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Ethnobotanical Survey of Wild Vegetables in the Warud Region: Customary Applications and Nutritious Value

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ABSTRACT

The study sought to identify and comprehend the use of wild edible plants for the treatment of various diseases by the tribes of Warud tahsil in Amravati District. For generations, wild plants have been a staple of traditional diets and medicine, providing a wealth of nutrients and bioactive chemicals. This study investigates the ethnopharmacological importance of wild vegetables in the Warud region, documenting their traditional uses, nutritional characteristics, and prospective pharmacological applications. The findings emphasize the significance of preserving these underutilized resources and investigating their potential for sustainable development and healthcare applications.

Keywords: Warud, Wild vegetables , Ethonomedicinal uses, tribes , Air potato plant

INTRODUCTION

Plants are essential for life on Earth and contain several life-enhancing chemicals. We rely on them instinctively. Plants have been used to ease human suffering from the beginning of time. The relationship between healing plants and humans dates back to the prehistoric times.

Nature has bestowed medicinal plants upon humanity as a means to promote health and wellness, and these plants also serve as important chemical labs on world wide scale.

Wild edible plants (WEPs) are species that are neither farmed or domesticated, but are available in their natural habitat and used as a source of food (Kiran et al., 2019).

Wild veggies, also known as "ranbhaji" locally, appear spontaneously with the arrival of rains and are picked from the wild rather than farmed agriculturally. These

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plants include leafy greens, delicate sprouts, creeper shoots, tubers, and various edible weeds and herbs. They are historically harvested and prepared by families as nutritious side dishes or main courses, providing critical minerals, vitamins, and distinct flavors that are not typically found in standard vegetables.

The Warud region in Maharashtra's Amravati district is well-known not only for its agricultural products such as oranges, cotton, and pulses, but also for a rich tradition of wild edible plants and vegetables that grow organically over its landscapes, particularly during the monsoon season. While cultivated crops dominate agricultural fields, natural vegetation in forests, fallow lands, and village edges supports a range of wild vegetables that have long been a part of the region's rural and tribal inhabitants' diets and cultures.

Because these wild plants grow without cultivation, they are often nutrient-dense and cost-effective, and they contribute significantly to the region's food heritage and biodiversity. However, with changing lifestyles and preferences for market veggies, traditional knowledge about these wild edibles is increasingly fading, making documenting and promotion crucial for cultural and nutritional sustainability. . (Published in Divya Marathi on 8th July 2025)

The survey and analysis of wild vegetables in the Amravati District's Warud Tehsil is the main subject of this investigation.

Materials and Methods

Study Area

In the Indian state of Maharashtra, Warud Tehsil is situated in the northern region of Amravati District. It is situated between the plains of the Purna River basin to the south and the Satpura hills to the north. Geographically, Warud is positioned roughly between latitudes 21°25′ and 21°40′ North and longitudes 77°50′ and 78°10′ East. The state of Madhya Pradesh lies to the north, Chandur Bazar Tehsil to the east, and Morshi Tehsil to the south.

Because of its vast orange orchards, Warud Tehsil is renowned as Vidarbha's "Orange Bowl." Geographically, Warud Tehsil is home to a wide range of wild edible vegetables that thrive in wastelands, hilly regions, agricultural fields, and forest borders.

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Figure 1: Map view of Warud Tehsil

Collection of Wild vegetables

The wild veggies were gathered from several villages, including Shahpur, Jambgaon (Khadka), Jarud, Aloda, and Shendurjna Ghat. The survey and vegetable gathering took place between September and October of 2025.
A total of eight plants are chosen and discussed, along with their family, botanical name, local name, and therapeutic applications.

Lady from Shahpur selling vegetable in local market

Biological name: ***Telosma pallida***
Common name : Varshadodi / Jivticha phulor
Family : Asclepiadaceae

Description : Thin, deciduous, twining shrub or climber that can reach a height of three meters. Leaves are simple, diametrically opposed, heart-shaped (cordate), with

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noticeable veins, a dark green upper surface, and a light green underside. structure of the leaf with laticifer cells in the petiole and warty trichomes (hairs). Paracytic and anomocytic stomata are present.

Ethnomedicinal Uses

T. pallida has historically been used to treat a variety of illnesses, including skin con ditions, colds, and coughs.This plant's leaves and blossoms are frequently used as ve getables. T. pallida's in vitro anti-inflammatory and anti-arthritic properties.

Biological name: *Plumbago zeylanica*
Common name : Chitrak pandhra
Family : Plumbaginaceae

Description : *Plumbago zeylanica* is a herbaceous plant with glabrous stems that are climbing, prostrate, or erect. The leaves are petiolate or sessile and have ovate, lance-elliptic, or spatulate to oblanceolate blades

Ethnomedicinal Uses
Improves digestion and appetite. Used in indigestion, gas, and constipation. Beneficial in skin problems. Used to alleviate arthritis and joint discomfort. The leaves act as a carminative and stimulant, and are used to add a sour taste to curry dishes.

Biological name: *Argyreia nervosa*
Common name : Elephant creeper
Family : Convoulaceae

Description : is a perennial woody climber. It is native to the Indian subcontinent and widely distributed in tropical regions.

Ethnomedicinal uses : Widely used in Ayurvedic medicine as a tonic, nervine, and rejuvenator Roots are used in the preparation of traditional formulations like

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Vidaryadi. Leaves are widely used for curry preparation

Biological name: *Basella alba*
Common name : Malabar spinach
Family : *Basellaceae*.

Description :
is a rapidly growing leafy vegetable popular in India and other tropical places. It is a perennial, succulent, twining climber with a fleshy stem that is smooth and green or purplish in color. Leaves are thick, glossy, tiny, white to pink, and grouped in spikes. Fruits are fleshy, dark purple berries that contain one seed.

Ethnomedicinal uses : Leaves are used as a laxative and cooling agent to treat constipation, ulcers, and burning sensations. Leaf paste is applied to cuts, boils, and skin inflammation .Juice utilized in anemia due to its iron content. Roots are generally used to treat diarrhea and vomiting. Used as a leafy vegetable in curries and bhaji

Biological name: *Colocasia esculenta*
Common name : Arvi, Taro, Alu (Marathi)
Family : *Araceae*

Description : This perennial herbaceous plant has a big subterranean corm. The leaves are big and heart-shaped (peltate), with long petioles. The inflorescence is a spadix encircled by a greenish spathe. It thrives in warm, humid, and soggy environments.

Ethnomedicinal uses : A significant food crop and wild vegetable in many parts of India. This ingredient is commonly used in traditional cuisines such as arvi sabzi, patra, and curry. Cooked corms are utilized as an energy-dense food. Leaf paste was traditionally used to treat wounds and skin problems.

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Corm decoction is used in traditional medicine to treat digestive issues. Leaves are occasionally used in traditional diets to treat anemia.

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Biological name: *Embelia ribes*
Common name : Vavding
Family : *Primulaceae*

Description:

It is a huge woody climbing shrub with simple, elliptic-lanceolate leaves with whole margins. The flowers are small, greenish-white, and the fruits are small, globose berries that are green when unripe and black when mature. They are scented.

Ethnomedicinal uses :

Embelin is an active element in this plant, along with volatile oils. Resins, quinones, and tannins are also present. Anthelmintics are effective against intestinal worms. It relieves indigestion, flatulence, and colic. Also possesses antimicrobial and antioxidant effects.

Biological name: *Cassia tora*
Common name : Tarota
Family : *Fabaceae*

Description :
The plant known as tarota (or takla) in Maharashtra is a wild, uncultivated green that blooms during monsoon season. It is widely regarded for its therapeutic virtues and nutritional value. The young, fragile stems and leaves are often employed to prepare a basic stir-fry (bhaji in Marathi). The leaves have a slightly bitter and earthy flavor.

Ethnomedicinal uses :
The entire plant or stem bark can be utilized to treat dysentery and other conditions. In other cases, the ash from the entire plant is used for heaps. Roasted seed powder paired with honey is used to treat asthma and expectoration. The plant is also edible,

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with young leaves served as vegetables and roasted seeds used as a coffee substitute in certain locations.

Biological name: ***Dioscorea bulbifera***
Common name : Air potato plant
Family : ***Dioscoreaceae***

Description : A perennial climbing vine with twining stems. The leaves are simple and alternating, broadly oval to heart-shaped, with long petioles. Produces distinctive aerial bulbils in the leaf axils, which resemble little potatoes. Underground tubers may also be found, but propagation is primarily through bulbils. Flowers are tiny, greenish-white, unisexual, and rarely visible. Bulbils and tubers are edible after being properly processed (by boiling, soaking, or roasting) to reduce bitterness and toxicity. Traditionally consumed by indigenous people when food is scarce.

Ethnomedicinal Uses: Used in Ayurvedic and folk medicine. Bulbils and tubers are utilized as follows Anti-inflammatory and analgesic medications Treatment for piles, dysentery, diarrhea, and skin problems. Paste applied on wounds, boils, and ulcers. Traditional uses include leprosy and rheumatism.

Conclusion

All the selected plans are found to be ethnomedicinally important used by the local people of Warud Tehsil and help in curing various diseases.

Acknowledgment

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