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REPORT FOR THE DAVIS EXPEDITION FUND 1998

Report to the Davis Expedition Fund

As was outlined in my application to the fund the purpose of this expedition was to survey the plants used for medicine by the inhabitants of numerous village communities along the north coast of New Britain island, (West New Britain Province), Papua New Guinea. At the suggestion of William Milligan an ethnobotanist from the Royal Botanic Gardens Edinburgh I decided to focus my study on only one community due to the short time available to me. Two months were spent on the northern end of the Williamez peninsular within two separate villages both part of a larger group of about ten. The location was chosen because its inhabitants represented a distinct cultural group whose ethnobotany had not yet been studied.

Interviews were carried out with several respondents in the first village and the information gained was verified by interviewing other respondents in the second village. This helped to prevent respondents conferring with each other and so enabled me to gain valid information on species of plants, their uses and names. For each plant whose use and name could be verified three samples were taken for identification. Dr George Argent of the Royal Botanic Gardens Edinburgh had kindly agreed to carry out the determinations provided duplicates could be kept for his herbarium. The specimens were identified by Robert Kiapranis of the PNG Forest Research Institute and an export licence granted; a list of determinations were then sent on to me ahead of the specimens.

Overall forty six species of plant were collected from thirty nine different families; these are listed below along with their uses. Methods of preparation were also recorded. These species are approximately 70% of the plant-medicines known by this cultural group. The European Union, Islands Region Environmental and Community Development Programme (I.R.E.C.D.P) who advise the government of Papua New Guinea on forest conservation in New Britain have asked for a copy of these results. I am also trying to contact an anthropologist from Cambridge University who is currently writing a book on this cultural group as she may find these results useful. Many of these plants merit further investigation and analysis, perhaps as a fourth year project.

Species	Family	Local name	Part of plant used	Use
<i>Crinum asiatica</i>	Amaryllidaceae	Tagima	Leaves	Topical antiseptic
<i>Cerbera floribunda</i>	Apocynaceae	Dodo	Seeds	Emetic
<i>Alstonia scholaris</i>	Apocynaceae	Rambaka	Sap or wood	Emetic/purgative
<i>Pothos</i> sp.	Araceae	Gavu	Leaves	Percutaneous anti-inflammatory. Wound antiseptic.
<i>Ageratum conyzoides</i>	Asteraceae	Proogopa or Mangneatamnyagus	Whole plant	Oral antiseptic
<i>Wedelia biflora</i>	Asteraceae	Kukaroo	New shoots	Taken for respiratory problems and as anti-motility agent
<i>Laminodendron</i>	Bigoniaceae	Touee	Flower	Disinfectant for eyes
<i>Casia alata</i>	Caesalpiniaceae	Gaiyakakera	Leaves	Anti-fungal (Thinia)
<i>Callophyllum</i> sp. <i>Inophyllum</i> ?	Clusiaceae	Balibali	Leaves	Anti-cancer? Poison.

Species	Family	Local name	Part of plant used	Use
<i>Terminalia catapa</i>	Combretaceae	Tarilay	Leaves or sap	Taken for cancer of the mouth.
<i>Ipomoea pes-caprae</i>	Convolvulaceae	Wuraywuray	Leaves	Percutaneous anti-inflammatory.
<i>Excoecaria</i> sp.	Euphorbiaceae	Be-lay	Sap or wood	Potent emetic/purgative
<i>Kleinhovia hospita</i>	Euphorbiaceae	Wooli	Leaves	Antiseptic
<i>Codiaeum</i> sp.	Euphorbiaceae	Dokodoko	Sap	Oral antiseptic
<i>Breynia</i> sp.	Euphorbiaceae	Wawague	Leaves	Analgesic taken in ear.
<i>Endospermum moluccanum</i>	Euphorbiaceae	Kakadi	Bark	Contraceptive. Taken every day for one month
<i>Melanolepis multiglandulosa</i>	Euphorbiaceae	Pidicou	Leaves	Percutaneous analgesic
<i>Macaranga</i> sp.	Euphorbiaceae	Huagobo	Wood	Anti-diarrhoeal
<i>Derris alata</i>	Fabaceae	Pakay	Roots and root sap.	Fish poison. Bundles packed into coral reef. Topical anti-parasitic for livestock.
<i>Pterocarpus indicus</i>	Fabaceae	Nala	Leaves	Potent anti-motility agent for diarrhoea
<i>Inocarpus fagiferus</i>	Fabaceae	Tepa	Sap	Anti-diarrhoeal
<i>Homalium foetidum</i>	Flacourtiaceae	Baila	Leaves or wood	Anti-diarrhoeal
<i>Flagellaria indica</i>	Flagellariaceae	Ali	New shoots	Emetic
<i>Plectranthus</i> sp.	Lamiaceae	Denga	Leaves	Topical anti-inflammatory
<i>Cordyline terminalis</i>	Liliaceae	Veeyou	Leaves	Topical analgesic
<i>Dianella</i> sp.	Liliaceae	Moraykapekapekay	Leaves	Perfume
<i>Durandea pentagyna</i>	Linaceae	Mota ka Gwau or Gwau.	New shoots	Contraceptive
<i>Ocimum</i> sp.	Lamiaceae	Kiongi	Leaves	Nasal decongestant
<i>Sida acuta</i>	Malvaceae	Unknown	Whole plant	Anti-diarrhoeal
<i>Hibiscus tiliaceous</i>	Malvaceae	Lako	New shoots	Induces labour, stimulates uterine contraction?
<i>Ficus nodosa</i>	Moraceae	Kala	Unknown	Unknown
<i>Ficus</i> sp	Moraceae	Woloko	Leaves	Taken for respiratory difficulties
<i>Psidium Guajava</i>	Myrtaceae	Unknown	Leaves	Laxative and anti-microbial.
<i>Syzygium</i> sp.	Myrtaceae	Kaveka	Leaves or tree wood	Taken for coughs

Species	Family	Local name	Part of plant used	Use
<i>Passiflora foetida</i>	Pasifloraceae	Basmora	Stem	Taken for abdominal pain.
<i>Paspalum conjugatum</i>	Poaceae	Warily	Sap	Wound antiseptic
<i>Morinda citrifolia</i>	Rubiaceae	Leebhooga	Fruit	Taken for warts
<i>Euodia hotensis</i>	Rutaceae	Mori	Leaves	Nasal decongestant
<i>Euodia hotensis</i>	Rutaceae	Bubu	Leaves	Anti-diarrhoeal
<i>Solanum torvum</i>	Solanaceae	Tavinacoe	Leaves	Wound antiseptic
<i>Laportea interrupta</i>	Urticaceae	Rongrongogutu	Leaves	Percutaneous anti-inflammatory
<i>Premna obtusifolia</i>	Verbenaceae	Ghalo	Leaves	Taken for respiratory difficulties
<i>Vitex quinata</i>	Verbenaceae	Dimoley	Leaves	Percutaneous anti-inflammatory
<i>Zingiber officinale</i>	Zingiberaceae	Largia	Root	Taken for stomach-ache
<i>Curcuma domestica</i>	Zingiberaceae	Agho	Root	Taken for stomach-ache

All plants were collected on the Williamez Peninsula of West New Britain, Papua New Guinea around the villages of Bulumuri (S 5° 1 E 150° 8) and Buludava (S 5° 4 E 150° 1). Local names are in Bulu language.