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### An ethnobotanical study of medicinal plants used by the Paliyars aboriginal community in Theni district, Tamil Nadu, India

Mehalingam P and V P Elango

V H N Senthikumara Nadar College, India

An ethnobotanical survey in various Paliyar tribal pockets of Western Ghats in Theni District, Tamil Nadu (India) was conducted. Most of the information included in this study was gathered from elderly and experienced medicine men those who have long acquaintance with the use of medicinal plants. The indigenous knowledge of local traditional healers on the native plants used for medicinal purposes was collected through personal interviews and informal conversations, during field trips of the study. The collected plants were identified by referring standard compilations, and arranged in alphabetical order with binomial of the plant, the vernacular name and ethnomedicinal use in brief. The voucher specimens have been deposited in herbarium of Department of Botany, V H N S.N College (Autonomous), Virudhunagar. About 76 plant species belonging to 44 families towards 36 types of ailments are described along the method of drug preparation, mode of administration, probable dosage and duration of treatment. The present study not only prescribed the remedies for common diseases in human beings but also has drawn attention for the need of detailed study on medicinal plants of the area, which could provide better and efficient remedies for many dreadful diseases. This study showed that many people in pockets of Western Ghats of Theni district still continue to depend on medicinal plants at least for the treatment of primary healthcare. At the same time the traditional healers are dwindling in number and there is a grave danger of traditional knowledge disappearing soon as the younger generation is not interested to carry on this traditional work.

#### Biography

Mehalingam P completed his PhD Degree from Madurai Kamaraj University, Madurai. Currently he is working as Assistant Professor in Botany, VHNSN College (Autonomous), Virudhunagar, Tamilnadu (India). He has been selected for UGC Research Award Scheme. He has participated and presented his research papers in international conferences held in The Netherlands, Malaysia and Thailand. He has been engaged in research on ethnobotany, pharmacognosy, pharmacology and phytochemistry.

[mehalingamp@yahoo.co.in](mailto:mehalingamp@yahoo.co.in)