PLANTS USED AS 'HENNA' BY THE BHILS OF RAJASTHAN

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Bhils are the second largest tribe of the State and constitute about 48% of the total tribal population in Rajasthan. They are mainly distributed in Udaipur, Dungarpur, Banswara, Sirohi and Chittorgarh districts. They use certain plant species for decorating ownselves. This aspect of ethnobotany in this area has totally been neglected by earlier workers. Joshi (1990) published a paper on plants used for adornment and decoration by the tribals of Rajasthan but he has not mentioned about plant species which are used for colouring their palms and soles.

Field surveys were conducted amongst the Bhils of the State from 1994 and observed that four plant species are used as henna by them besides *Lawsonia inermis*. Botanical name, family, local name, a short note on plant and their mode of application is given here :

Impatiens balsamina L. (Balsaminaceae)

Local name : Timadiyo

Pubescent herb, 15-45 cm high. Leaves alternate, sessile or shortly stalked, narrowly lanceolate. Flowers pink or nearly white. Capsule ovoid, 8-13 mm long.

Use : Leaves crushed and made into paste, kept for a whole night and next day applied on palms.

Lindernbergia muraria (Roxb. ex D. Don) P. Bruehl (Scrophulariaceae)

Local name : Pindru

A densely glandular-hairy annual or perennial herb. Leaves ovate, subacute, crenate-serrate. Flowers 1 or 2 in the axil of leaves. Capsule 6 mm long.

Use : Young stem crushed with water and applied.

Ludwigia perennis L. (Onagraceae)

Local name : Bandra Mehendi

Annual, glabrous herb. Leaves lanceolate or elliptic-lanceolate. Flowers yellow.

Capsule pale-brown.

Use : Juvenile stem with leaves made into thin paste and applied.

Tectona grandis L. f. (Verbenaceae)

Local name : Hag, Hagda.

Tall deciduous tree. Leaves large, elliptic-obovate, coriaceous. Flowers white. Drupe subglobose.

Use : Juvenile leaves collected and crushed on stone and applied around finger lobes.

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