

Edible wild plants used by Gond tribes in Sidhi district

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Abstract

Most of Gond tribals of Sidhi District live in remote forest areas. These tribals have got the knowledge of edible wild plants from their ancestors. This information and knowledge is given by one generation to another. The tribals use fruits, flowers leaves, stems, and roots, etc of some plants as food. But some time they fell sick or die by unknowingly eating poisonous plants or mushrooms. Now gradually they are adopting farming, but still most of the tribals of Kusumi are dependent on botanical resources and they collect seasonal fruits & roots of seasonal and perennial plants. The tribes want to live independently and they do not want out side interference. The present investigation reports 40 species of plants which are used as food by the tribals of this area.

Study area :

Sidhi, Rewa, Satna, Shahdol, Singrouli etc.

Ethnobotany is a branch of the science which describes & presents direct relation between plants and human beings. Food is a primary necessity of human beings. They scout for food from morning till evening. All kinds of food are obtained from plants. Cereals pulses, vegetables & fruits come from plants. Sidhi District is inhabited by *Gond*, *Panika*, *Khairwar*, *Baiga* & *Kol* tribes. In Kusumi tahsil of Sidhi District 64 % of *Gond* tribals reside.

The topographical area in Sidhi Distt. is Plato and covered with forest areas Panika,

Gond, *Khairwar*, *Baiga* & *Kol* Tribals are densely populated. *Gond* tribals use wild plants for fruits, flowers, roots, leaves, and stems in their daily life as food, vegetable and medicines. They themselves treat most of the diseases by using these plants. They do not require outside Doctor & Hakims.

Gond tribals are known as main friends of environment because they do not destroy nearby plants & trees unnecessarily and they save them from destruction or damage. *Neem*, *Peepal* etc. are commonly seen in their lawns. They worship these trees. They give more preference to some medicinal plants than God.

Information of the plants given in

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table-1. got from conversing with locals and scheduled tribes who are living in different areas of Sidhi District by the writer himself. The work of identification of plants was done with the help of flora of Oommachan & Shrivastava of Botanical Survey of India, Allahabad⁴.

Most of tribals of Sidhi distt. are found in forest and hill areas. The *Gond* tribals create their own environment in forest. They are poor people and get their livelihood by working in

other fields as agriculture, labourers and grow *Jwar, Bajra, Arhar, Koddo, Kukuti Moong* etc. and in addition to this they also use *Mahua, Chironji, Tendu, Sarai* etc. as food items. They treat their ill or injured fellow with the help of plants. Mahua is their multipurpose tree because they use its flowers, fruits, leaves & barks. The following is the list of 40 edible and medicinal plants which are used by the tribals. For the preparation of this manuscript, relevant literature¹⁻⁴ has been consulted.

Table-1. List of the food and medicinal plants

S. No.	Local Name	Botanical Name	Family	Uses of the part
1	Chirchiri	<i>Achyranthes aspera</i> Linn.	Amaranthaceae	Leaves in the form of vegetable
2	Bael	<i>Aegle marmelos</i> Corr.	Rutaceae	Edible ripe fruit
3	Sitaphal	<i>Annona squamosa</i> Linn.	Annonaceae	Edible ripe fruit
4	Dhawa	<i>Anogeissus latifolia</i> Wall.	Combretaceae	Gum is edible
5	Chourai	<i>Amaranthus viridis</i> Linn.	Amaranthaceae	Leaves in the form of vegetable
6	Neem	<i>Azadirachta indica</i> A. Juss.	Meliaceae	Edible ripe fruit
7	Poi	<i>Basella alba</i> Linn.	Basellaceae	Leaves in the form of vegetable
8	Kachnar	<i>Bauhinia variegata</i> Linn.	Fabaceae	Leaves in the form of vegetable
9	Semal	<i>Bombax ceiba</i> Linn.	Bombacaceae	Flowers in the form of vegetable
10	Chiraunji	<i>Buchanania lanzan</i> Spreng.	Anacardiaceae	Ripe fruit & seeds edible
11	Palas	<i>Butea monosperma</i> (Lam.) Kuntze	Fabaceae	Flower as a vegetable
12	Karaunda	<i>Carissa carandas</i> Linn.	Apocyanaceae	Ripe fruits edible
13	Amaltas	<i>Casipa fistula</i> Linn.	Fabaceae	Leaves & flowers in the form of vegetable
14	Chakauda	<i>Cassia tora</i> Linn.	Fabaceae	Leaves in the form of vegetable
15	Bathua	<i>Chenopodium album</i> Linn.	Chenopodiaceae	Soft stem and leaves in the form vegetable

16	Jangali kunduru	<i>Coccinia cordifolia</i> Cogn.	Cucurbitaceae	Fruits edible
17	Kanda	<i>Colocasia esculenta</i> (Linn.)	Araceae	Rhizome edible
18	Kankaua	<i>Commelina bengalensis</i> Linn.	Commelinaceae	Soft stem in the form of vegetable
19	Gondila	<i>Cyperus rotundus</i> Linn.	Cyperaceae	Rhizome in the form of vegetable
20	Baans	<i>Dendrocalamus strictus</i> (Roxb.) Nees	Poaceae	Young stem in the form of vegetable
21	Tendu	<i>Diospyros melanoxylon</i> Roxb.	Ebenaceae	Ripe fruits edible
22	Sem	<i>Dolichos lablab</i> Linn.	Fabaceae	Fruits in the form of vegetable
23	Bargad	<i>Ficus bengalensis</i> Linn.	Moraceae	Ripe fruits edible
24	Gular	<i>Ficus racemosa</i> Linn.	Moraceae	Ripe fruits edible
25	Pipal	<i>Ficus religiosa</i> Linn.	Moraceae	Ripe fruits edible
26	Khamhar	<i>Gmelina arborea</i> Linn.	Verbenaceae	Ripe fruits edible
27	Gud sakari	<i>Grewia hirsuta</i> Vahl.	Tiliaceae	Leaves in the form of vegetable
28	Amari	<i>Hibiscus cannabinus</i> Linn.	Malvaceae	Flowers in the form of vegetable
29	Kurchi	<i>Holarrhena antidysenterica</i> Wall.	Apocynaceae	Buds, flowers in the form of vegetable
30	Gumi	<i>Leucus aspera</i> Spreng.	Lamiaceae	Leaf in the form of vegetable
31	Kaitha	<i>Limonia acidissima</i> W.&A.	Rutaceae	Edible ripe fruit
32	Mahua	<i>Madhuca longifolia</i> (Linn.)	Sapotaceae Macbride	Oil of seeds used in cooking
33	Kheksa	<i>Momordica dioica</i> Roxb.	Cucurbitaceae	Fruits in the form vegetable
34	Munga	<i>Moringa oleifera</i> Lim.	Moringaceae	Young stem & flower in the form of vegetable
35	Kemach	<i>Mucuna pruriens</i> Hook.	Fabaceae	Fruits in the form vegetable
36	Khatta meetha	<i>Oxalis corniculata</i> Linn.	Oxalidaceae	Leaves in the form of vegetable
37	Sarai	<i>Shorea robusta</i> Gaertn.f.	Dipterocarpaceae	Leaves & seeds in the form of vegetable
38	Makoi	<i>Solanum nigrum</i> Linn.	Solanaceae	Ripe fruits edible
39	Jamun	<i>Syzygium cumini</i> (Linn.) Skeels	Myrtaceae	Ripe fruits edible
40	Bahera	<i>Terminalia belerica</i> Roxb.	Combretaceae	Fruits edible

Forty species have been studied which belong to 36 genera and 32 families during my study. Each part of vegetable, fruits and others of these plants are used by human beings. All plants have been found as forest plants. These plants are not destroyed much by scheduled tribes so that environment is not affected or polluted.

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