

## **Commonly consumed tribal plants in different parts of India and their folkloric uses**

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### **ABSTRACT**

The uses of plants are as old as humanity. Various types of wild edible also known as underutilized plants; are traditionally used as a source of food which provides adequate level of nutrition to the consumers. Large heterogeneous geography and nutritional researches on wild edible plants have been continuing all over India. Utilization of plants for nutritional as well as medicinal purposes in India has been documented long back in ancient literature. In the present day wild edible plants are particularly useful during famine and similar scarcity situation. Even during normal times, wild plants provide materials of diet to the less advanced section of human community. Organized studies in this direction were initiated in mid nineties and off late such studies are gaining recognition and popularity due to fading of traditional knowledge and reducing plant population. Therefore, the present paper reviewed on wild edible plants documented in different parts of India and their utilization by the tribes.

**Key Words :** Plants, Folklor, Human community, Tribes

### **INTRODUCTION**

The uses of plants are as old as humanity. The uses of plants have been known in various ancient manuscripts such as Atharva Veda and Rig Veda, the Illiad and Odyssey, Charak Samhita and the History of Herodotus. In India, uses of plants for health dates back close to 5000 years. Various types of wild edible also known as underutilized plants; are traditionally used as a source of food which provides adequate level of nutrition to the consumers. Large heterogeneous geography and nutritional researches on wild edible plants have been continuing all over India. Traditional knowledge of local people on wild edible plants has contributed a lot to the society and proved to be effective up to this day.

In India, the tribal people depend on forests for their livelihood. The tribal people are very close to nature and have hereditary traditional knowledge of consuming wild plants and plant parts viz. tuber, shoots, leaves, fruits etc. as a source of food and medicine. Although, these wild edible plants play an important role in food security, they are ignored hence known

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as underutilized plants.

Utilization of plants for nutritional as well as medicinal purposes in India has been documented long back in ancient literature. Even today various tribal sects of India are repositories of rich knowledge on various uses of plant genetic resources. Wild plants are not only used for nutritional purposes but also for medicinal purposes. The primitive man through trial and error has selected many wild edible plants, which are edible and subsequently domesticated them. In the present day wild edible plants are particularly useful during famine and similar scarcity situation. Even during normal times, wild plants provide materials of diet to the less advanced section of human community.

Therefore, organized studies in this direction were initiated in mid nineties and off late such studies are gaining recognition and popularity due to fading of traditional knowledge and reducing plant population. Right from its beginning, the documentation of traditional knowledge especially on the medicinal uses of plants, has provided many important drugs of the modern day. Even today this area holds much more hidden treasure. The present paper reviewed on wild edible plants documented in different parts of India and their utilization by the tribes.

## METHODOLOGY

For the collection of data, different journals, research papers, articles and books etc available on internet is used. Data related to ethno-botanical surveys, underutilized plants/wild plants etc is taken into consideration. The present data is tabulated along with the scientific and common names of plants.

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Sr. No.	Scientific name	Family/ Common name	Consumption and different forms of uses
1.	<i>Aegele maelos</i> (L) Correa	Ructacea/ Bael, koovalam	Ripened fruit is eaten raw and also used in sharbat. Raw fruit pulp is eaten. One tea spoon pulp is taken orally once a day for 3–4 days for curing Abdominal pain and constipation.
2.	<i>Acacia etbaica</i> Schweinf.	Fabaceae/ Kasalto	Crushed bark and fruits are soaked in water and the water is taken orally in gastric problem.
3.	<i>Ailanthus triphysa</i> (Dennst.)Alston	Simaroubaceae/ Mattipal, Perumaram	Ripe fruits are consumed
4.	<i>Alangium salvifolium</i> (Linn.f.)Wang	Alangiaceae/ Ankollam	Edible fruits possess astringent
5.	<i>Annona squamosa</i> L.	Annonaceae/ Shareefa	Ripened fruits are eaten
6.	<i>Anthocephalus cadamba</i> Roxb.	Rubiaceae/ kadamba	Large tree with a broad crown and straight cylindrical bole and its fruits eaten as raw.
7.	<i>Antidesma montanum</i> Blume	Phyllanthaceae/ Puliyilamaram	Ripe fruits are consumed
8.	<i>Aristolochia bracteolata</i> Lam.	Aristolochiaceae/ Suqsuqi	Crushed fresh leaves and fruits are soaked in water and the water is taken orally during constipation.

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9.	<i>Artocarpus heterophyllus</i> Lam.	Moraceae/ Pilavu	Raw fruits cooked and eaten
10.	<i>Artocarpus lakoocha</i> Roxb.	Moraceae/ Barhar	Ripened fruits are eaten
11.	<i>Balanites Rotundifolia (vanTieghem) Blatter</i>	Balanitaceae/ Alayto	Crushed fresh leaves and fruits are soaked in water and the water is taken orally in diabetes and fever.
12.	<i>Calamus rotang</i> Linn.	Arecaceae/ Cheruchooral	Ripe fruits are eaten
13.	<i>Canthium rheedii</i> DC.	Rubiaceae/ Malankara	Ripe fruits are eaten
14.	<i>Capparis deciduas</i> Edges	Capparidaceae/ Ker	Ripened fruits eaten as raw and after processing also used as vegetable and pickle.
15.	<i>Carissa carandas</i> L.	Apocynaceae/ Karonda	Fully ripened fruits are consumed fresh and immature fruits are used in pickles
16.	<i>Chenopodium foliosum</i> Wall.	Chenopodiaceae	Red juicy fruits are eaten as it is, used to cure indigestion, sometimes ripe fruits are also mixed with grains for consumption
17.	<i>Citrullus lanatus</i> (Thumb.)	Cucurbitaceae/ Tarbuj, Mateera	Ripened fruit is eaten. It relieves constipation and diarrhoeas, cardiac and kidney troubles.
18.	<i>Coccinea grandis</i> (Linn.) Voigt	Cucurbitaceae/ Kundru, kattukoval	Unripe fruits are chopped into small pieces and fried in vegetable oil. Salt and spices are added to taste.
19.	<i>Cordia myxa</i> L.	Boraginaceae/ Lasora	Mature seeds are eaten as raw and also used in pickles and chutney
20.	<i>Crataegus songarica</i> K. Koch	Rosaceae/ Pingyath	Ripe fruits are eaten by school children and road side laborers Fruits are edible and considered as cardio tonic
21.	<i>Cucumis callosus</i> (Rottl.) Cogn.	Cucurbitaceae/ Kachari	Rural people grow kachri fruit with other rainfed crops for their food security
22.	<i>Diospyros lotus</i> L.	Eebnaceae/ Kala malook	Fresh and dried fruits are eaten raw. Fruits are also used in constipation.
23.	<i>Diospyros malabarica</i> (Desr.)Kostel	Ebenaceae/ Panachi	Ripe fruits are eaten
24.	<i>Elaeagnus conferta</i> Roxb.	Elaeagnaceae / Gaihein	Fruits are eaten raw and used for faster clearance of blood alcohol after the alcohol ingestion
25.	<i>Emblica officinalis</i> Gaertn syn. <i>Phyllanthus emblica</i> Linn.	Euphorbiaceae/ Aonla, Amla, Nelli	Fruits are used to prepare Morabba. Green fruits are pickled and ripe fruits are eaten. One tea spoon dried fruit powder is taken orally with water in constipation.
26.	<i>Ficus benghalensis</i> L.	Moraceae / Bargad	Fruits eaten as raw and also used as sharbat
27.	<i>Ficus glomerata</i> Roxb.	Moraceae/ Gular, Bar	Fruits eaten as raw and also used as vegetable. Fruits Powder of ripened fruits is taken orally along with milk or water in intestinal worms, piles and menstrual disorders. Ripened fruits are eaten raw in constipation.

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28.	<i>Ficus hispida</i> L.	Moraceae/ Goolar	Unripe fruits are chopped into small pieces and fried in vegetable oil with chopped potato. Salt and spices are added to taste. Fruits are also used to make pickle
29.	<i>Ficus carica</i> L.	Moraceae/ Trakani phagwar	Dried fruits of <i>Ficus carica</i> and seeds of <i>Amaranthus viridis</i> are Powdered and taken orally with water or milk in eye vision problem.
30.	<i>Flacourtia jungomas</i> (Iour) Raeusch	Flacourtiaceae/ Paniala	Ripened fruits eaten as raw and cooked as jam
31.	<i>Garcinia gummi-gutta</i> (Linn.)Rob.	Clusiaceae/ Karukkampuli	Fruits rindsused in curries to get sour taste
32.	<i>Gmelina arborea</i> Roxb.	Lamiaceae/ Kumbil, kumil	Ripe fruits are eaten
33.	<i>Grewia subinaequalis</i> D. C.	Tiliaceae/ Phalsa	Ripened fruits are eaten as raw and also used in pickles
34.	<i>Grewia titliaefolia</i> Vahl.	Tiliaceae/ Chadachi	Ripe fruits are eaten
35.	<i>Helicteres isora</i>	(Sterculiaceae)/ Marodphali	One tea spoon dried powder is taken orally with water in Dysentery
36.	<i>Hibiscus surattensis</i> Linn.	Malvaceae/ Chemeenpuli	Fruits used in curries to get a sour taste
37.	<i>Iroxra brachiata</i> DC.	Rubiaceae/ Malathechi	Ripe fruits are eaten
38.	<i>Lantana camara</i> Linn. Var <i>Aculeate</i> (Linn.) Mold.	Verbenaceae/ Koothadichipoov	Ripe fruits are eaten
39.	<i>Madhuca indica</i> J. F. Gmel	Sapotaceae/ Mahua	Fruits are eaten as raw and after drying fruit pulp also used for alcohol production
40.	<i>Manilkara hexandra</i> Roxb.	Sapotaceae/ Khirni	Fresh as well as dry fruits are eaten as raw
41.	<i>Mesua ferrea</i> Linn.	<i>Mesua ferrea</i> / Nanku	Ripe fruits are eaten
42.	<i>Mimusops elengi</i> Linn.	Sapotaceae/ Maulshree, Elengi	Ripe fruits are eaten
43.	<i>Momordica dioca</i> L.	Cucurbitaceae/ Kheska	Unripe fruits are chopped into small pieces and fried in vegetable oil. Salt and spices are added to taste
44.	<i>Moringa oliefera</i> Lam.	Fabaceae/ Sahijan	Fruits are used as vegetables. Fruits are chopped into small pieces and fried in vegetable oil with chopped potato. Salt and spices are added to taste. Fruits are cut into small pieces and boiled in pulses. Fruits are also used to make pickle.
45.	<i>Morus alba</i> L.	Moraceae/ Sufaid Shahtoot	Fruits eaten as raw
46.	<i>Morus indica</i> L.	Moraceae/ Shahtoot	Fruits eaten as raw
47.	<i>Morus serrata</i> Roxb.	Moraceae/ Kruum	Fruits are eaten raw. Fruits are also used as digestive stimulant and to relieve constipation and other digestive problems.

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## COMMONLY CONSUMED TRIBAL PLANTS IN DIFFERENT PARTS OF INDIA &amp; THEIR FOLKLORIC USES

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48.	<i>Mucuna pruriens</i> (L.)D.C	Fabaceae/ Badi Kewanch	Frits are used as vegetables.
49.	<i>Myrsine africana</i> L.	Myrsinaceae/ Khukan	Dried fruit and seed powder is taken orally with curd or buttermilk in intestinal worms
50.	<i>Olea dioica</i> Roxb.	Oleaceae/ Edana	Ripe fruits are eaten
51.	<i>Opuntia dillenii</i> Haw.	Cactaceae/ Nakh band	Fresh fruits are peeled off and eaten raw and also used to cure diabetes, gastric ulcer and inflammation
52.	<i>Passiflora foetida</i> Linn.	Kurukkan pazham	Ripe fruits are eaten
53.	<i>Pedalium murex</i>	Pedaliaceae/ Gokharu	Powder is applied locally with butter during Rheumatic pains
54.	<i>Phoenix dactylifera</i> L.	Palmae/Chotti Khagoor	Dried fruits are boiled in milk and given to children in Measles as tonic.
55.	<i>Physalis minima</i> L.	Solanaceae/ Rasbhari	Ripened fruits are eaten as raw
56.	<i>Piper longum</i> Linn.	Piperaceae/ Thippali	Used as spice
57.	<i>Piper nigrum</i> Linn.	Piperaceae/ kattukurumulaku	Used as spice
58.	<i>Pithecellobium dulce</i> Roxb.	Fabaceae / Jungali julebi	Thorny deciduous tree Fruit eaten raw. Fruits and leaves are used to cure febrifuge and enema Saponins showed significant activity against carrageenin-induced oedema and formaldehyde-induced arthritis. Ethanol extract of the leaf possesses strong antifungal and moderate antibacterial properties.
59.	<i>Pistacia integerrima</i> J.L. <i>Stewartex Brandis.</i>	Anacardiaceae / Kangar	Fruits powder is given to patient suffering from cough and asthma along with water
60.	<i>Podophylum hexandrum</i> Royle	Berberidaceae / Bankakri	Fruits are edible and consumed raw
61.	<i>Potentilla nubicola</i> Lindl.	Rosaceae / Dhul-akhre	Fruits are collected and eaten raw Fruits are used as carminative, for stomach ulcers, and as antiseptic.
62.	<i>Prunus cornuta</i> (Wall. ex Royle)	Rosaceae/ Jammu	Fruits are consumed raw.
63.	<i>Prunus domestica</i>	Rosaceae/ Lucha	Fresh and ripened fruits are eaten raw in stomach inflammation, constipation.
64.	<i>Pyrus pashia</i> L.	Rosaceae/ Kali Batangibari	Ripened fruits are eaten raw Also used to cure constipation.
65.	<i>Quinquelocularis</i> Hardw.	Caprifoliaceae/ Bakhur	Fruit juice is applied to cure cracks of foot and hands
66.	<i>Rosa moshata</i> Auct.	Rosaceae/ Gangli gulab	Decoction of fresh flowers and fruits is taken orally in constipation.

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67.	<i>Rubus ellipticus</i> Sm.	Rosaceae/ Aakhre, Akha	Fruits are eaten by the local people Fruit is edible and is having cooling effect. Juice of fresh and ripened fruits is taken orally in diabetes.
68.	<i>Rubus niveus</i> Thunb.	Rosaceae/ Lal aakhre	Fruits are eaten raw
69.	<i>Rubus ulmifolius</i> Schott in Oken.	Rosaceae/ Kali bari pluchi	Fresh fruits are eaten raw in inflammation and indigestion.
70.	<i>Sarcostigma kleinii</i> Wight & Arn.	Icacinaceae/ Odalvalli	Ripe fruits are eaten
71.	<i>Smilax aspera</i>	Smilacaceae/ Dadrund Thuthur	Fruits are eaten raw and used to cure Diuretic, diaphoretic, and arthritis
72.	<i>Smilax zeylanica</i> Linn.	Smilacaceae/ Kareenlanchi	Ripe fruits are eaten
73.	<i>Solanum anguivi</i> Lamk	Solanaceae/ chunda	Green fruits are salted, dried, roasted in oil and eaten
74.	<i>Solanum incanum</i> L.	Solanaceae/ Banbhanta, Kali Mukaiya, Makoae	Unripe fruits are chopped into small pieces and fried in vegetable oil with chopped potato. Ripe Fruit eaten as raw Smoke treatment is given in piles
75.	<i>Spondia pinnata</i> (L.F.) kurz.	Anacardiaceae/ Amla	Ripened fruits are used in pickles
76.	<i>Syzygium cuminii</i> (Linn.) Skeels	Myrtaceae/ Jamun, Njaval	Ripe fruits are eaten
77.	<i>Syzygium palghatense</i> Gamble	Myrtaceae/ kattunjaval	Ripe fruits are eaten
78.	<i>Tamarindus indica</i> Linn.	Caesalpiniaceae/ Imali, Puli	Fruits used in curries to get a sour taste, young fruits also pickled Eaten directly or cooked as vegetables also used for curing irregular menstruation.
79.	<i>Tribulus terrestris</i>	Zygophyllaceae/ Chota gokharu	Dried fruit and leaves powder is used for making laddoos and eaten by man. Powder is taken with milk to increase the number of sperms
80.	<i>Viburnum cotinifolium</i> D.	Caprifoliaceae / Ka	Fruits Ripe fruits are edible raw Fruit is considered to be laxative and blood purifier.
81.	<i>Viburnum grandiflorum</i> Buch Ham. Ex D.	Caprifoliaceae / Tilhanj, Guch	Ripe fruits are eaten raw Used to in Constipation
82.	<i>Vitis Jacquemontii</i> Parker.	Vitaceae/Gidhar dakh (also known as tree of heaven)	Fresh and ripened fruits are eaten raw in constipation.
83.	<i>Vitis parvifolia</i> Roxb.	Vitaceae/ Kali baridakh	Fresh and ripened fruits are eaten raw in Constipation
84.	<i>Xeromphis uliginosa</i> (Retz) Maheshwari	Rubiaceae/ Pindar	Unripened fruits are used as vegetable

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85.	<i>Zanthoxylum armatum</i> D.C. Prodor.	Rutaceae/Toothache Tree	Fruit powder is taken orally with water. Used to cure cholera, stomach disorder, gas trouble and indigestion.
86.	<i>Ziziphus mauritiana</i> Lam.	Rhamnaceae/ Ber, Thanber	Ripened fruits eaten as raw It also helps in blood purification and improves digestion. Dried fruit powder taken orally with warm water in cough
87.	<i>Ziziphus rugosa</i> Lamk	Rhamnaceae/ Vanthodali	Ripe fruits are eaten

**Conclusion :**

Life is dependent on nature. Every living organism need food to live so as human beings. For the survival of life man utilizes different plant species. Present review focuses on some commonly consumed wild plants of India by different tribes. Researches and studies about such kinds of wild plants will help us in achieving and defending malnutrition in the society because today people are mainly dependent on only commercialized species which are very expensive. But these wild plants can be grown without any expensive efforts and can become a tool for combating the problem of nutritional security and malnutrition. Therefore there is a need for documentation, preservation of orally transmitted traditional knowledge to lower the load for future generations. If it happens, then we can achieve Hippocrates quote *i.e.* "Everyone has a doctor in him or her; we just have to help it in its work. The natural healing force within each one of us is the greatest force in getting well. Our food should be our medicine. Our medicine should be our food. But to eat when you are sick, is to feed your sickness".

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