaysia, and tropical Australia.



L.Ar.



Alternate
distichous

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Linear-
lanceolate or
elliptic

L.Ap.



Acute

L.Ba.



Attenuate

L.Ma.



Entire

Indigofera glandulosa Wendl.

FABACEAE

Three leaf indigo -En

HABIT: A small subshrub.

FLOWER: In axillary, capitate clusters, sessile; red. Flowering December onwards.

FRUIT: An oblong pod, deflexed, pubescent, torulose; seed(s) 1 or 2, ovoid or cuboid. Fruiting January onwards.

FIELD TIPS: Leaves 3-foliolate, pellucid-punctate.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Common in scrub jungles, fallow lands and exposed barren lands from plains to 400m. Endemic to Peninsular India.

L.Ar.



Alternate distichous

L.Ty.



3-foliolate

L.Sh.



Oblanceolate

L.Ap.



Obtuse-retuse

L.Ba.



Cuneate

L.Ma.



Entire



Indigofera linnaei Ali

FABACEAE

Birdsville Indigo -En

Seppu nerinji -Ta

HABIT: A small prostrate herb.

FLOWER: In axillary subcapitate racemes; pink. Flowering June-September.

FRUIT: An ellipsoid pod, turgid; white-hirsute; seeds 2, cuboid. Fruiting throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: Commonly forms dense mat on exposed grounds.

MISCELLANEOUS: Good soil binder. This plant is responsible for Birdsville disease in horses.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common along the roadsides and exposed bare lands from plains to 700m. Indian subcontinent, Indo-China, Malaysia and Australia.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: Leaf paste applied on the body before bath to cure fevers.



L.Ar.



Alternate-distichous

L.Ty.



Imparipinnate

L.Sh.



Oblanceolate

L.Ap.



Obtuse-retuse

L.Ba.



Cuneate

L.Ma.



Entire



Kalanchoe delagoensis Eckl. & Zeyh
CRASSULACEAE

Mother of thousands, Chandelier plant-En

HABIT: A medium sized, semisucculent herb.

FLOWER: In terminal diffuse cymes; orange-reddish. Flowering from September-December.

FRUIT: A follicle, 4, membranous; seeds numerous. Fruiting December onwards.

FIELD TIPS: Leaves in whorls of 3, subterete. Leaves with numerous plantings at apices.

MISCELLANEOUS: Commonly cultivated in the garden.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Occasional along the stream banks and exposed rocks near water course from plains to 1000m. Native of Madagascar, now widespread throughout the tropics.

L.Ar.



Whorled

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Linear

L.Ap.



Acute

L.Ba.



Attenuate

L.Ma.



Serrate



Kleinia grandiflora (DC.) N.Rani

ASTERACEAE

Attukaal chedi, Muyal kadhu, Naainaakku, Illaikalli -Ta

HABIT: An erect or subscentent subshrub.

FLOWER: In terminal corymbs, homogamous, disciform; cream. Flowering from February-May.

FRUIT: A faintly ribbed achene, white hairy. Fruiting March onwards.

FIELD TIPS: Branchlets angled above, with numerous prominent leaf scars below.

MISCELLANEOUS: The plant is used in medicinal preparations.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common on bare, exposed slopes and rocks of deciduous forests from plains to 1400m. India, Sri Lanka and Nepal.



L.Ar.



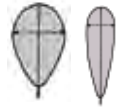
Alternate-spiral

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Obovate-oblanceolate

L.Ap.



Obtuse

L.Ba.



Cuneate

L.Ma.



Entire

Knoxia hookeriana (R.Bhattacharjee & Deb)

Subba Rao & Kumari

RUBIACEAE

HABIT: An erect, slender herb.

FLOWER: In terminal, lax corymbs; violetish. Flowering from January-April.

FRUIT: An indehiscent mericarp, splitting vertically. Fruiting March-June.

FIELD TIPS: Stipules split into subulate bristles.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Common on bare slopes and grasslands of above 600m. India, Sri Lanka to Malaysia, N.Australia.

L.Ar.



Opposite or whorled

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Linear-lanceolate

L.Ap.



Acute

L.Ba.



Cuneate-attenuate

L.Ma.



Entire



Leonotis nepetiifolia (L.) R.Br.

LAMIACEAE

Lions Ear -En

Hejurchei -Hi

HABIT: A medium-sized subshrub.

FLOWER: In axillary, verticels, many; orange. Flowering from December-March.

FRUIT: An erect nutlet, basilar, trigonous; seeds oblong. Fruiting throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: Stem obtusely quadrangular. Calyx tubular, spinescent.

MISCELLANEOUS: Flowers are a favourite with butterflies as a source of nectar. The leaves are brewed as a tea.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Scarce along the roads, fallows from plains to 300m. Native of tropical Africa, naturalized in the tropics.



L.Ar.



Opposite

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Ovate

L.Ap.



Acute

L.Ba.



Truncate-cuneate

L.Ma.



Crenate-serrate

Leucas aspera (Willd.) Link

LAMIACEAE

Common Leucas -En

Thumbai -Ir

Thumbai -Ta; Thumbe gida -Ka; Thumba -Ma; Gopha, Chota halkkusa -Hi



HABIT: A scabrid, erect or diffuse herb.

L.Ar.



Opposite-decussate or whorled

FLOWER: In terminal or axillary verticels; white. Flowering from November-February.

FRUIT: A subtrigynous nutlet, erect, basilar. Fruiting throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: The stem hispid or scabrid, quadrangular.

L.Ty.



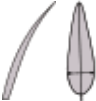
Simple

MISCELLANEOUS: Many veterinary medicines prepared from the leaves.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common along roadsides and fallow fields from plains to 400m. India, Bangladesh, Indo-China and Malaysia.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: A mixture of leaves and charcoal applied on the wounds of cattle to remove maggots.

L.Sh.



Linear-lanceolate



L.Ap.



Acute

L.Ba.



Cuneate

L.Ma.



Entire-serrate

Leucas chinensis (Retz.) Sm.

LAMIACEAE

HABIT: An erect or ascending, stout herb.

FLOWER: In axillary verticils; white. Flowering from December-January.

FRUIT: A nutlet, subtrigonal, erect, basilar, fruiting calyx enlarged. Fruiting January onwards.

FIELD TIPS: Stem quadrangular.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Common in scrub jungles and stream banks from plains to 700m. Peninsular India and China.



L.Ar.



Opposite-decussate

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Ovate

L.Ap.



Acute

L.Ba.



Truncate

L.Ma.



Crenate-serrate

Leucas marrubioides Desf.

LAMIACEAE

Horehound Leucas -En

HABIT: An erect, stout herb.

FLOWER: In axillary verticils; white. Flowering from August-November.

FRUIT: A nutlet, 4, sub-trigonal, fruiting calyx enlarged. Fruiting September onwards.

FIELD TIPS: Stem quadrangular.Bracts filiform. Calyx 10-toothed.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Occasional along the roadsides, scrub jungles and wastelands from 800-1200m. Continental S.E.Asia and Malaysia.

L.Ar.



Opposite-decussate

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Broadly ovate

L.Ap.



Acute

L.Ba.



Truncate-subcordate

L.Ma.



Crenate-serrate



Leucas urticifolia (Vahl) Sm.

LAMIACEAE

Kannuthumbai -lr

HABIT: A large, slender herb.

FLOWER: In axillary verticils, dense; white. Flowering from December-February.

FRUIT: A nutlet, subtrigonal. Fruiting January onwards.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common in arable lands and agricultural fields from plains to 500m. India, Baluchistan, Arabia and Abyssinia.



L.Ar.



Opposite-decussate

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Ovate

L.Ap.



Acute

L.Ba.



Acute

L.Ma.



Serrate

Ludwigia hyssopifolia (G.Don) Exell
ONAGRACEAE

Seed box, Linear leaf water primrose -En

HABIT: An annual erect herb.

FLOWER: Solitary, axillary; yellow. Flowering from December-January.

FRUIT: A subterete capsule, thin walled, 8-ribbed, base torulose; seeds many, multiseriate. Fruiting throughout the year.

MISCELLANEOUS: Used in making compost and manure. The leaves, fruits and root are used in medicine.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Common along the riverbanks and slow running streams from plains to 300m. Tropical Africa, Continental Asia, Malaysia to N.Australia.

L.Ar.



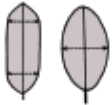
Alternate distichous

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Oblong-elliptic

L.Ap.



Acuminate

L.Ba.



Attenuate

L.Ma.



Entire



Ludwigia peruviana (L.) H.Hara

ONAGRACEAE



Peruvian primrose -En

HABIT: A medium-sized, perennial subshrub.

FLOWER: Solitary, axillary; yellow, very showy. Flowering from January-February.

FRUIT: An oblong capsule, 4-angled, 4-ribbed, thin walled; seeds many, multiseriate, ellipsoid. Fruiting throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: Branchlets and leaves hirsute.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Rare along the stream banks and fresh water ponds from plains to 300m. Native of new world tropics, now naturalized throughout the tropics.



L.Ar.



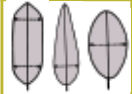
Alternate
distichous

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Oblong-
lanceolate or
elliptic

L.Ap.



Acute

L.Ba.



Attenuate

L.Ma.



Entire

Martynia annua L.

PEDALIACEAE

Cat's claw - En

Thael kodukkukaai, Kaaka mookkuchedi -Ta

HABIT: A medium sized subshrub.

FLOWER: In axillary or terminal racemes; purple with yellow throat. Flowering throughout the year.

FRUIT: An ovoid drupe, with 2 apical curved beaks splitting into 2 valves; seeds oblong. Fruiting throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: Stem purplish-green; glandular hairy, sticky.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Common on fallow fields and arable lands from plains to 1500m. Tropical and subtropical America, W.Pakistan, India, Nepal and Myanmar.

L.Ar.



Opposite-decussate

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Cordiform

L.Ap.



Acute

L.Ba.



Cordate

L.Ma.

Sinuate



Mimosa pudica L.

MIMOSACEAE

Touch me not, Sensitive Plant -En

Thotta sinungi -Ir

Thottar sinungi -Ta; Lajja -Ka; Thottavadi -Ma; Chuimui, Lajvanthi -Hi

HABIT: A small spreading, armed herb.

FLOWER: In axillary heads; pink. Flowering from November-March.

FRUIT: A flat pod, slightly undulate, jointed, bristly along margin, horned; seeds 2-5, ovoid, compressed. Fruiting from January-May.

FIELD TIPS: Stem well branched with highly sensitive leaves. Prickles short, curved.

MISCELLANEOUS: Leaves and roots are used in traditional medicines.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common along waysides, fallows and watercourses from plains to 1000m. Native of tropical America, now pantropical.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: Leaves are used for the treatment of piles. The fumes from the leaves are used to repel bees during honey collection.



L.Ar.



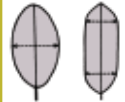
Alternate-distichous

L.Ty.



Bipinnate

L.Sh.



Elliptic-oblong

L.Ap.



Acute

L.Ba.



Truncate-obtuse

L.Ma.



Entire-ciliate

Mollugo pentaphylla L.

AIZOACEAE

Five leaved carpetweed -En

Pulimuttu chedi -Ir

Seeragappoindu -Ta

HABIT: An erect slender herb.

FLOWER: In terminal or leaf-opposed polychasial cymes; white. Flowering throughout the year.

FRUIT: A oblong capsule; seeds 15-20, dark brown, prominently granular.

FIELD TIPS: Leaves radical and cauline. Rooting at nodes.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common in the cultivable lands and fallows from plains to 1000m. Tropics and subtropics of the world.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: The leaf paste is applied to heal wounds in cattle which have been caused by tiger or leopard attacks.

L.Ar.



Radical or whorled

L.Ty.



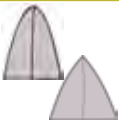
Simple

L.Sh.



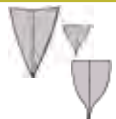
Oblanceolate-spathulate

L.Ap.



Obtuse-subacute

L.Ba.



Cuneate-attenuate

L.Ma.



Entire



Nymphaea nouchali Burm.f.

NYMPHAEACEAE

Lilly -En

Alli -Ta

HABIT: A floating, stoloniferous aquatic herb.

FLOWER: Solitary, regular, bisexual; white. Flowering throughout the year.

FRUIT: A spongy berry, ripening below the surface; seeds many, minute, embedded in the pulp, enclosed in a sac like aril. Fruiting throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: Leaves sharply sinuate toothed, densely pubescent beneath.

MISCELLANEOUS: It is used as an ornamental plant because of its spectacular flowers. Much used in Ayurvedic preparations.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Commonly found growing in stagnant water pools or ponds. Africa through India to Malaysia.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: The tubers and the fruits are eaten after boiling.



L.Ar.

Radical

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Orbicular

L.Ap.

L.Ba.

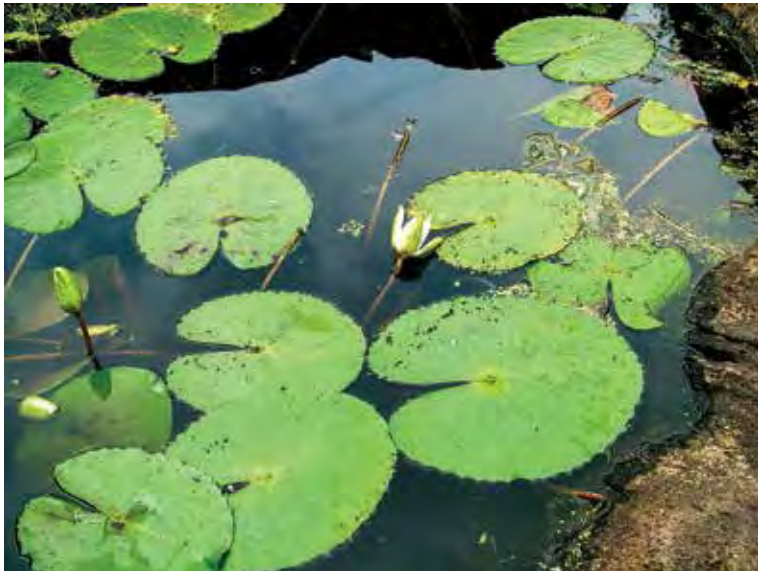


Peltate

L.Ma.



Dentate



Opuntia ramosissima Engelm.

CACTACEAE

Branched Pencil Cholla -En

Sulli mullu -lr

HABIT: A profusely branched, succulent subshrub.

FLOWER: In short lateral shoots; yellow. Flowering from July-September.

FRUIT: An ellipsoid berry; greenish-yellow, spiny; seeds circular. Fruiting August onwards.

FIELD TIPS: Branchlets terete, tubercles flattened. Spines 3 per areoles.

MISCELLANEOUS: The plant has numerous minutely barbed glochids (hairs) that are easily dislodged when the plant is touched, they then stick to the skin from where they are difficult to see and remove causing considerable discomfort.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Common along the edges of agricultural lands; native of N.America, naturalised in the dry hilly areas.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: Commonly planted as a fence for agricultural fields.

L.Ar.

L.Ty.

L.Sh.

L.Ap.

L.Ba.

L.Ma.



Orthosiphon thymiflorus (Roth) Sleesen
LAMIACEAE

Raja tulasi -lr

HABIT: An erect subshrub.

FLOWER: In terminal, trichotomous racemes; white. Flowering throughout the year.

FRUIT: An erect nutlet, basilar, enclosed in enlarged persistent calyx. Fruiting throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: Branchlets 4-angular. Leaves aromatic when crushed. Flowers white and bluish with filaments resembling a cat's whiskers.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common along roadsides and rocky crevices from hills above 600m. India, Sri Lanka to Indo-China and Malaysia.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: The fumes from the leaves cure fever and cough.



L.Ar.



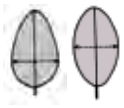
Opposite-decussate

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Ovate-elliptic

L.Ap.



Acute

L.Ba.



Truncate-cuneate

L.Ma.



Serrate



Oxalis corniculata L.

OXALIDACEAE

Creeping wood sorrel -En

Pulicheerai -Ir

Puliyarai -Ta; Hulichikkai -Ka; Puliyarei -Ma; Amrit sak -Hi

HABIT: A small branched, diffuse herb.

FLOWER: In axillary pseudo-umbels, 1-6-flowered; yellow. Flowering throughout the year.

FRUIT: An oblong capsule, tapering above, puberulous; seeds many, ovoid or ellipsoid, transversely ridged. Fruiting throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: Branchlets creeping, rooting at nodes, softly pilose.

MISCELLANEOUS: Leaves edible after cooking.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common along roadsides, fallow fields and disturbed areas of above 500m. Cosmopolitan.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: Leaf juice is used to remove the *jack fruit* latex from hands.

L.Ar.

Caulescent

L.Ty.



Digitate

L.Sh.

Obcordate

L.Ap.



Emarginate

L.Ba.



Cuneate

L.Ma.



Entire



Parthenium hysterophorus L.

ASTERACEAE

Santa Maria Feverfew, Whitetop weed, Congress Grass -En

Coimbatore chedi -lr

Gajar ghas -Hi

HABIT: An erect, well-branched herb.

FLOWER: In terminal, lax, dichotomous panicles; capitula white. Flowering from November-March.

FRUIT: A triquetrous achene, compressed, puberulous along the sides. Fruiting from December onwards.

FIELD TIPS: Leaves dissected, greenish-white.

MISCELLANEOUS: A very aggressive weed of disturbed lands entered in India by imported wheats. The pollen from the flower believed to cause asthma for human-beings and animals.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Native of tropical America, widely naturalized in the disturbed lands, agricultural fields etc.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: The whole plant is harvested after full growth and tied in bundles, kept in sunlight. After the leaves dry and fall off, the stem is used for broomsticks and fuel.



L.Ar.

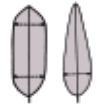


Alternate

L.Ty.

Pinnatifid

L.Sh.



Oblong-lanceolate

L.Ap.



Acute

L.Ba.



Decurrent

L.Ma.

Dissected

Pavonia odorata Willd.

MALVACEAE

Fragrant swamp mallow -En

Theengai pillai -Ir

Peramutti -Ta

HABIT: An erect subshrub.

FLOWER: In axillary, solitary; pink or white. Flowering throughout the year.

FRUIT: A globose schizocarp, pubescent; seed 1 per mericarp, reniform. Fruiting throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: Branchlets viscid, stellate-pubescent. Leaves 5-nerved from base. Epicalyx segments 8-12. Sap very sticky.

MISCELLANEOUS: White petals turn pink soon after drying.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common in scrub jungles, arable or fallow fields and roadsides from plains to 500m. India, Pakistan, Burma, Srilanka and East Tropical Africa.

L.Ar.



Alternate-disticuous

L.Ty.



Simple or Palmately lobed

L.Sh.



Ovate-suborbicular

L.Ap.



Acute

L.Ba.



Cordate

L.Ma.



Dentate-subentire



Pavonia zeylanica (L.) Cav.

MALVACEAE

Ceylon swamp Mallow -En

Thengai poondu -Ta

HABIT: A small viscid subshrub.

FLOWER: Solitary, axillary; pink or white. Flowering throughout the year.

FRUIT: A schizocarp; mericarp winged at edges; seeds pubescent. Fruiting throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: Branchlets viscid and stellate pubescent. Leaves deeply 3-lobed. Epicalyx segments 8-11.

MISCELLANEOUS: Differ from the earlier by its obovate leaf segments and winged mericarp.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common along the roadsides and wastelands from plains to 400m. India, Sri Lanka, tropical Africa and Mauritius.



L.Ar.



Alternate
distichous

L.Ty.

Deeply 3-lobed

L.Sh.



Obovate

L.Ap.



Acute-obtuse

L.Ba.



Cuneate

L.Ma.



Dentate

Peristrophe montana Nees
ACANTHACEAE

HABIT: An erect undershrub..

FLOWER: In terminal or axillary branched cymes; pink. Flowering December-March.

FRUIT: An ellipsoid capsule, stalked, pubescent; seeds 4, reniform, granulate. Fruiting March onwards.

FIELD TIPS: Bracts equilateral, ovate or elliptic, obtuse.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Common along the fringes of forests and moist, shaded localities. India, Indo-China and Malaysia.

L.Ar.



Opposite-decussate

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Elliptic

L.Ap.



Acuminate

L.Ba.



Cuneate-rounded

L.Ma.



Entire





Persicaria pubescens var.

acuminata (Franch. & Sav.) H.Hara

POLYGONACEAE

HABIT: A small spreading herb.

FLOWER: In terminal racemes, slender, flexuous, leafy at base; pinkish. Flowering from August-December.

FRUIT: A glossy nutlet, 3-gonous. Fruiting November onwards.

FIELD TIPS: Stipules sheathing around the internode, margin ciliate.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Rare along river banks and slow running streams from 900-1200m. India, China, Japan and Malaysia to Australia.



L.Ar.



Alternate-spiral

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Elliptic-lanceolate

L.Ap.



Acuminate

L.Ba.



Attenuate

L.Ma.



Entire

Phyllanthus amarus Schumach. & Thonn.
EUPHORBIACEAE

Kirunelli -Ir

Kizhaanelli -Ta & Ma; Nillanelli -Ka; Jar amla -Hi

HABIT: A small prostrate herb.

FLOWER: In axillary, solitary or clustered, minute; greenish-white. Flowering throughout the year.

FRUIT: A dry capsule, dehiscent; seeds 6, vertically muriculate. Fruiting throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: Branchlets resemble pinnate leaves. Male flower with 5 disc glands.

MISCELLANEOUS: The leaves possess an active principle 'Phyllanthin' which helps alleviate jaundice.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common in the agricultural fields and fallow fields from plains to 900m. Native of tropical America, now widely naturalized in the tropics.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: The whole plant is used to treat jaundice.

L.Ar.



Alternate-distichous

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Oblong

L.Ap.



Obtuse-apiculate

L.Ba.



Obtuse

L.Ma.



Entire



Phyllanthus madraspatensis L.

EUPHORBIACEAE

Canoe weed-En

Kirunelli -Ta

HABIT: A small spreading herb.

FLOWER: In axillary, solitary or clustered, minute; greenish-white. Flowering throughout the year.

FRUIT: A globose, 3-valved capsule, 3-lobed; seeds triquetrous, vertically muricate. Fruiting throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: Stipule peltate, lanceolate. Pedicel filiform.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common along the roadsides and fallow fields from plains to 800m. Tropical Africa, Arabia, India, Sri Lanka, China, Malaysia and Australia.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: The whole plant is used as medicine for jaundice.



L.Ar.



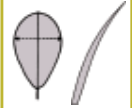
Alternate-distichous

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Obovate-linear

L.Ap.



Retuse-obtuse

L.Ba.



Cuneate

L.Ma.



Entire

Phyllanthus virgatus G.Forst.
EUPHORBIACEAE

Seed Under Leaf, Virgate leaf-flower -En

HABIT: A small prostrate herb.

FLOWER: Solitary, axillary; cream. Flowering throughout the year.

FRUIT: A globose capsule, 3-lobed, warty; seeds 6, triquetrous, minutely tubercled. Fruiting throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: The capsule surfaces densely warty.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Common on the slopes, grasslands and fallow fields from plains to 1400m. India, Indo-China, S.China, Malaysia and Polynesia.

L.Ar.



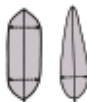
Alternate distichous

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Oblong-lanceolate

L.Ap.



Obtuse-acute

L.Ba.



Rounded

L.Ma.



Entire



Physalis minima L.

SOLANACEAE

Little Gooseberry, Pygmy groundcherry -En

Tholthakalie -Ir

Sodakku thakkaali, Tholtakkali -Ta; Njodinjotta -Ma; Pipat -Hi

HABIT: A small, annual herb.

FLOWER: In axillary, solitary, pedicellate; yellow with purple throat. Flowering from November-February and July-October.

FRUIT: A globose berry, overtopped by inflated calyx; seeds many, compressed. Fruits covered by inflated calyx. Fruiting throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: Stem very delicate, geniculate.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common along river banks, cultivable lands and roadsides from plains to 1000m. Tropical Africa, Asia and Australia.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: Fruits edible.



L.Ar.



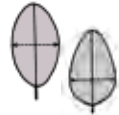
Alternate

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



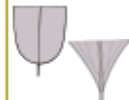
Elliptic-ovate

L.Ap.



Acute

L.Ba.



Obliquely rounded-acute

L.Ma.

Coarsely toothed

Plumbago zeylanica L.

PLUMBAGINACEAE

White Plumbago, The Ceylon Leadwort -En

Ottuchedi -Ir

Kodivaeli, Chithiramoolam -Ta; Thumba -Ma; Chitrak, Chita -Hi

HABIT: A perennial shrub with ascending branchlets.

FLOWER: In terminal or axillary racemes; white. Flowering from December-March.

FRUIT: A membranous, 5-valved capsule, enclosed in a persistent calyx, tubular, 10-ribbed, covered with stalked glands; seed dark black, flattened.

FIELD TIPS: Calyx covered with stalked glands.

MISCELLANEOUS: A paste made from the root is used as a pain killer.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common in scrub jungles, stream banks and fallow fields from plains to 800m. Throughout the tropics and subtropics

INIGENOUS INFORMATION: Root used in many medicines.

L.Ar.



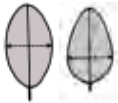
Alternate-spiral

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



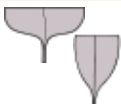
Elliptic-ovate

L.Ap.



Acutely apiculate

L.Ba.



Truncate-attenuate

L.Ma.



Entire



Polygala elongata Klein ex Willd.

POLYGALACEAE

Narrow leaved milkwort -En

HABIT: A small herb.

FLOWER: In terminal or leaf-opposed racemes; yellow. Flowering throughout the year.

FRUIT: A rhomboid capsule, flat, glabrous, apex obliquely emarginate, narrowly margined, ciliate; seed solitary. Fruiting throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: Staminal sheath pink coloured.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Common on exposed slopes and crevices of rocks from foothills to 800m. India, Sri Lanka and Malaysia.



L.Ar.



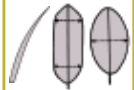
Alternate
distichous

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Linear, oblong-
elliptic

L.Ap.



Obtuse

L.Ba.



Attenuate

L.Ma.



Entire

Polygonum chinense L.

POLYGONACEAE

Chineseknotweed, Common Marsh Buchwheat -En

Neerkapachi -Ir

Sivappu Kumbakodaali, Actalaree -Ta; Nir kanigalu -Ka; Chavannamudela mukkam -Ma



HABIT: A stout, dense subshrub.

FLOWER: In terminal racemes; pink. Flowering from November-March.

FRUIT: A compressed nutlet, faces flattened. Fruiting throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: Stipules conspicuous, sheathing around internode, tubular, getting torn with age.

MISCELLANEOUS: Young leaves are cooked with other vegetables and eaten.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common along river banks and marshy areas from plains to 1400m. Africa, Afghanistan, India east to China, Malaysia and Japan.

L.Ar.



Alternate-spiral

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Linear-lanceolate

L.Ap.



Acuminate

L.Ba.



Acute-decurrent

L.Ma.



Entire



Portulaca quadrifida L.

PORTULACACEAE

Pulikkeerai -Ir

Tharai pasalai, Siru pasalai -Ta

HABIT: A small prostrate herb.

FLOWER: Solitary, terminal; yellow. Flowering throughout the year.

FRUIT: An oblong capsule; seeds ca. 10, tubercled. Fruiting throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: Branchlets creeping. Leaves succulent, nodes with white hairs.

MISCELLANEOUS: Some times cultivated as an ornamental plant.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Common in fallows, arable lands and scrub jungles from plains to 600m. Pantropic.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: The leaves are sour to taste, and eaten raw or cooked.



L.Ar.



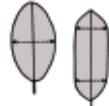
Opposite-decussate

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Elliptic-oblong

L.Ap.



Acute

L.Ba.



Cuneate

L.Ma.



Entire

Priva cordifolia (L.f.) Druce

VERBENACEAE

Heart-Leaf Velvet Bur, Heart-Leaf Priva

Ottai chedi -Ir

HABIT: A scandent herb.

FLOWER: In aggregated, elongate terminal spikes; white. Flowering from November-February.

FRUIT: A drupe of 2, 2-seeded pyrenes, enclosed in calyx-base. Fruiting December onwards.

FIELD TIPS: Branchlets 4-angular, sticky-pubescent, velvety with hooked hairs, especially at nodes

MISCELLANEOUS: Fruits easily stick onto clothes.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Scarce along the roadsides river banks and thickets from plains to 1000m. India, Pakistan and Nepal.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: Leaves are very sticky and spread out on the floor of the house to catch mites.

L.Ar.



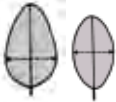
Opposite-decussate

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Ovate-elliptic

L.Ap.



Acute

L.Ba.



Truncate-subcordate

L.Ma.



Serrate



Protulaca oleraceae L.

AIZOACEAE

Common purslane, pigweed -En

Vellai Chaaruvaelai, Saagaipoondu -Ta

HABIT: A small, prostrate herb.

FLOWER: In axillary, subumbellate clusters; green without, pink within. Flowering from December-April.

FRUIT: A subterete capsule, beak 2-lobed; seeds subreniform, concentrically ribbed. Fruiting January onwards.

FIELD TIPS: Branchlets and leaves succulent.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Scarce in the agricultural fields and stream banks from plains to 750m. India, Sri Lanka, Malaysia and Australia.



L.Ar.



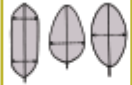
Opposite-decussate

L.Ty.



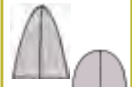
Simple

L.Sh.



Oblong or ovate-elliptic

L.Ap.



Obtuse or rounded

L.Ba.



Acute

L.Ma.



Entire

Pupalia lappacea (L.) Juss.

AMARANTHACEAE

HABIT: A small spreading herb.

FLOWER: In terminal, unbranched spikes; purplish-green. Flowering from November-February.

FRUIT: A depressed-globose capsule, top areolate, surrounded by 5-20, persistent, stellately spreading hooked bristles. Fruiting December onwards.

FIELD TIPS: Leaves densely sericeous below. Outer and inner tepals 3-nerved.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common along road sides, scrub jungles and thickets from plains to 500m. Peninsular India, Sri Lanka and E.Africa.

L.Ar.



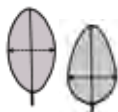
Opposite-decussate

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Elliptic-ovate

L.Ap.



Acutely apiculate

L.Ba.



Truncate

L.Ma.



Entire



Richardia scabra L.

RUBIACEAE

Mexican Clover, Rough Mexican Clover -En

Beelie chedi -lr

HABIT: A procumbent hispid herb.

FLOWER: In terminal capitate clusters, sessile; white. Flowering from November-February.

FRUIT: A 3-valved capsule; seeds flattened, slightly winged. Fruiting from November-February.

FIELD TIPS: Branchlets spreading, terete to angular. Flowers subtended by 3 to 4 subsessile leaves.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common in cultivable lands and fallows from plains to 1000m. Native of tropical America, now Pantropical.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: Children use the hollow stem as a whistle.



L.Ar.



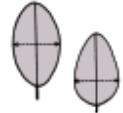
Opposite-decussate or whorled

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Elliptic-ovate

L.Ap.



Acute

L.Ba.



Attenuate-obtuse

L.Ma.



Entire

Ruellia prostrata Poir.

ACANTHACEAE

Bell Weed -En

Baasaatty dagu -Ir

Vedichedi -Ta; Upudali -Ma

HABIT: A small prostrate herb.

FLOWER: In axillary, solitary, blue to violet. Flowering throughout the year.

FRUIT: An oblong capsule, thinly pubescent; seeds 12 or more, orbicular. Fruiting throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: Stems often rooting at nodes.

MISCELLANEOUS: Believed to be anticancer against the epidermis of the nasopharynx region and slightly hypoglycemic.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common in the disturbed areas, foot paths and agricultural lands from plains to 800m. India.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: Young leaves are eaten after boiling.

L.Ar.



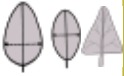
Opposite-decussate

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



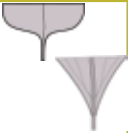
Ovate-elliptic to deltoid

L.Ap.



Subacute-obtuse

L.Ba.



Truncate-acute

L.Ma.



Entire



Sansevieria roxburghiana Schult. & Schult.f.
AGAVACEAE

The Bowstring Hemp -En

Manji -Ir

Marul, Mottamanji -Ta; Marul -Hi

HABIT: A stemless, fleshy herb.

FLOWER: In racemes on a stout scape; greenish, tinged purple. Flowering December-February and July-September.

FRUIT: A globose berry, indehiscent; seed(s) 1-3, globose, fleshy. Fruiting throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: Rootstock short, often stoloniferous or a creeping rhizome. Leaves deeply concave, channelled, green transversely marked with number of darker bars, edges often whitish when old.

MISCELLANEOUS: The fibre from the leaves used for various purposes.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Common on rocky slopes, scrub jungles and hedges from plains to 1400m. Native to Africa, Madagscar and South Asia.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: Fibre from the leaves used to make ropes for tying brooms and for other agricultural purposes.

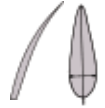


L.Ar.

Radical
L.Ty.



Simple
L.Sh.



Linear-lanceolate
L.Ap.



Acute
L.Ba.



Sheathing
L.Ma.



Entire

Sauropus andogynus (L.) Merr.

EUPHORBIACEAE

Star gooseberry, Sweetleaf -En

HABIT: A large herb.

FLOWER: In axillary fascicles (or flowers upto 8mm long racemes), flower single or few together, usually all of same sex, green. Flowering throughout the year.

FRUIT: A capsule, not lobed, usually thin walled, smooth. Seeds triangular. Fruiting throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: Young branch with 2-4 ribs. Leaves somewhat semisucculent.

MISCELLANEOUS: It is one of the most popular leaf vegetables in South Asia

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Common along the stream banks and wet areas from plains to 700m. Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Indo-China, Thailand and Malaysia.

L.Ar.



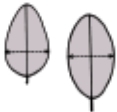
Alternate-disticious

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



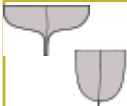
Ovate-Elliptic

L.Ap.



Acute

L.Ba.



Rounded-truncate

L.Ma.



Entire



Scoparia dulcis L.

SCROPHULARIACEAE

Sweet broom weed, Goat weed-En

Sarakkotthini -Ta

HABIT: An erect annual herb.

FLOWER: Solitary or 2, axillary; white. Flowering throughout the year.

FRUIT: An ellipsoid-globose capsule, septicidal; seeds truncate or 4-angled, reticulate. Fruiting throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: Leaves punctate, penninerved.

MISCELLANEOUS: Whole plant is sweet and edible. It is dried in shade and consumed as a tea.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common along the stream banks and fallows from plains to 400m. Native of tropical america, now Pantropical.



L.Ar.



Decussate or whorled

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Oblong-elliptic

L.Ap.



Acute

L.Ba.



Cuneate

L.Ma.



Serrate

Senna occidentalis (L.) Link

CAESALPINIACEAE

Coffee senna -En

Thagarai -Ir

Paayavarai -Ta; Kasondi -Hi

HABIT: A medium sized subshrub.

FLOWER: In axillary or terminal, corymbose racemes; yellow. Flowering throughout the year.

FRUIT: A short stipitate, compressed pod; seeds 20-25, longitudinal. Fruiting throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: Leaves foetid when crushed. Petiole with globose glands at base.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Native of tropical America, now Pantropical.

L.Ar.



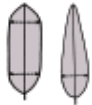
Alternate-spiral

L.Ty.



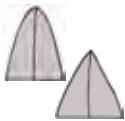
Paripinnate

L.Sh.



Oblong-lanceolate

L.Ap.



Obtuse or acute

L.Ba.



Rounded

L.Ma.



Entire



Senna tora (L.) Roxb.

CAESALPINIACEAE

Java bean, Sickle senna -En

Ooci thagarai -Ir

Tagarai -Ta; Chakunda -Hi

HABIT: A medium sized, annual subshrub.

FLOWER: In terminal, corymbose racemes; golden yellow coloured. Flowering throughout the year.

FRUIT: A flat, compressed pod, shortly stipitate, septate between seeds; seeds 20-30, oblong, longitudinal. Fruiting throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: Leaves foetid when crushed. Rachis with two glands between two lowest leaf pair of leaflets.

MISCELLANEOUS: The yellow flowers and seeds are good source of blue dye.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very commonly found along the river banks, moist fallow fields from plains to 1000m. India to Polynesia.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: Young leaves are cooked and eaten.



L.Ar.



Alternate-spiral

L.Ty.



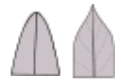
Paripinnate

L.Sh.



Obovate

L.Ap.



Obtuse-apiculate

L.Ba.



Oblique, cuneate-rounded

L.Ma.



Entire

Sida acuta Burm.f.

MALVACEAE

Common Sida , Wire weed, Broom weed-En

Maar chedi, Kalagandrai -Ir

Pazhampasi, Vattatirippi -Ta; Cheru paruva -Ka; Bala -Hi



HABIT: A small, erect herb.

L.Ar.



Alternate-spiral

L.Ty.



Simple

FLOWER: In axillary, solitary, sometime clustered into lax racemes; pale yellow. Flowering throughout the year.

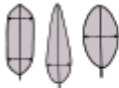
FRUIT: A schizocarp, enclosed in the calyx, margin at apex toothed; mericarps 6, 4-hedral with 2 awns; seeds 3-gonous. Fruiting throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: Leaves 3-5-nerved from base. Stipules at the same node unequal. Awns of mericarp glabrous.

MISCELLANEOUS: Leaves and roots used in traditional medicine. Fibre used as substitute for jute.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common along roadsides, scrub jungles and wastelands from plains to 1000m. Pantropical.

L.Sh.



Oblong-lanceolate or elliptic

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: The dried stems are tied into a bundle and used as broom.

L.Ap.



Acuminate



L.Ba.



Obtuse

L.Ma.



Serrate

Sida cordifolia L.

MALVACEAE

Country Mallow, Flannel weed- En

Ottu maarchedi, Thuthi -lr

HABIT: A small subshrub.

FLOWER: In axillary or terminal, 1 or 2, rarely in lax racemes, yellow. Flowering throughout the year.

FRUIT: A schizocarp, enclosed within the calyx; mericarps 5, sparsely hairy at apex, beak 2-dentate; seeds ovoid, dorsal side hollowed. Fruiting throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: Stem stellate-tomentose. Leaves palmivened, 7-nerved from base.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common along forest paths, wastelands, and forest clearings from plains to 900m. Pantropical.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: The dried stems are tied into a bundle and used as broom.



L.Ar.



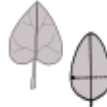
Alternate-spiral

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Cordate-ovate

L.Ap.



Acuminate

L.Ba.



Cordate

L.Ma.



Crenate-serrate

Sida glabra Mill.

MALVACEAE

Pulavathuratti, Vattakkuruthankanni -Ta

HABIT: A small hirsute subshrub.

FLOWER: Solitary or 5-7-flowered lax racemes; yellow to orange with a pink throat. Flowering throughout the year.

FRUIT: A schizocarp, enclosed in the calyx, smooth or faintly rugose, hairy at apex; mericarps 5, 3-gonous, beak 2-lobed. Fruiting throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: Branchlets stellate-tomentose and simple glandular hairy. Leaf base 5-7-nerved from base.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Common on the waysides, disturbed slopes from 800-1200m. Tropical America, introduced in S.E.Asia.

L.Ar.



Alternate-spiral

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Ovate-cordate

L.Ap.



Acuminate

L.Ba.



Cordate

L.Ma.



Crenate-serrate



Sida rhombifolia L.

MALVACEAE

Angled Sida -En

Chitamutti, Karunguruthankanni -Ta; Binnegarugagida -Ka; Anakurunthothi -Ma;
Atibala -Hi

HABIT: A small, spreading herb.

FLOWER: Solitary or in 5-7-flowered cymose clusters; yellow to orange. Flowering throughout the year.

FRUIT: A schizocarp, enclosed in the calyx; mericarps 7-10, tomentose at apex, beak minute or 0; seeds ovoid. Fruiting throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: Branchlets spreading, close to the ground. Stem dark purple. Leaves glaucous below, 3-nerved from base.

MISCELLANEOUS: Stem and roots used in traditional medicine.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common on waysides and fallow fields from plains to 1000m. Tropical and subtropical regions of old and new world.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: The dried stems are tied into a bundle and used as broom.



L.Ar.



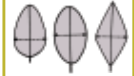
Alternate-spiral

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Ovate-elliptic or
rhomboid

L.Ap.



Obtuse-truncate

L.Ba.



Cuneate

L.Ma.

Bidentate-
biserrate

Solanum americanum Mill.

SOLANACEAE

American nightshade, Black nightshade -En

Kakkae dagu -Ir

Manathakali, Milaguthakkali, Sirungunni, Kaasithazhai -Ta

HABIT: An erect, much branched annual herb.

FLOWER: In umbellate cymes, 3-5; greenish- white. Flowering from August-January.

FRUIT: A small, globose berry, ripening black, juicy; seeds ovoid,. Fruiting September onwards.

FIELD TIPS: Branchlets sparsely scabrous, unarmed, zigzag.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Common found along roadsides and riverbanks from plains to 700m. Native of North and South America, now widely naturalised throughout the tropic.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: The young leaves, flowers and fruits are eaten after cooking.

L.Ar.



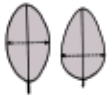
Alternate distichous

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



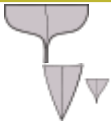
Elliptic-ovate

L.Ap.



Acute

L.Ba.



Truncate-cuneate

L.Ma.



Entire-sparingly denticata



Solanum surattense Burm.f.

SOLANACEAE

Yellow-berried Nightshade -En

Periya sundai -Ir

Kandankathiri -Ta & Ma; Berkateli -Hi

HABIT: A perennial, prostrate subshrub.

FLOWER: In extra-axillary, 4-5-flowered cymes; purple. Flowering throughout the year.

FRUIT: A globose berry, green with white stripes, ripening yellow; seeds many. Fruiting throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: Branchlets, leaves and fruits with straight, yellow prickles.

MISCELLANEOUS: The root is an important ingredient of well-known ayurvedic medicine Dasamula.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common along the roadsides and fallow fields from plains to 400m. India, Sri Lanka, S.E.Asia, Australia and Polynesia.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: Fruits used to prepare curries.



L.Ar.

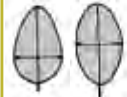


Alternate-distichous

L.Ty.

Pinnatifid

L.Sh.



Ovate or elliptic

L.Ap.



Acute

L.Ba.



Attenuate

L.Ma.

Lacerate

Stachytarpheta jamaicensis (L.) Vahl

VERBENACEAE

Jamaican Blue Spike -En

Anaaidumudi, Yeluthanipundu, kuchipoo -lr

Seemainaayuruvi -Ta; Kariyartharani -Hi



HABIT: A medium-sized, spreading subshrub.

L.Ar.



Opposite

FLOWER: In terminal, cylindrical spikes; blue to violet. Flowering from December-March.

FRUIT: An oblong pyrene; seeds oblong. Fruiting throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: Branchlets 4-angular.

L.Ty.

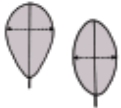
MISCELLANEOUS: Flowers are very attractive to butterflies and food plant of Death's Head Hawkmoth.



Simple

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common along stream banks, fallow fields, cultivable lands and scrub jungles from plains to 1000m. Pantropical.

L.Sh.



Ovate-elliptic



L.Ap.



Bluntly acute

L.Ba.



Acute-decurrent

L.Ma.



Serrate



Striga angustifolia (D.Don) C.J.Saldanha
SCROPHULARIACEAE

Asiatic witchweed -En

HABIT: A small, slender herb.

FLOWER: Solitary, axillary, making for a leafy terminal spike; white. Flowering throughout the year.

FRUIT: An oblong capsule; seeds oblong, cuneate, longitudinally ribbed. Fruiting throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: Calyx 15-ribbed, lateral ribs of calyx-lobes converging at apex.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Occasional in exposed lands and scrub jungles from plains to 800m. India, Myanmar and Sri Lanka.



L.Ar.



Decussate
below, alternate
above

L.Ty.

Simple or
pinnatifid

L.Sh.



Oblong

L.Ap.



Acute

L.Ba.



Decurrent

L.Ma.



Entire

Synedrella nodiflora (L.) Gaertn.

ASTERACEAE

Cinderella Weed -En

HABIT: A prostrate or erect herb.

FLOWER: Solitary, axillary capitulum; yellow. Flowering from December-April.

FRUIT: A filiform achene, narrow, compressed or 3-quetrous, lacerate winged. Fruiting January onwards.

FIELD TIPS: Leaves 3-nerved from base. Flowers surrounded by involucre bracts.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common along the roadsides and fallows from plains to 800m. Native of W.Indies, introduced in India, China and Malaysia.

L.Ar.



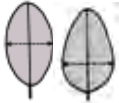
Opposite

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Elliptic-ovate

L.Ap.



Acute

L.Ba.



Rounded-acute

L.Ma.



Serrulate



Tephrosia purpurea (L.) Pers.

FABACEAE

Wild indigo, Common Tephrosia -En

Kolingi -lr

Kattukolingi, Avuri -Ta; Empali -Ka; Kozhenjil -Ma; Sarphanka -Hi

HABIT: A much-branched subshrub.

FLOWER: In leaf-opposed pseudoracemes; bluish-pink to purple. Flowering throughout the year.

FRUIT: A slightly falcate pod, downy-pubescent; seeds 7, ovoid. Fruiting throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: Branchlets pubescent-villous. Terminal leaflet less than 1.5 cm long.

MISCELLANEOUS: A blue dye extracted from the flowers.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Common on agricultural fields, river banks and roadsides from plains to 500m. Africa, Asia and C.America.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: A good green manure for agricultural fields.



L.Ar.



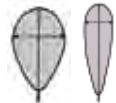
Alternate-distichous

L.Ty.



Imparipinnate

L.Sh.



Obovate-oblanceolate

L.Ap.



Truncate

L.Ba.



Cuneate

L.Ma.



Entire

Trianthema portulacastrum L.

AIZOACEAE

Mookaratai -Ta

HABIT: A prostrate, succulent herb.

FLOWER: Solitary, inserted in the petiolar sheath; pinkish-white. Flowering December-April.

FRUIT: A turpinate capsule, 2-lobed; seeds 2, white papillose. Fruiting January onwards.

FIELD TIPS: Leaves and stem succulent, margin purplish.

MISCELLANEOUS: Good fodder plant.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common in the agricultural fields and wastelands from plains to 300m. Pantropical.

L.Ar.



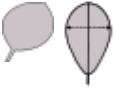
Opposite-decussate

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Orbicular-ovate

L.Ap.



Obtuse

L.Ba.



Cuneate

L.Ma.



Entire



Tribulus subramanyamii P.Singh, G.S.Giri & V. Singh
ZYGOPHYLLACEAE

Nerunji -Ta

HABIT: An annual prostrate herb.

FLOWER: Solitary, axillary; bright yellow. Flowering from June-July.

FRUIT: A schizocarp; mericarps dorsally ridged, appressed silky hairy, spines 4, sometime the lower pair reduced. Fruiting July onwards.

FIELD TIPS: Leaves densely appressed pubescent.

MISCELLANEOUS: Differ from the later by its pubescent style and ciliate intrastaminal glands.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common along the roadsides and wastelands from plains to 400m. Endemic to Peninsular India.



L.Ar.



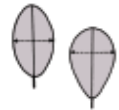
Opposite

L.Ty.



Paripinnate

L.Sh.



Elliptic-ovobate

L.Ap.



Apiculate

L.Ba.



Oblique

L.Ma.



Entire

Tribulus terrestris L.

ZYGOPHYLLACEAE

Puncture Plant -En

Nerunji -Ir

Nerinji -Ta; Sanna neggilu -Ka; Nerunji -Ma; Gokhru -Hi



HABIT: A small prostrate herb.

FLOWER: In axillary, solitary; yellow. Flowering from January-April.

FRUIT: A 5-angled schizocarp, woody, each with a pair of unequal spines; seed solitary per coccus. Fruiting throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: Branchlets and leaves densely white sericeous.

MISCELLANEOUS: Tender shoots eaten. Roots and fruits are used for traditional medicines.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common along the roadsides, wastelands and scrub jungles from plains to 500m. Tropical and temperate regions of the world.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: The mature fruit paste is applied to cure eyes ailments.

L.Ar.



Subopposite

L.Ty.



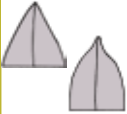
Paripinnate

L.Sh.



Oblong

L.Ap.



Acute-mucronate

L.Ba.



Obtuse-cuneate

L.Ma.



Entire



Trichodesma indicum (L.) Lehm.

BORAGINACEAE

Indian Borage -En

Erumainalaangi -lr

Kalithumbai, Kaasithumbai, Pallicheddi -Ta; Kattethumbai soppu -Ka; Chota kulpha -Hi

HABIT: A small, spreading, rugose herb.

FLOWER: In axillary, solitary; blue. Apex of the corolla long tailed, curved. Flowering from September-November and January-March.

FRUIT: In almost free, 4 nutlets, smooth on the outer and rugosely pitted on the inner face. Fruiting throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: Leaves hirsute-pubescent below, base auriculate.

MISCELLANEOUS: It attracts milkweed butterfly.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Common on agricultural fields and fallow fields from plains to 800m. India, Myanmar, Afghanistan and Malaysia.



L.Ar.



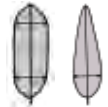
Opposite-decussate / alternate

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Oblong-lanceolate

L.Ap.



Acute

L.Ba.



Acute-auriculate

L.Ma.



Entire

Tridax procumbens L.

ASTERACEAE

Coat Buttons -En

Mukuthi poo, railpoo -lr

Seruppadithalai, kenathuppoondu -Ta; Gabbusanner savanathi -Ka & Ma; Akal kohadi -Hi



HABIT: A slender, branched, low herb.

L.Ar.



Opposite

FLOWER: In solitary or at the forks of dichotomy; cream to yellow. Flowering throughout the year.

FRUIT: A turbinate achene, smooth or faintly ribbed. Fruiting throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: Leaves simple, entire, rarely pinnatisect. Peduncle very long, strigose.

L.Ty.



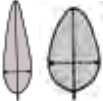
Simple

MISCELLANEOUS: Flowers attracts many butterflies and bees.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common in fallow fields, agricultural fields and disturbed wastelands from plains to 600m. Native of Central America, now widely distributed throughout the tropics and subtropics.

INDIGENOUS INFORMATION: Children play with the flowers.

L.Sh.



Lanceolate-ovate



L.Ap.



Acute

L.Ba.



Acute

L.Ma.



Coarsely serrate

Waltheria indica L.

STERCULIACEAE

Shengalipoondu -Ta

HABIT: An erect subshrub.

FLOWER: In axillary clusters; yellow. Flowering throughout the year.

FRUIT: An obconical capsule, enclosed in calyx, 2-valved; seed solitary, obconical, wrinkled. Fruiting throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: Branchlets stellate-pubescent. Leaves 3-5-nerved from base.

MISCELLANEOUS: It is sometimes grown as an ornamental. The leaf is used in herbal preparations.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Common in fallow fields, scrub jungles and road sides from plains to 1400m. Pantropical.



L.Ar.



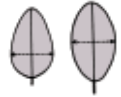
Alternate-distichous

L.Ty.



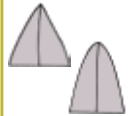
Simple

L.Sh.



Ovate-elliptic

L.Ap.



Acute-obtuse

L.Ba.



Obtuse-subcordate

L.Ma.



Serrate



Xanthium strumarium L.

ASTERACEAE

Common cocklebur -En

Periya ottaikkai -Ir

Ottarachedi -Ta



HABIT: A medium-sized subshrub.

L.Ar.



Alternate-spiral

FLOWER: In terminal or axillary clusters, capitula monoecious, male above, female below. Flowering throughout the year.

FRUIT: An achene, enlarged, enclosed in prickly, glandular hispidulous envelop forming an urticle. Fruiting throughout the year.

L.Ty.



Simple or 3-5 lobed

FIELD TIPS: Tender parts spinulose, hispid-pubescent. Branched reddish tinged.

MISCELLANEOUS: The achene easily sticks to clothes and skin.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Common along river banks and fallow fields from plains to 1000m. India and Malaysia.

L.Sh.



Cordate



L.Ap.



Acute

L.Ba.



Subcordate-acute

L.Ma.



Serrate-crenate

Notes:

L.Ar.

L.Ty.

L.Sh.

L.Ap.

L.Ba.

L.Ma.

WILD FRUITS



Uncultivated fruits gathered from the forests have been a source of nutrients for indigenous communities' world over. In the region of Pillur, the Irula people gather fruits from the semi-evergreen to deciduous forests of the region. The activity happens at different times of the year depending on seasonality of the fruits. These fruits are gathered for consumption and also for sale as in the case of Nellikai/Amla (*Phyllanthus* spp.).

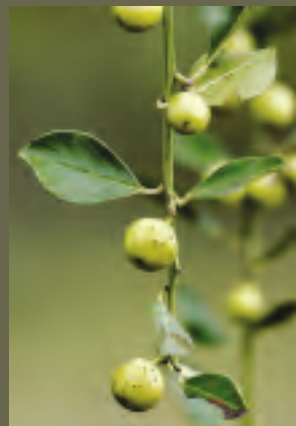
Most of the fruit yielding plants are distributed commonly in the forests around the villages. Many plants like *Carissa carandus*,





1. *Carissa carandus* - Kalakka
2. *Drypetes sepiaria* - Thanuvam
3. *Ficus racemosa* - Athi
4. *Grewia hirsuta* - Kallai
5. *Mangifera indica* - Aathu Maa
6. *Opuntia stricta* - Kalli
7. *Phyllanthus emblica* - Nellikkai
8. *Schleichera oleosa* - Pulipoosam
9. *Scutia myrtina* - Sodalie
10. *Syzygium cuminii* - Neeral or Naval
11. *Ziziphus mauritiana* - Lanthai
12. *Ziziphus oenoplia* - Julie
13. *Ziziphus xylopyrus* - Kottai

Opuntia stricta, *Scutia myrtina*, and *Ziziphus mauritiana*, *Z. oenophilia* are commonly found in the scrub and thorny forests. *Syzygium cumini*, *Mangifera indica*, *Ficus racemosa* and *Drypetes sepiaria* are very common along the stream banks. Few plants like *Grewia hirsuta*, *Phyllanthus emblica*, and *Ziziphus xylopyrus* are distributed in the grasslands of above 1000m. All the fruits are eaten raw without any further process. Collection of wild fruits is not a regular activity in the recent days except *Phyllanthus emblica*. They collect fruits when they get a chance to go forest for firewood collection, cattle grazing etc. A few major uncultivated fruits are mentioned above.



Cymbidium aloifolium (L.) Sw.

ORCHIDACEAE

HABIT: An epiphytic herb.

FLOWER: In pendent racemes, many flowered; midlobe purple striped. Flowering from July-August.

FRUIT: A big capsule, green, persistent throughout the year, dehiscing by April; seeds many, minute.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Scarce on tree forkings, crevices of rocks from foot hills to 1400m. India, Sri Lanka to China and Malaysia.



L.Ar.

Clustered

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Oblong

L.Ap.



Obtuse-retuse

L.Ba.



Cuneate

L.Ma.



Entire

Dendrophthoe falcata (L.f.) Ettingsh.
LORANTHACEAE

Ottuchedi -lr

HABIT: An evergreen parasitic subshrub, to 1m.

FLOWER: In axillary racemes; yellow turning red, curved above the middle. Flowering from November-March.

FRUIT: A drupe, epicarp thick; seed solitary. Fruiting throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: Branchlets terete, nodes dilated. Leaves thickly coriaceous. Dried flowers reddish.

MISCELLANEOUS: Very common parasitic plant on Guava, Sapota. Highly variable species.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common in foothill scrub jungles and deciduous forests from plains to 1000m. India, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Indo-China and Australia.



L.Ar.



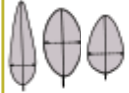
Alternate-dichotomous

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Lanceolate or elliptic-ovate

L.Ap.



Obtuse

L.Ba.



Acute -cuneate

L.Ma.



Entire

Scurrula parasitica L.

LORANTHACEAE

HABIT: A parasitic subshrub.

FLOWER: In axillary racemes, zygomorphic; orange-yellow. Flowering from March-May and September-November.

FRUIT: An obovoid drupe, club-shaped; seed solitary. Fruiting throughout the year.

FIELD TIPS: Branchlets tawny-tomentose. Corolla lobes 4.

MISCELLANEOUS: A common parasitic plant on *Phyllanthus* sp.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common in deciduous forests and scrub jungles from 600-2000m. India, Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Thailand, Indo-China, China and Malaysia.

L.Ar.



Opposite
or sub-opposite

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



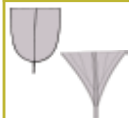
Elliptic or ovate

L.Ap.



Obtuse-
subacute

L.Ba.



Rounded-acute

L.Ma.



Entire



Vanda tessellata (Roxb.) Hook. ex G. Don

ORCHIDACEAE



Grey orchid -En

HABIT: An epiphytic herb.

FLOWER: In erect, axillary laxly few flowered racemes; violet when open, brownish when fading. Flowering from July-August.

FRUIT: A capsule, terete; seeds many. Fruiting August onwards.

FIELD TIPS: Leaf apex tridentate.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common on deciduous trees of deciduous forests from plains to 700m. India, Sri Lanka and Myanmar.



L.Ar.



Alternate-spiral

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Linear

L.Ap.

Tridentate

L.Ba.



Sheathing

L.Ma.



Entire

Vanilla walkeriae Wight

ORCHIDACEAE

Urunda parandai -Ta

HABIT: A leafless, succulent epiphytes.

FLOWER: In axillary racemes, very showy; white with green tinge outside. Flowering from March-April.

FRUIT: A linear or cylindrical capsule, green when young. Fruiting April onwards.

FIELD TIPS: Plants without or very minute reduced leaves. Stem succulent, green, act as leaves. Each node with a small root.

MISCELLANEOUS: Wild relative of the *Vanilla planifera*. The pod used for making vanilla extracts.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very rare in the deciduous forests and scrub jungles from plains to 500m. Peninsular India and Sri Lanka.



L.Ar.

L.Ty.

L.Sh.

L.Ap.

L.Ba.

L.Ma.

Viscum heyneanum DC.

VISCACEAE

HABIT: A large parasitic subshrub, to 1m.

FLOWER: In axillary, peduncled triads, lateral flowers female, central flowers male. green. Flowering from July-August.

FRUIT: An oblong berry, green, smooth. Fruiting August onwards.

FIELD TIPS: Easily recognized by its smooth green berry.

MISCELLANEOUS: Very commonly found on the *Pongamia pinnata* tree.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION: Very common in the deciduous forests from plains to 500m. Endemic to Peninsular India.



L.Ar.



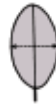
Opposite-decussate

L.Ty.



Simple

L.Sh.



Elliptic

L.Ap.



Obtuse

L.Ba.



Cuneate

L.Ma.



Entire

Glossary

A

Accrescent: Increasing in size with age, as the calyx of some plants after flowering.

Achene: A small dry one seeded indehiscent fruit, strictly of one carpel.

Acuminate: Tapering gradually with the sides of the apex concave.

Acute: Sharp pointed. Margins straight to convex forming a terminal angle.

Alternate: One leaf per node.

Anthocarp: A structure comprising of a fruit enclosed in a persistent perianth

Apex: Tip of the leaf.

Apically clustered: Leaves clustered at the apex of branchlets.

Apiculate:with a short sharp point.

Aril: An outgrowth of the the stalk connecting an ovule to its placenta, forming an appendage or outer covering of a seed.

Attenuate: Gradually tapering with the lower sides constricting concavely.

Axil: The angle formed by the upper side of the leaf and the stem.

Axillary: In the axil.

B

Berry: A fleshy indehiscent fruit with the seed or seeds immersed in pulp.

C

Calyx: The outer perianth composed of free or united sepals.

Capitate: pin headed.

Capsule: A dry dehiscent fruit.

Caryopsis:a dry, one seeded indehiscent fruit, characteristic of grasses.

Caudate: With a tail like apex.

Climber: A plant that grows upwards by twining around nearby plants and other supports, or by clinging on to them with tendrils.

Cocci: The part of a fruit that contains one seed and separates from the whole fruit at maturity.

Compound: Composed of two or more similar

parts.

Conical: Cone shaped.

Connate: united with similar parts [as stipules, bracts, stamens or styles].

Cordate: heart shaped.

Corymb: a racemose inflorescence with pedicels of different lengths causing the flower cluster to be flat topped.

Crenate: with rounded teeth.

Crenulate: with small rounded teeth

Culm: the jointed stem, especially the flowering stem of grasses.

Cuneate: Wedge shaped.

Cyathia: the inflorescence of the genus euphorbiaceae.

Cyme: A branching, determinate inflorescence, with a flower at the end of each branch.

D

Deciduous: Falling off of leaves in a particular season.

Decurrent: Running down, as when a base of a leaf is prolonged down the stem as a wing.

Decussate: In opposite pairs, each pair at right angle to the next.

Dehiscence: Open spontaneously when ripe.

Deltoid: Triangular.

Dentate: Toothed.

Determinate: A form of inflorescence in which the terminal flower opens first and prevents further growth of the stem or branch.

Digitate: Palmate with narrow leaflets.

Distichous: Arranged in two vertical ranks.

Drupe: Fleshy fruit containing one or more seeds, each enclosed within a stony endocarp.

E

Ellipsoid: Elliptical in outline with a 3 dimensional body.

Elliptic: In the form of an ellipse.

Emarginate: Distinctly notched at the apex.

Endocarp: Innermost layer of the fruit wall.

Ensiform: Sword shaped.

Entire: Margin forming a smooth line or arc without any noticeable projections or indentations.

Epiphytic: growing on another plant, but not deriving nourishment from it.

Even pinnate (Paripinnate): Having an equal number of leaflets and lacking the terminal leaflet.

Evergreen: Retaining most of its leaves throughout the year.

F

Fascicles: A close cluster or bundle.

Foetid: having a highly unpleasant smell.

Follicle: a dry fruit formed from a single carpel

Fulvous: tawny.

G

Galls: abnormal growth of plant tissue in response to an attack by insects, fungi, bacteria, mites etc.

Glabrous: Without hairs.

Gland: An organ producing a secretion.

Glandular: Possessing glands.

Glaucous: Bluish grey or blue green.

Globose: Spherical or globe shaped.

H

Herb: A non woody plant or one that is woody only at the base.

Hirsute: Covered with long stiff hairs.

Hispid: Having stiff bristly hair

Hyaline: thin, colourless, and translucent

I

Imparipinnate (Odd pinnate): Pinnate leaf with a terminal leaflet (Plate B7)

Indehiscent: remaining closed at maturity

Inflorescence: The arrangement of flowers on the floral axis; a flower cluster.

Interpetiolar: Between the petioles.

L

Laciniate: Margin cut into ribbon like segments.

Lanceolate: Lance shaped.

Latex: a juice produced by special cells in many different plants.

Leaf: A lateral outgrowth from the stem, usually consisting of a stalk (petiole) and a leaf blade (lamina).

Leaflet: A leaf like segment of a compound leaf.

Lenticels: a pore in the stem that allows gases to pass between the outside atmosphere and interior of a plant.

Liana: A woody climber in tropical forests that grows from the ground into the tree canopy.

Ligule: A strap shaped structure, a projection from the top of the leaf sheath in grasses.

Linear: Long and narrow with parallel sides.

Lobed: Any division of an organ especially if the part is rounded.

M

Megasporophyll: A specialized leaf that bears the female gametophyte, a scale arranged around the central axis of the female cone in gymnosperms.

Mesocarp: The middle layer of the pericarp.

Microsporophyll: A specialized leaf that bears the male spores, a scale arranged around the central axis of a male cone.

Mucronate: Ending abruptly in a short straight point.

Muricate: Rough with short hard points.

O

Oblique: An asymmetrical leaf base.

Oblong: Longer than broad with more or less parallel sides.

Obovate: Inversely ovate, broadest towards the apex and tapering to the stalk.

Odd pinnate: (See imparipinnate)

Opposite: Leaves borne two together on different sides of the stem at the same level.

Orbicular: Circular

Ovate: With an egg shaped outline.

P

Palmate: Divided to the base into separate leaflets, all the leaflets arising from the end of the leafstalk.

Panicle: A much branched inflorescence.

Paniculate: In the form of a panicle.

Pedicel: The stalk of a single flower.

Pedicellate: Of a flower, stalked.

Peduncle: The stalk of an inflorescence.

Pendulous placentation: the arrangement in which the placenta is situated at the top of the ovary and the ovules hang down from it.

Perennial: Living for a number of years, a plant that lives for a number of years.

Perianth: A collective term for the outer non-reproductive parts of a flower, often differentiated into calyx and corolla.

Persistent: remaining attached.

Petioles: Stalk of the leaf.

Pitted: with small depressions on the surface

Pod: a dry many seeded dehiscent fruit, particularly in the family leguminosae.

Procumbent herb: lying along the ground.

Puberulous: Slightly hairy.

Pubescent: Hairiness.

Punctate glands: Marked with dots, depressions or translucent glands.

Pyrene: The stone of a drupe, consisting of the seed surrounded by the hard endocarp.

R

Raceme: An indeterminate inflorescence with pedicellate flowers.

Receptacle: The end of the stem which bears the flower parts.

Reflexed: Bent abruptly backwards.

Reniform: Kidney shaped.

Retuse: Slightly notched at the apex.

Rhomboid: diamond shaped with four equal sides.

Rotund: Round.

Rugose: Wrinkled.

S

Scabrid: slightly rough

Schizocarp: a fruit derived from a syncarpous ovary which breaks up at maturity into one seeded portions

Scrambler: a weak stemmed climbing plant

Sepals: A single segment of the calyx.

Serrate: Saw toothed, teeth sharp and ascending.

Serrulate: Minutely serrate.

Sessile: Without a stalk.

Sheath: A tubular covering.

Shrub: A woody perennial plant generally smaller than a tree and with several stems arising from the ground level.

Simple: Of one piece.

Sinuate: Having the blade of the leaf flat but with the margin winding strongly inward and outward.

Spadix: A spike with a fleshy axis.

Spathulate: spatula shaped.

Spike: An indeterminate inflorescence with sessile flowers .

Stellate: Star shaped hairs.

Stipules: A leafy outgrowth often one of a pair arising at the base of the petiole. Straggler:

Strigose: Bearing stiff hairs or bristles.

Sub acute: (Plate D9)

Sub cordate: More or less heart shaped.

Sub opposite: Of the leaves when neither strictly opposite nor strictly alternate.

Sub orbicular: Almost circular

Succulent: Fleshy and juicy

Sulcate: furrowed

T

Tendrils: A twining, thread like structure produced from a stem or leaf that enables a plant to hold its position securely.

Terete: like a slender tapering cylinder, more or less circular in any cross section.

Terminal: At the apex or end.

Tomentose: Densely covered in soft hairs.

Tooth: One of the small pointed projections that form the margin of many leaves, or sometimes the apex of a mature capsule.

Tree: A woody perennial plant usually tall with a single bole or trunk that bears a crown of branches.

Trigonous: Three angled.

Trigonous: Three angled.

Truncate: Cut straight across; ending abruptly almost at right angle to midrib (Plate D8 10)

Tubercles: A small tuber, a small rounded projection.

U

Umbels: An inflorescence in which the pedicels arise from the same point on the peduncle.

Unarmed: without any spines, prickles or thorns.

Utricle: a bladder like structure, especially the membranous sac like structure in the genus carex.

V

Valvate: When similar parts of the plant meet exactly without overlapping; in anthers or fruits opening by valves.

Valve: One of the pieces into which an anther splits at maturity to release the pollen; one of the pieces into which a fruit splits at maturity to release the seeds.

Verticillaster: a deceptive kind of inflorescence found in the Labiatae, which gives the appearance if a whorl, but in reality consists of two dichasial cymes on opposite sides of the stem.

W

Whorled: The arrangement of three or more organs in a circle around the axis.

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