

**Botanic name :** *Rouvolfia tetraphyla* L.

**Family:** Apocynaceae.

**Common name:** Wild snake root.

**Habitat:** Terrestrial.

**Distribution:** Native to tropical America, but present in Andaman islands, South-east Asia, Bangladesh, Malaysia, Indonesia, India (Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, North Bengal and Assam)

**Description:** A small much-branched woody shrub, 0.6-1.2 m high. Leaves whorled, elliptic, medium to dark green in color, and occur in groups of 4 unequally-sized at each node, Flowers greenish white or creamy white in umbellate cymes; drupes ovoid, deep purple when ripe; pyrenes rugose, oblong and look like large pepper corns.

**Phytochemicals:** Reducing sugars, sugars, carbohydrates, alkaloids, amino acids, steroids, tannins, flavonoids, phenols, saponins, fixed oils, fats, gums, and mucilages. A new labdane diterpene characterized as 3 $\beta$ -hydroxy-labda-8(17),13(14)-dien-12(15)-olide (air-dried stems & branches), Three antipsychotic indole alkaloids namely,  $\alpha$ -yohimbine, isoreserpiline, and 10-methoxy tetrahydroalstonin (leaves). Five new indole alkaloids rauvotetraphylline, together with eight known analogues, were isolated from the aerial parts.

**Medicinal/Economic uses :** Roots are sedative, tonic and febrifuge. It is a valuable remedy in high blood pressure; used for the treatment of insomnia, madness, painful affections of the bowels, hypochondria and irritative conditions of the central nervous system. Used for relief of various nervous disorders like anxiety, excitement, schizophrenia, insanity, insomnia and epilepsy, diarrhoea, dysentery, cholera, colic and fever. Decoction is employed to increase uterine contractions and promotes expulsion of the foetus