

Botanic name : *Polygonum barbatum* L. -- Sp. Pl. 1: 362. 1753 [1 May 1753] (IK)

Common name : Knot grass,

Family : Polygonaceae

Habitat : Terrestrial

Distribution : Indian Himalayas to western and southern China

Description : An erect, decumbent or prostrate simple-branched, annual, herb; stems glabrous, lineolate-canaliculate; leaves linear to linear-lanceolate, acuminate at apex, glabrous except margin, midrib and veins ciliate, sessile to subsessile, stipulate; stipules Ochreate flowers white, pedicel, arranged in a branched raceme with 1-6 spikes/ raceme, pedunculate; tepals 5, oblanceolate-obovate, obtuse, biseriate, unequal; stamens 5-8, filaments long, equal; ovary broadly ovate-orbicular, placentation basal, trigonous, styles three, long, filiform and free till half of the length with capitate stigmas; fruits-nuts trigonous, included in persistent perianth, black, shiny, ovoid.

Phytochemicals: sitosterone, viscozulenilic acid, acetophenone (aerial parts), flavanones (leaves), sitosterone, viscozulenilic acid and acetophenone

Medicinal/Economic uses : Astringent, antioxidant, antimicrobial, antinociceptive, anti-inflammatory, diuretic, antiulcer, wound healing, carminative, parasiticide, and has cooling effect. Acetophenone is used extensively as a food additive to create various food fragrances, and is also known to possess hypnotic and anticonvulsant property. A paste of the root is used externally in the treatment of scabies while seeds are used to relieve the griping pains of colic. Young leaves and shoots cooked as vegetable.