

Botanic name : *Peperomia pellucida* (L.) Kunth.

Common name : Shiny Bush, Silver bush, Slate Pencil plant, Luchipata (Bengali)

Family : Piperaceae

Habitat : Terrestrial

Distribution : Native to South America but widely naturalized/introduced in Asia, Africa, & other tropics

Description : Fleshy annual glabrous herb; erect or ascending, sometimes procumbent; stems succulent bearing roots at nodes and shiny, cordate, fleshy leaves; small bisexual flowers arranged in cord like spike, 3-6 cm long arising from leaf axils; fruits small, round, become blackish at maturity

Phytochemicals: Sesquiterpenes as major essential oil constituents, carotol (sesquiterpenes), flavonoids, phytosterols, arylpropanoids (apiols), substituted styrenes, and a dimeric ArC₂ compound or pellucidin A have been isolated. Antifungal activity has been reported for arylpropanoids (apiols). Peperomins, flavonoids (acacetin, apigenin, isovitexin, and pellucidatin) and phytosterols such as campesterol and stigmasterol have also been isolated as bioactive principles. Five new bioactive compounds: two secolignans, two tetrahydrofuran lignans, and one highly methoxylated dihydronaphthalenone have also been reported

Medicinal/Economic uses : Widely used in Ayurvedic medicine of India. Anti-inflammatory, cytotoxic, anticancer, antifungal, chemotherapeutic, antipyretic (leaf extract), antimutagenic (aqueous extract) and analgesic properties have been found in crude extracts of the plant. As aromatic taste, it stimulates the appetite and digestion. Also used in the treatment of arthritis and gout (The Philippines), bronchitis, asthma, rheumatic pain, impotence, abdominal pain, (India) and high cholesterol (Brazil). In South America, fresh juice of the plant is effective against eye inflammation, cough & cold, fever, headache, sore throat, diarrhea, kidney & prostate problems, and high blood pressure. The leaves are sometimes harvested from the wild and used locally as a food, salads, medicine and tea and externally used as face cleanser. Pounded whole plant is used as warm poultice for treating ulcers, boils, pustules, pimples and wounds.