



Regional Plant Resource Centre
An autonomous organization under the Department of Forest and Environment, Govt. of Odisha, India

PLANT OF THE WEEK

6th week
22-12-2014

Helminthostachys zeylanica (L.) Hook.– A beautiful flowering fern

Botanical Name

Helminthostachys zeylanica (L.) Hook.

Synonyms

Osmunda zeylanica L.
Botrychium zeylanicum (L.) Swartz
Helminthostachys dulcis Kaulfuss
Ophiala zeylanica (L.) Desvaux

Family

Ophioglossaceae

Local Name

English: Flowering fern, Kamraj,
Tukod langit

Bengali : Ekbir

Kannada : Kertsawang

Sanskrit : Akar tunjuk langit,
Akar paku, Jelai

Habitat

It occurs in edges of marshes in deciduous forest and low elevations.

Distribution

India, Sri Lanka, Malay Peninsular, China, Japan, Philippines, Solomon Islands, New Caledonia, New Guinea, Australia, New Zealand, Thailand, Indonesia, Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos and Pacific islands.

Fertile time: October– December

Conservation Status

Endangered



A mature Sporophore

Description

Habit : Plants medium sized, terrestrial, evergreen.

Rhizome: The rhizome of this annual plant short, creeping, underground and stout; dorsiventral with fronds in two rows on dorsal side; glabrous; root thick.

Frond: - Fronds usually single at rhizome apex, 20 – 60 cm tall; stipe base sheath ca.1 cm; common stipe fleshy, glabrous; sterile lamina ternate with basal pinnae divided into 3 to 4 pinnules; pinnules lanceolate, base decurrent, margin irregularly toothed, apex acute.

Sporophore: - Sporophore attached at base of sterile lamina, spike like, cylindrical; sporangia globose, born in pseudo-whorls on radially arranged stalked clusters interspersed with small sterile projections.

Whole plant is widely used as a traditional medicine against various human diseases .

Rhizome: The rhizome is used as a tonic and also for treating a fever, syphilis, diarrhea, flu and also useful to increase one's sexual drive.

Rhizome used in dysentery, catarrh, sciatica, malaria and also as a tonic and mild aperients. The whole plant is useful for regain impotency. Powder of rhizome is useful to treat spermatorrhoea and in favour of improving memory power.

The portion of rhizome is cleaned properly with water, crushed and deeply boiled along with cow's milk and to prepare the decoction with black pepper (*Piper nigrum*) useful to cure leucorrhoea. Paste made from rhizomes of *Helminthostachys zeylanica*, *Chlorophytum tuberosum* and roots of *Bombax ceiba* is used to cure waist pain.

Frond : The leaves were dried and smoked to treat bleeding nose. The fronds are useful in aperients, intoxicant anodyne and used in sciatica. Leaf juice relieves blisters on tongue and rhizomes are used to treat impotency and jaundice.

Uses



Source

- Ambasta, S .P (1986): *The useful plants of India*, CSIR, New Delhi.
- Jain, S.K. (1991): *Dictionary of Indian Medicine and Ethnobotany*. Deep Publ. New Delhi.
- Joshi B., Ecology and Medicinal Uses of *Helminthostachys zeylanica* (L.) Hook. "An endangered flora of India" reported at Foothills of Kumaun Himalaya (Kashipur), Uttarakhand, *Researcher.*, 3(4) 2011.
- Saxsena, H.O. & Brahmam, M. (1994). *The Flora of Orissa*, Vol. IV, pp: 2550-2551
- www.envis.frilht.org
- www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Helminthostachys_zeylanica