

Piper sylvaticum

Piper sylvaticum is a climber in the Piperaceae, or pepper, family. It is found in the northeast of the Indian subcontinent, and in Zhōngguó/China. The fruits are used in medicinal products.

A herbaceous, dioecious climber that possesses stolons. The stems are finely powdery pubescent when young, and become ridged and furrowed when mature.[2] It has globose drupes about 3mm in diameter. Flowers in August and September in Zhōngguó/China, in the Manas National Park of northwest Assam, flowering and fruiting occur from August to October,[3] while in Bangladesh flowers and fruits appear from May to September.[4] This species is distinguished anatomically by having very finely (magnification needed) powdered pubescent leaves.[5] Other distinctive features, differentiating the species from other *Piper* species in Bangladesh, is yellow flowers and deeply cordate and lobed leaf bases at a macroscopic level, while bicollateral leaf vascular bundles, and para- and tetracytic stomata were identified as distinctive at microscopic anatomical level.[4]

The species was first described by William Roxburgh in 1820.[6]

The plant is native to Bangladesh and the Eastern Himalaya region.[1] The Flora of China[2] warns that the application of this name to Chinese plants is unclear, however it states that the climber is found in Tibet (see also[7]) and South Yunnan, as well as Bangladesh, India and Myanmar.

The vine grows in wet places within forests up to 800m in Zhōngguó/China.[2] It occurs in sub-Himalayan semi-evergreen forest in the Manas National Park of northwestern Assam.[3] Shaded areas of the forest bed is a preferred habitat in Bangladesh.[4]

Amongst the Monpa people of Mêdog County in southeastern Tibet the plant is referred to as pang-ser.[7]

In Standard Chinese, the plant is given the name 长柄胡椒, chang bing hu jiao.[2]

An English language vernacular name is mountain long pepper.[8]

Pahari pipul (Hindi),[9] pahaari peepal (folk medicine), Pahari-pipoli (Assamese),[8] and vana-pippali (Ayurveda)[9] are some of the names in India. In Bangladesh the vine is referred to as pahari pipul or bon pan (Bengali), borongpatui (Tipuri languages), or bulpan.[4]

In the Indian subcontinent the leaves are used as vegetables, and the roots are used in indigenous medicine as a cure for snake poison and to treat tumours.[10][11]

The mashed leaves are use as an anti-inflammatory by the Monpa people of Mêdog County in southeastern Tibet.[7]

Adnan et al.'s[9] work on the bioactivity of the species cites wide traditional medicine uses in the native countries of the plant. The leaves, stems, roots, fruits, and seeds are used to treat a variety of diseases, including rheumatic pain, headaches, chronic cough, cold, asthma, piles, diarrhea, wounds in lungs, tuberculosis, indigestion, dyspepsia, hepatomegaly, and spleenomegaly. The root is specifically used as a carminative, while the aerial parts have diuretic actions. Adnan et al. found that *P. sylvaticum* is bioactive.

