

Importance of wild Edible Vegetables for local populations from Karjat Tehsil

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Abstract

The wild edible vegetables are been traditionally accepted by local populations for their nutritional value, taste and odour. A preliminary study was undertaken during September 2022 in Karjat Tehsil to survey the popular wild edible vegetables, their properties, importance in diet and use. A total of Eight species were studied and reported from the area during the study.

Key words: Wild edible vegetables, nutritionally rich, Karjat.

INTRODUCTION :

Man has tremendous influence on wild edible plants since before civilization because of their high nutritional value as well as medicinal importance (Naik *et. al.* 2017). Wild edible plants play an important role in human life and are the vital constituent of the traditional diet. Gathering of wild vegetables and fruits is common practice even today (Ladda *et.al* 2015).

Wild edible species refer to naturally growing edible plants species on farm land or open area without cultivation or care. These plants mainly grow in areas like forest, barren lands , agricultural farms, fields, household lands etc. These wild species are used as vegetables in the diet and also have medicinal plants properties. Sundriyal *et. al.* (2001) reported that wild edible plants are good source of nutrients and they also suggested we need to grow few species in commercial cultivation .

In many tribal and rural areas, the local populations harvest a wide range of vegetables in the form of leaves, stem, flower, fruits, tubers, roots, tubers of the plants to fulfill their daily requirement. Kuvar and Shinde (2019) studied the wild plants used by tribes. They found that economically weaker section of tribes is largely depends on preparation from wild vegetables.

In last few decades, Biotechnology has provided a gateway for new trends. The reasons like exponential increase of population, scarcity of fertile land for cultivation, demand for quality food etc. has demanded revolution in agriculture. There has been emergence of better and nutritionally rich food in the form of hybrid varieties and Genetically modified food. These varieites have solved many food problems but show limitations regarding the nutritional status.

Recently, a lot of interest has been focused to evaluate nutritional status of various wild edible plants from the locality because they are the vital constituent of human diet, provide elements, minerals, vitamins, hormone precursors, protein and energy (Tapan *et al.* 2017) and are easily available. The nutritive value and taste of the wild edible species is much higher than the available common vegetables. Muthu and Rimo (2018) showed that wild vegetables have better nutritional value than that are cultivated. These wild edible vegetables not only serve as alternatives to staple food during periods of food deficit but also play as a valuable supplement for a nutritionally balanced diet. The wild vegetables traditionally used in diet as food that enhance the taste and color.

Karjat tehsil of Ahmednagar district is a drought prone area with very less annual rainfall. The area has average temperatures throughout the year range from 33-35°C. The area has more of deciduous and rainfed vegetation. Most of the wild species are abundantly present during the rainy season and preferred as tasty food in their diet by the local populations. Most of these wild plants are considered medicinal and used in ayurvedic preparations by the vaidyas.

The objective of present study is to create awareness and popularization of wild vegetables from karjat tehsil.

MATERIAL & METHODS:

A preliminary survey and collection of wild edible vegetables from in and around Karjat Tehsil was undertaken during September 2022 after the rainy season. Many of the villagers and local populations were interviewed for the required information of the wild vegetables used in diet. These vegetables along with the regular vegetables are popularly sold during the weekly market and has a lot of demand due to their freshness, taste and odour. The plants were identified, collected and dried for herbarium purpose.

RESULT & DISCUSSION:

The study has revealed the identification and description of Eight species, which are abundantly and popularly accepted by the locals. All these are being consumed fresh as a regular diet content due to its nutritional and medicinal value. The survey reveals that these plants are containing proteins, minerals and vitamins in abundance thus are good in texture and taste.

Sr. No.	Name of the Plant	Common name	Family	Part used	Uses	Medicinal value
1.	<i>Amaranthus spinosus (L.)</i>	Kathe math	Amaranthaceae	Leaves and stem	As vegetable, raw or cooked	Used to cure fever and asthma.

2.	<i>Amaranthus viridis</i> (L.)	Unad bhaji / Hirwa math	Amaranthaceae	Leaves and stem	As vegetable	Used for cure fever and diabetics
3.	<i>Commelina benghalensis</i> (L.)	Keni	Commelinaceae	Leaves and rhizomes	As vegetable. Good fodder for cattle, increase their milk production	Used for treatment of wounds and inflammations
4.	<i>Digera muricata</i> (L.)	Kunjir	Amaranthaceae	Leaves	As vegetable	Used for urinary disorders
5.	<i>Hibiscus sabdariffa</i> (L.)	Ambadi	Malvaceae	Leaves	Eaten raw or cooked as vegetable	Used to control sugar levels and blood pressure.
6.	<i>Launaea procumbens</i> (Roxb.)	Pathari	Asteraceae	Leaves	Used as vegetable	Used to treat kidney disorder and eye irritation
7.	<i>Portulaca oleracea</i> (L.)	Ghol	Portulacaceae	Leaves	Used as vegetable	Used for wound healing as antiseptic, to cure anaemia
8.	<i>Tribulus terrestris</i> (L.)	Sarata	Zygophyllaceae	Leaves and stem	Used as vegetable	Used for treating different body pains, as tonic for fever, for treating skin and eye disorder

These studies reveal the importance and popularity of wild vegetables among the locals from karjat tehsil. Detailed study regarding wild edible vegetables from this locality and their nutritional status need to be investigated in future.

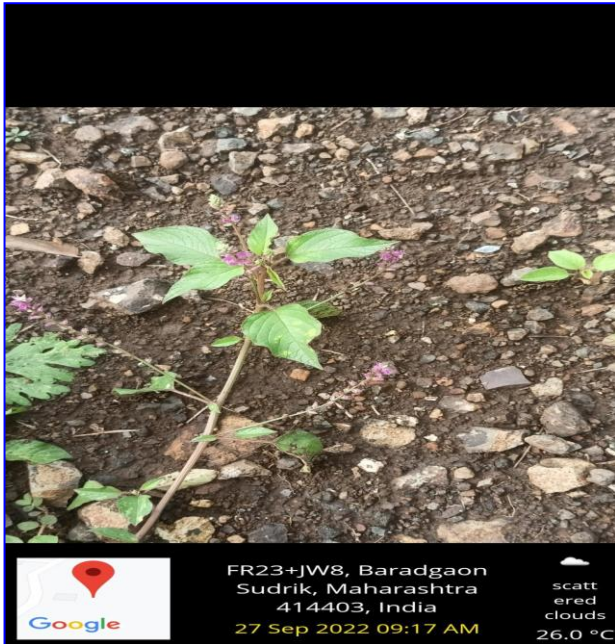
Plant Photographs:



Amaranthus spinosus



Launaea procumbens



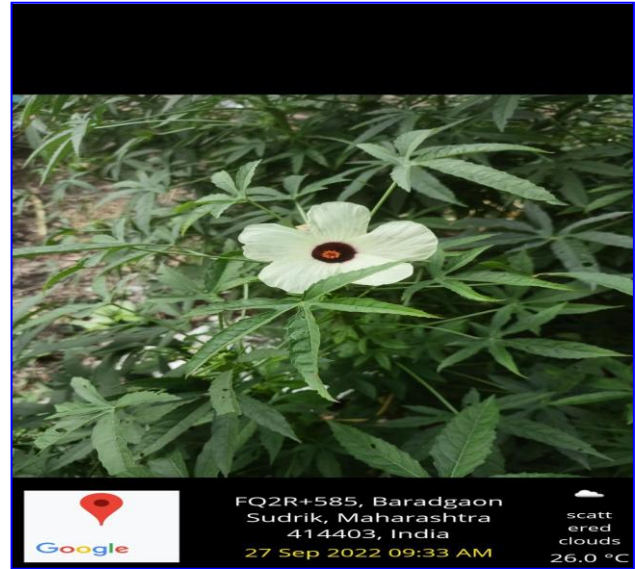
Digera muricata



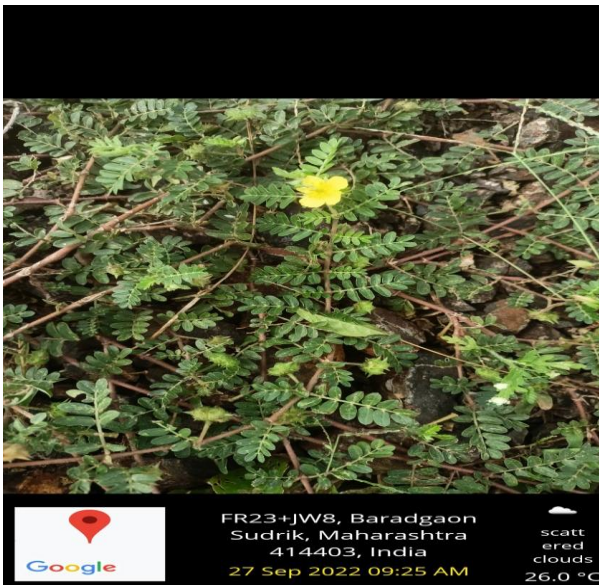
Amaranthus viridis



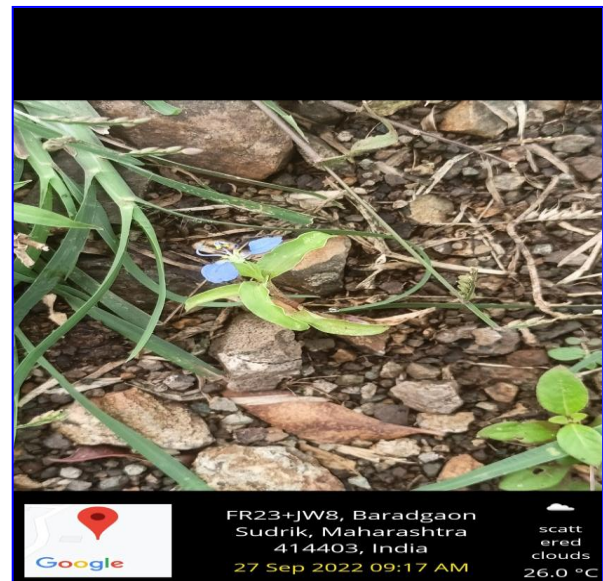
Portulaca oleracea



Hibiscus sabdariffa



Tribulus terrestris



Commelina benghalensis

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