



Herbal Garden (Muligai Vanam)



Bramhadhandi

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Botanical Name	:	<i>Argemone mexicana</i> L.
Tamil Name	:	Bramhadhandi
Sanskrit Name	:	Swarnakshiri
English Name	:	Mexican poppy

Distribution and Habitat:

Argemone mexicana is an annual herb, growing up to 100-140 cm and belongs to the family Papaveraceae. The plant is abundant in Mexico and distributed across tropical and sub-tropical countries. The plant tends to grow along roadsides, in fallow and cultivated lands, riverbanks and floodplains in almost every part of India and Bangladesh. It competes with and



replaces native species in some cases and is also a significant crop weed. Its stem is branched and usually prickly. Leaves, 5-11 cm long, thistle-like and alternate, without leaf stalks, toothed and the margins are spiny. The grey-white veins stand out against the bluish-green upper leaf surface. Flowers are terminal and solitary, yellow and of 2.5-5 cm diameter. Fruit are capsules. Seeds are small about 1 mm in diameter, very numerous, nearly spherical, covered in a fine network of veins, brownish black.

Parts used: Whole plant

Phyto-chemical constituents

Berberine, cheilanthifoline, coptisine, muramine, scoulerine, stylopine, cryptopine, thalifone, sanguinarine, protopine, optisine, ferulic acid, tannic acid, caffeic acid, benzoic acid, cinamic acid, rutin, quercetin, terpenoids, flavonoids, phenolics, and long-chain aliphatic compound.

Medicinal uses

The plant is considered as an important medicinal plant in India; the yellow juice, which exudes when the plant is injured, has long been used in India as a traditional medicine for dropsy, jaundice, ophthalmia, scabies and cutaneous affections. The plant has medicinal properties such as purgative, diuretic, and destroys worms. It is used to cure leprosy, skin diseases, inflammations and bilious fever. Roots are anthelmintic. Seeds are purgative and sedative. The whole plant is used for the treatment of uncomplicated malaria (Chandrasekhar and Vinay, 2017). A decoction made from the root is used to wash eyes and serves as a lotion for inflammatory swellings. The juice of the plant is diuretic and is used to treat jaundice, skin diseases and gonorrhoea. The oil is locally applied over affected areas for skin diseases (Sudhakar, 2007). The smoke of the seed is used to relieve toothache. The plant extract is used in oral treatment of bronchitis and whooping cough in Homeopathy. It is reported to have antimicrobial, wound healing, larvicidal, allelopathic, antimalarial, molluscicidal, anticancer, hepato-protective, anti-HIV and neuro-pharmacological activity.

Conclusion

The plant is extensively used as a traditional medicine for the treatment of numerous diseases. Various parts of the plant are extensively used in Ayurveda, Siddha, Unani and Homeopathic medicines. *Argemone mexicana* plant and its parts are utilized for cure of asthma, malaria, dropsy, bronchitis, skin diseases and numerous pharmacological activities.

Photo link: <https://portal.wiktrop.org/species/show/29>

