



Herbal Garden (Muligai Vanam)

Naikkaduku



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Botanical Name	:	Cleome viscosa L.
Tamil Name	:	Naikkadugu, Kaatu kadugu
Sanskrit Name	:	Adityabhakta
English Name	:	Dog mustard

Distribution and Habitat

Cleome viscosa belongs to the family *Cleomaceae* and is a weed widespread in various warmer parts of the world like India, Pakistan, Africa, Ethiopia, peninsular Arabia, Australia, Cambodia, Indonesia and Japan. The plant is an annual, sticky herb with a strong odour with glandular and simple hairs. It grows about 90-120 cm high and is branched. The leaves are 3-5 foliate, obovate and obtuse. The flowers are yellow, axillary, growing out into a lax raceme. The fruits are capsules, dark brown 30-75 mm long, compressed and hairy throughout, while the seeds are finely transversely striate, sub globose and become brownish-black when ripe.



Parts used

Whole plant

Uses

Fresh leaves of *C. viscosa* and shoots are used as a vegetable. The pleasant flavoured seeds are used as a low cost substitute for cumin.

Medicinal uses

In the traditional system of medicine, this plant is used to treat various disorders such as diarrhoea, fever, inflammation, liver diseases, bronchitis, skin diseases and malarial fever. The

leaf decoction is used in the treatment of respiratory tract infections, wounds and jaundice. The sap from young leaves is squeezed into the ears, nostrils and eyes to treat epileptic seizures and ear ache. It also provides relief in case of chest pain. The plant is good for malarial fevers and useful in blood diseases, uterine complaints. Its seeds are a stimulant and carminative and are traditionally used in the Indian system of medicine as an anthelmintic. The whole herb is rubbed on the body to treat rheumatism. The plant possesses diverse biological activities, anti-bacterial, anti-fungal, insecticidal and nematocidal, analgesic, anti-diarrheal, anti-pyretic, anti-hyperlipidemic and anti-ulcer activities (Saroop and Kaul, 2015).



Conclusion

Cleome viscosa Linn, a neglected crop grows as a weed along roadsides, wastelands and other degraded areas. The whole plant and its parts (leaves, pods and roots) are widely used in traditional and folkloric systems of medicine. It is also used for its remarkable nutritional, antioxidant and free radical scavenging properties. *Cleome* is not only a weed but an important medicinal herb that can be used in treating various ailments.

