

MEDICINAL POTENTIAL OF MANGROVE AND MANGROVE ASSOCIATED PLANTS AT SARASALAI NORTH IN JAFFNA

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Mangroves thrive in the intertidal zones by the tropical belt, often in sheltered bays, lagoons and seas. Indigenous systems of medicine rely on extracts from plants including mangroves. In Jaffna peninsula mangroves occupy 18.67 percentage of land and thus have a potential for traditional medicine. The objective of the study was to determine the presence of potential mangrove and mangrove associate medicinal plants at Anthanar Tidal in Sarasalai North. Field work was carried out during January to August 2012. The investigation revealed the presence of 5 species of mangroves and 14 species of mangrove associated medicinal plants belonging to 13 families. The documented medicinal plant grouping based on morphology revealed the existence of Herbs (2), Trees (13), Climbers (1) and Shrubs (3). Based on the usage species were grouped as, whole plant (1), leaf (2), bark (10), seed (1), root (6) and latex (1). Out of a total of 19 species, comprising 15 perennials and 4 biennials, 6 are used for skin diseases, 5 for Rheumatism, 2 for fever and one for Diabetic mellitus. Two poisonous plants were also recorded. The thirty years of war, displacement and associated pressure on mangrove and mangrove associated medicinal plants for firewood and Tsunami have collectively contributed to the destructions of mangrove and mangrove associate medicinal plants in Jaffna peninsula. These are considered as threats to mangrove and mangrove associate plants in the Jaffna district as we move on to activate the propagation of the mangrove plants in the mangal areas. We must take efforts to conserve the mangrove and mangrove associate plants thus conserving their medicinal value, and to preserve the eco-system.

Keywords: Mangrove, Mangrove associate, Medicinal plants, Sarasalai