

Botanic name: *Vitex negundo* L. -- Sp. Pl. 2: 638. 1753 [1 May 1753] (IK)

Common name: Chasta tree, Nirgundi (Sanskrit), Nishinda (Bengali)

Family: Verbenaceae

Habitat: Terrestrial

Distribution: Native to India and also found growing in Bangladesh, China, Philippines, Sri Lanka, and Japan, tropical Eastern and southern Africa

Description : Aromatic, evergreen to semi evergreen shrub or small tree; leaves 3 or 5 foliate; leaflets lanceolate, long, coarsely toothed, cuneate at base, flowers in peduncles branched, opposite to the triangular rachis of a large, terminal panicles, corolla bluish purple; fruits-drupe, ovoid black when ripe

Phytochemicals: casticin, isoorientin, chrysophenol D, luteolin.p-hydroxybenzoic acid and D-fructose. Aucubin aginuoside, Alkaloids: Nishindine, Hydrocotylene, Glyoflavonoids, Orientin, Isoorientin, 5-Hydroxy, 3,6,7,31,4 1 pentamethoxy flavone (leaves); β - sitosterol, phydroxybenzoic acid and 5 oxyisophthalic acid, hydrocarbons (seeds). The main constituents of the oil are subinene, linalool, terpinen-4-ol, B-caryophyllene, globulol constituting 61.8% of the oil.

Medicinal/Economic uses : Leaves, leaf oil, roots, fruits, and seeds are used in Ayurveda, Unani, Siddha, Homeopathy, and Allopathy for therapeutic purposes. Antitumor, anthelmintic, ppetizer, antiandrogenic, carminative, discutient, hepatoprotective, anticatarrhal, effective against mental disorders, headache, ear problem, multi nodular tuberculosis, teething in children, fever, chronic rhinitis, arthritis, digestion power, menstrual cycle, diseases of liver, fever due to cough and swelling of lungs. A very good muscle relaxant (body massage oil), pain relieving, anti-anxiety, anti-asthma and phlegm reducing. Used in treating PMS and PMDD symptoms, uterine fibroids, female fertility (by increasing luteinizing hormone, modulating prolactin and aiding in the inhibition of the release of follicle-stimulating hormone which all helps balance out the ratio of progesterone to estrogen), acne, and amenorrhea. Hot poultice of leaves is prescribed for inflammatory swellings of joints from acute rheumatism and of testes from gonorrheal epididymitis, and orchitis.

Plant is grown as a fencing for agriculture lands as well as house. Used as biopesticide and insecticide (leaves). Dried leaves are kept with woolen clothes to repel insects. Leaf smoke is used as mosquito repellent.

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