

## **Ethno- Medicinal Plant Diversity and Practices in Western Ghats Regions of Shivamogga District, Karnataka, India**

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The rich and varied medicinal plant diversity abode in Western Ghats region of India. A number of ethnic tribal groups have inhabited in various forests of Shivamogga District. These tribes have acquired the art of traditional medicinal practices by utilizing the locally available flora to treat various health problems. Rapid disappearance of medicinal plants, due to over exploitation and urbanization, suggests that unrecorded ethno- botanical information may be lost forever. The present investigation one thno- medicinal plant diversity and practices was therefore undertaken in the Western Ghats region of Shivamogga. Exploration of ethno-botanical regions, personal interviews with traditional healers and tribes was made to collect the information related to utilization of medicinal plants and practices adopted in health management. In our investigation more than 90 species, belonging to 44 families were documented along with their botanical and vernacular names, family, parts used, mode of administration and therapeutic uses were gathered. Of these species 37% herbs, 27% shrubs, 22% trees, 13% climbers were recorded. The tribes are using various plant parts such as leaves ( 72 species), barks ( 58 species), whole plants (56 species), roots (32 species), fruits (31 species), seeds (22 species), and underground parts (21 species) of different species. The exploitation of these species for medicinal purposes is threatening them. Documentation of the traditional knowledge of these species and their status serve as a valuable information tool for future sustainable use, bioprospection and conservation.

**Keywords:** Traditional knowledge, ethno-medicinal plants, Diversity.