



Medicinal application of different parts of *Nyctanthes arbortristis*

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ABSTRACT

With the growth of population cost of treatment, inadequate supply of drugs, side effect of several allopathic drugs and development of resistant to currently used drugs for infectious diseases have led to increased emphasis on the use of plant materials as a source of medicines for a wide variety of human ailments. Some forest species are used as raw materials for manufacture of drugs and perfumery products due to medicinal properties. The present investigation *Nyctanthes arbortristis*, commonly known as Harsinghar, Shiuli, Night Jasmine, Coral Jasmine etc., belongs to the oleaceae family. *Nyctanthes arbortristis* is widely distributed shrub. The leaves of *Nyctanthes arbortristis* are antibacterial, anti-inflammatory and anthelmintic. The flowers are bitter astringent, ophthalmic, stomachic and carminative. It is expectorant, bitter and tonic, febrifuge and mild purgative. It is used as bilious and obstinate remittent fever, sciatica and rheumatism. It is used in the treatment of dry cough, fungal skin infection, bronchitis.

Keywords: *Nyctanthes arbortristis*, medicinal plants, drugs, Harsinghar, Shiuli.

INTRODUCTION

Nearly all cultures on the earth use medicinal plants and herbs for the prevention or treatment of their illness. As per WHO estimation, nearly 80% of the population in the many Asian and African countries depends on herbal medicine. The same percentage has used in the form of traditional or medicinal therapy, in developed countries. *Nyctanthes arbortristis* is commonly known as Harsinghar, Harsingar, Harashringara in Hindi, Shefali, Shephalika, Siuli in Bengali, Sewali in Assamese, Prajakta, Prajakt, Parijatha in Sanskrit. The tree is sometimes called the tree of sorrow, because the flowers lose their brightness during day time. The name arbor-tristis means sad tree. Its flower is the official flower of the state of West Bengal, India, and for Kanchanaburi Province, Thailand [1-5].

EXPERIMENTAL SECTION

A survey of medicinal plants used by the rural and urban inhabitants of Banka district, state of Bihar was performed by means of 100 interviews with medicinal plant users.

RESULTS

Medicinal use of *Nyctanthes arbortristis* (Harsinghar):

◆ Leaves:

In Ayurvedic medicine leaves of *Nyctanthes arbortristis* are used for the treatment of different diseases such as eumatism, internal worm infections, chronic fever. Leaf juice with honey is given internally thrice daily for the

treatment of dry cough. The leaf juice is also used for the treatment of chronic fever, rheumatism, sciatica, liver disorders. The leaf juice with common salt is used for the treatment of intestinal worms. The aqueous paste of leaves is used externally for the treatment of skin related troubles, especially for the treatment of ringworm. Paste of Leaves with honey reported for the treatment of high blood pressure and diabetes[6], enlargement of spleen[7,8].

◆ **Seeds:**

Seeds are used as anthelmintics. It is antibilious and an expectorant and is used for the treatment of bilious fevers. The seeds are used to cure scurfy affections of scalp, piles and skin diseases. The seeds are crushed and aqueous paste is prepared. The patients are suffering from piles are advised to apply fresh paste externally on piles, along with the internal use of the powdered seeds. This treatment is simple and very effective. The decoction of seeds is used as hair tonic and advised to wash the hair daily in order to get rid from dandruff and lice.

◆ **Flowers:**

Flowers are used as antibilious, expectorant, carminative, stomachic, hair tonic and for the treatment of piles, skin diseases and ophthalmic purposes. The decoction of flowers is used for the treatment of gout. The decoction is given up to one week during the time of attack. As treatment, it is given up to one month in a year. Flowers are sweet scented, sessile, 3-7 together in pedunculate heads which are arranged in short trichotomous cymes; bracts elliptical. The bright orange corolla tubes of the flowers contain a coloring substance were formerly used for dyeing silk.

◆ **Stem:**

The powder of stem bark is used for the treatment of rheumatic joint pain, bronchitis and malaria. It is reported that the bark is used for the treatment of snakebite and bronchitis [9, 10]. The paste of stem bark of *Nyctanthes arbortristis* along with Arjuna bark is rubbed on the body for the treatment of joint broken bones[11].

Description:

Nyctanthes arbortristis (Harsinghar): *Nyctanthes arbortristis* is a deciduous tree with quadrangular branches and grey or greenish-white rough bark. Leaves opposite, 10-13 by 6-8 cm ovate, acute, coriaceous, covered with stiff white hair; base rounded or cuneate. Flowers are sweet scented, sessile, 3-7 together in pedunculate heads which are arranged in short trichotomous cymes; bracts elliptical. Calyx-tube 5 cm, minutely 4-5 toothed. Corolla-tube cylindrical, orange-red; limb white, spreading; emarginated, contorted in bud. Anthers 2, sub sessile, inserted near the mouth of the corolla tube. Ovary 2-celled; ovule 1 in each cell, erect. Capsule long, orbicular, compressed, chartaceous, 2-celled; seeds exalbuminous.

CONCLUSION

Nyctanthes arbortristis is widely distributed shrub useful for the treatment of dry cough, fungal skin infection, bronchitis, sciatica and rheumatism. Leaves are antibacterial, anti-inflammatory and anthelmintic. The flowers are bitter astringent, ophthalmic, stomachic and carminative. It is expectorant, bitter and tonic, febrifuge and mild purgative.

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