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# Plants Used as Ethnomedicine by the Thengal Kacharies of Assam, India

Dutta ML

*N.N.S. College, Titabar, Assam, India*

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## ABSTRACT

*An account of the ethnomedicinal usage of 20 plants species among the Thengal Kacharies of Assam, an aboriginal tribe presently found in Titabar region of Assam, India.*

**Keywords:** Ethnomedicine, Thengal kacharies, Assam, India

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## INTRODUCTION

The Thengal Kacharies are one of the ethnic communities belonging to the Indo Mongoloid race with mythical ancestry. They have rich cultural history. It is believed that their name Thengal is derived from an ancestor, who is too ascended to heaven leg foremost [1]. It is speculated that the community save the ahom Kings and wore a uniform name Thenga shirt touching their heels which might have led to the name thengal [2]. They are a large group of plain tribal residing 1.125 percent of the total population of the state concentrated to 355 villages in the districts Dibrugarh, Jorhat, Golaghat, Lakhimpur and Dhemaji. This group of people live in village areas and use natural resources in day to day primary healthcare.

Assam, a state in the North Eastern of India, with an area of 78,438 km between 88°25'/-96°E latitude and 24°5'/-28°N longitude, is rich in floristic diversity. More than 100 tribes are reported from this region. These people have rich traditional knowledge. Hence an ethnomedicinal study was conducted among the Thengal Kacharies of Assam before the information is buried.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

The main objective of the study was to identify the less known ethnomedicinal plants used by the ethnic group. The study area covers in three villages of Titabar administrative district. The study was done during June to August 2016. The information was collected during field trips on the basis of interviews with village heads, medicine men and elderly persons. The plant species were then identified consulting floras [3,4]. The information was compared with of important medicinal plant literatures [5-7] and less known information are recorded and reported in this communication. The plant species are preserved as herbarium and deposited at the Herbarium of N. N. Saikia College, Titabar.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The identified plants are arranged alphabetically with accession number followed by family name, local name, plant parts and mode of administration (Table 1). About 20 species are reported under 19 genera and 19 families. The plants are used by the people as infusion, as decoction and paste.

**Table 1:** Ethnomedicinal plants used by the Thengal Kacharies of Assam

Sl.No	Botanical Name	Family	Local Name	Parts used	Ailments
1.	<i>Acorus calamus</i> L. (NNSJ 2601)	Liliaceae	Boss	Rhizome	Brain tonic
2.	<i>Adhatoda vasica</i> Nees (NNSJ 2602)	Acanthaceae	Boga bahek	Leaves	Rheumatism
3.	<i>Adenanthera pavonina</i> L. (NNSJ 2603)	Mimosaceae	Kuchandan	Stem bark	Fever
4.	<i>Ageratum conyzoides</i> L.(NNSJ 2604)	Asteraceae	Gundhua bon	Leaves	Fever
5.	<i>Allamanda cathartica</i> L. (NNSJ 2605)	Apocynaceae	Haldhia phool	Leaves	Fever
6.	<i>Aloe vera</i> (L.) Burm. f (NNSJ 2606)	Liliaceae	Sal kuwari	Leaves	Anticancer
7.	<i>Alpinia galanga</i> (L) Willd. (NNSJ 2607)	Zingiberaceae	Tora baghini	Rhizome	Diabetes
8.	<i>Annona squamosa</i> L. (NNSJ 2608)	Annonaceae	Atlas	Leaves	Skin diseases
9.	<i>Boerhavia diffusa</i> L. (NNSJ 2609)	Nyctaginaceae	Purnonowa	Aerial portion	Fever
10.	<i>Calotropis procera</i> (Ait) R.Br (NNSJ2610)	Asclepiadiaceae	Akon	Root bark	Cold & Cough
11.	<i>Cuscuta reflexa</i> Roxb. (NNSJ 2611)	Cuscutaceae	Akashilota	Stem	Fever
12.	<i>Cyndon dactylon</i> (L) Pers (NNSJ 2612)	Poaceae	Dubori bon	Leaves	Nasal bleeding
13.	<i>Cyperus rotundus</i> L. (NNSJ 2613)	Cyperaceae	Cyperaceae	Whole plant	Fever
14.	<i>Desmodium trifolium</i> (L.) DC (NNSJ 2614)	Fabaceae	Fabaceae	Leaves	Dysentery
15.	<i>Flemingia strobilifera</i> (L.) Ait (NNSJ 2615)	Fabaceae	Makhiyati	Root	Epilepsy
16.	<i>Mezoneuron cucullatum</i> Wight & Arn (NNSJ2616)	Caesalpiniaceae	Bagh achoora	Seed	Skin diseases
17.	<i>Merremia umbellata</i> L. (NNSJ 2617)	Convolvulaceae	Kolia lota	Stem	Cuts
18.	<i>Michelia champaca</i> L.(NNSJ 2618)	Magnoliaceae	Champa	Flower	Fever
19.	<i>Morus indica</i> L. (NNSJ 2619)	Moraceae	Nooni	Leaves	Tonsclitis
20.	<i>Streblus aspera</i> L. (NNSJ 2620)	Lauraceae	Khorua	Bark	Fever

## CONCLUSION

In the above observation 20 plant species are recorded in the ailments of 11 different diseases. They preserved these plants in their homestead garden for their day to day needs. They collect some plants from forests. They used plants as infusion, decoction and in the form of paste. So, conservation is necessary before the information is buried forever.

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