#### **Review Article**



# A Review on Some Antioxidant Plant Species Growing in North East India

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### ABSTRACT

The objective of the present review is to find out the antioxidant potential of some plants, traditionally used by the local people of Northeast India. An antioxidant is any substance that retards or prevents deterioration, damage or destruction caused by oxidation, responsible for cells against the effects of free radicals. Free radicals are generated through normal metabolism of drugs, environmental chemicals as well as endogenous chemicals. Cellular damage or oxidative injury arising from free radicals or reactive oxygen species is the fundamental mechanism underlying a number of human neurodegenerative disorders i.e diabetes, inflammation, viral infections, hypertension, aging, cancer, AIDS, autoimmune pathologies and digestive system disorders. This paper reviews the antioxidant potential of several important medicinal species of Northeast India. Synthetic antioxidants such as Butylated hydroxytoluene (BHT) and Butylated hydroxyl anisole (BHA) are currently used as antioxidant and many plant species have similar antioxidant potentials as these synthetic ones. Accumulated evidence suggests that reactive oxygen species can be scavenged through chemoprevention utilizing natural antioxidant compounds present in foods and medicinal plants. The literature reveals that these natural antioxidants represent a potentially side effect- free alternative to synthetic antioxidants agents.

Keywords: Antioxidant, Northeast, Pharmacological, Chemical constituents, Phenol, Flavonoids.

#### **INTRODUCTION**

he term antioxidants do not represent only one kind of compounds having similar structures but it represents a class of compounds, comprising of different chemical structures, obtained from different sources but having similar characteristic property, to get rapidly reduced or bind to free radicals or reactive oxygen species which could result the oxidation of substances<sup>1</sup>. Antioxidants provides a protective effect against ROS (Reactive oxygen species) such as hydrogen peroxide (H2O2), hypochlorous acid (HOCL) and free radicals, like hydroxyl radical (OH) and superoxide anion (O2 -)<sup>2,3</sup>, generated as byproducts of biological reactions such as the mitochondrial respiratory chain or from exogenous factors or environmental pollutants<sup>4,5</sup>. Antioxidants possess free radical chain reaction breaking properties, thus defend the living cells against oxidative damage<sup>6</sup>. Under stress, our bodies produce more free radicals or reactive oxygen species (ROS) (e.g., superoxide anion radicals, hydroxyl radicals and hydrogen peroxide) than enzymatic antioxidants (e.g., superoxide dismutase (SOD), glutathione peroxidase (GPx), and catalase) and nonenzymatic antioxidants (e.g., ascorbic acid, tocopherol, glutathione, carotenoids, and flavonoids). This imbalance leads to cell damage and health problems. A lack of antioxidants, which can quench the reactive free radicals, facilitates the development of degenerative diseases including cardiovascular diseases, cancer, neurodegenerative diseases, Alzheimer's and inflammatory diseases. One solution to this problem is to supplement the diet with antioxidant compounds that are contained in natural plant sources. Studies have shown

that many phytonutrients of fruits and vegetables might protect the human body against damage by ROS. In recent years, there has been a considerable interest in finding natural antioxidants from plant materials. The antioxidant phytochemicals from plants, particularly flavonoids and other polyphenols have been reported to inhibit the propagation of free radical reactions, to protect the human body from disease<sup>7,8</sup> and to retard lipid oxidative rancidity<sup>9</sup>. In addition, the use of synthetic antioxidants has been questioned because of their toxicity<sup>10</sup>. Therefore, there have been numerous researches on these bio-resources to seek for potential natural and possibly economic and effective antioxidants to replace the synthetic ones for treating diseases<sup>11-28</sup>. Antioxidants, including phenolic and flavonoids compounds have wide ranging pharmacological effects, such as anti- inflammatory, anti-carcinogenic and anti-atherosclerotic effects<sup>29-31</sup>. Natural antioxidants shows a comprehensive range of biochemical activities, including inhibition of ROS generation, direct or indirect free radicals scavenging activity, and changing intracellular redox potential<sup>32</sup>. Among them flavonoids have attracted most of the scientists and researchers due to their powerful potent antioxidants and free radical scavenging activity. Flavonoids inhibits radical-induced lipid peroxidation, likely though their membrane-stabilizing potential<sup>33,34</sup>. The plant extracts possessing antioxidant activity are evaluated on the basis of their total phenols, total flavonoids, total flavonols, phenolic acids, tannins, catechins and lignans contents<sup>35-34</sup>

Plants selected for this study are commonly found in the North East region of India and have been used as folk



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remedies by local practitioners for a variety of ailments. North-east India is a hub of many medicinal plants. Some of these plants are used not just for the treatment of specific diseases, but also for maintaining general health. There are several reports of such traditional medicinal uses of plants phytochemical screening and estimation of total phenol and flavonoid contents. These types of plants have attracted much attention of researchers for their potential antioxidant activities<sup>40-47</sup>.

This paper reviews the antioxidant potential of extracts from the stems, roots, bark, leaves, fruits and seeds of several important medicinal species of northeast India. The literature reveals that these natural antioxidants represent a potentially side effect-free alternative to synthetic antioxidants in the food processing industry and for use in preventive medicine.

### **MATERIALS AND METHODS**

To collect the data which support this review we performed an extensive literature survey of chemical abstract from 1917-2008. An systematic review using Sciencedirect, Scopus, Pubmed, Google and MEDLINE database is performed.

All English-language articles published between 1990 and 2015 were searched using the terms 'Medicinal plants, 'Antioxidant', 'Plant extract', 'Phenolic', 'Flavanoid'. Details regarding the antioxidant activity of different plant extracts are captured in this database. Evidence for the support of an extract was assessed from multiple studies.

S. No	Plant	Family	Parts	Antioxidant value [Me extract] <sup>48</sup>
1	Alocasia fornicata (Roxb.) Schott.	ocasia fornicata (Roxb.) Schott. Araceae		41.06 21.63
2	Alpinia malaccensis Rosc.	Zingiberaceae	Aerial part	5.69
3	Alpinia officinarum Hance	Zingiberaceae	Rhizomes Aerial part	94.02 74.97
4	Aquillaria malaccensis Lamk.	Thymelaeaceae	Stem Aerial part	43.30 92.03
5	Callicarpa macrophylla Vahl	Verbenaceae	Stem Leaves	53.65 47.20
6	Clerodendrum indicum (Linn.) Kuntze.	Verbenaceae	Aerial part Root	47.07 1.0
7	Dalbergia volubilis Roxb	Fabaceae	Stem Twig	86.44 88.93
8	Dipterocarpus turbinatus	Dipterocarpaceae	Stem Leaves Fruit	75.86 10.76 97.26
9	<i>Garuga pinnata</i> Roxb	Burseraceae.	Stem Leaves	87.56 65.01
10	<i>Hydnocarpus kurzii</i> (King)Warb	Flacourtiaceae	Stem Twig Fruit	45.96 53.27 47.95
11	Melastoma malabathricum Linn	Melastomataceae	Aerial part	36.58
12	<i>Murraya koenigii</i> (Linn.) Spreng	Rutaceae	Aerial part	41.75
13	Phlogacanthus thyrsiflorus Nees	Acanthaceae	Stem Twig	37.70 14.43
14	<i>Psidium guajava</i> Linn	Myrtaceae	Aerial part	67.34
15	Saraca asoca (Roxb.) DeWilde	Caesalpiniaceae	Stem Leaf	95.52 79.50
16	Schima wallichii (DC.)	Theaceae	Stem Leaf	96.46 96.72
17	Syzygium cerasoideum (Roxb.)	Myrtaceae	Stem Leaf	93.60 94.65
18	Litsea glutinosa (Lour.)	Lauraceae	Stem Twig	90.57 41.53
19	Artocarpus chama Buch-Ham.	Moraceae	Stem Leaf	47.70 76 94

#### Table 1: Medicinal species of Northeast India with reported antioxidant potential

Me extract-Methanol extract

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	Table 2: Medicinal plant species of Northeast India with reported Flavonoid and Phenolic content					
S. No	Plant	Family	Phenolic content	Flavonoid content		
1	Polygonum microcephalum (Leaf)	Polygonaceae	19.0 [Et -H <sub>2</sub> O ext] <sup>49</sup>	39.6[Et -H <sub>2</sub> O ext] 49		
2	Moringa oleifera Lamk. (Leaf)	Moringaceae	13.4 [Et -H <sub>2</sub> O ext] <sup>49</sup>	37.0 [Et -H <sub>2</sub> O ext] <sup>49</sup>		
3	Croton tiglium Linn. (Leaf)	Euphorbiaceae	7.48 [Et -H <sub>2</sub> O ext] <sup>49</sup>	26.6 [Et -H <sub>2</sub> O ext] <sup>49</sup>		
4	Gomphrena globosa(Leaf)	Amaranthaceae	3.6[Et -H <sub>2</sub> O ext] <sup>49</sup>	17.2[Et -H <sub>2</sub> O ext] 49		
5	Zanthoxylum armatum(Fruit)	Rutaceae	59.34±0.13 [Me ext] <sup>50</sup>	-		
	Artocarpus gomeziana(Fruit)	Moraceae	96.19±1.18[Me ext] <sup>50</sup>			
6	Osbeckia chinensis(Fruit)	Melastomataceae	12.74 ± 0.35[Me ext] <sup>50</sup>	-		
	Gymnopetalum cochinensis Lour. (Fruit)	Cucurbitaceae	13.84±0.31[Me ext] <sup>50</sup>	-		
7	Baccaurea sapida(Fruit)	Euphorbiaceae	21.14±0.23 [Me ext] <sup>50</sup>	-		
8	Smilax perfoliata Lour(Leaf)	Smilacaceae	13.8± 0.09 [M.E ext] <sup>51</sup> 3.5±0.05 [E.E ext] <sup>51</sup>	15.6± 0.24 [M.E ] <sup>51</sup> 2.5±0.12 [E.E ext] <sup>51</sup>		
9	Gynocardia odorata (Seeds)	Flacourtiaceae	$3.31\pm0.10$ [Aq Me ext] <sup>52</sup> $4.43\pm0.36$ [Acetone ext] <sup>52</sup>	-		
10	Gentiana pedicellata (Leaf)	Moraceae	$9.33 \pm 0.15$ [Aq Me ext] <sup>52</sup> 2.61±0.13[Acetone ext] <sup>52</sup>	-		
11	Ficus pomifera (Leaf)	Moraceae	$9.33 \pm 0.15$ [Aq Me ext] <sup>52</sup> 2.61 ±0.13[Acetone ext] <sup>52</sup>	-		
12	Ficus geniculata (Leaf)	Moraceae	$9.33 \pm 0.15$ [Aq Me ext] <sup>52</sup> 2.61 \pm 0.13[Acetone ext] <sup>52</sup>	-		
13	Ficus clavata (Leaf)	Moraceae	$14.47 \pm 0.32$ [Aq Me ext] <sup>52</sup> 5.23 ±0.53[Acetone ext] <sup>52</sup>	-		
14	Fagopyrum cymosum (Leaf)	Polygonaceae	$9.22 \pm 0.08$ [Aq Me ext] <sup>52</sup> $6.85 \pm 0.13$ [EA ext] <sup>52</sup>	-		
15	Bauhinia purpurea	Leguminosae	$27.67 \pm 0.16 \text{ [M.E ext]}^{52}$ 3.47 ±0.48[Acetone ext] <sup>52</sup>	-		
16	Dillenia pentagyna (Flower)	Dilleniaceae	9.33±0.15[Aq Me ext] <sup>52</sup> 2.61±0.13[Acetone ext] <sup>52</sup>	-		

 Table 2: Medicinal plant species of Northeast India with reported Flavonoid and Phenolic content

Et -H $_2O$  –Ethanol water extract, E.E-Ethyl acetate extract, Aq Me-Aqueous methanol extract

#### Table 3: Chemical constituents of plant species

S. No	Plant	Chemical constituents	
1	Alocasia fornicata	Leaves contain triglochinin, tubers contain sterols-campesterol, cholesterol, beta-sitosterol, trypsin/chymotrypsin inhibitors $^{\rm 53}$	
2	Alpinia malaccensis	Essential oil from rhizome consists of methyl cinnamate <sup>53</sup>	
3	Alpinia officinarum	Rhizomes contain gingerols and diaryheptanoids. <sup>53</sup>	
4	Aquillaria malaccensis	Essential oil contains argofurans, gmelofuran agarol, coumarin olignan quillochin, spiroses quiterpene alcohols. $^{\rm 53}$	
5	Callicarpa macrophylla Vahl	Leaves and seeds contain calliterpenone, betasitosterol. <sup>53</sup>	
6	Clerodendrum indicum	$\boldsymbol{\beta}$ -sitosterol, $\boldsymbol{\gamma}$ -sitosterol octacosanol. <sup>53</sup>	
7	Dalbergia volubilis	Stem and leaves contain dalbergio, tectorigenin, friedelin, flavonoid glycosides <sup>53</sup>	
8	Dipterocarpus turbinatus	Humulene, beta-caryophyllene, tannins. <sup>53</sup>	
9	Garuga pinnata	Leaves and stem bark contain sterols, sitosterol, stigmasterol, campesterol. Gum-resin contains alpha-amyrin, butyrospermol and dammarandiol $^{\rm 53}$	
10	Hydnocarpus kurzii	<i>carpus kurzii</i> Oil consists glycerides of cyclopentenyl fatty acids like hydnocarpic acid (48%), chaulmoogric acid (27%), gorlic acid (23%), oleic acid (12%) and palmitic acid (6%). Tannins are present in bark <sup>53</sup>	
11	Melastoma malabathricum	Leaves contains beta-sitosterol and a triterpene, melastomic acid <sup>53</sup>	



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12	Murraya koenigii	All parts of plant gives carbazole alkaloids. <sup>53</sup>
13	Phlogacanthus thyrsiflorus Nees	Leaves contains diterpene lactone, phlogantholide A and its glucoside <sup>53</sup>
14	Psidium guajava	Quercetin, beta-sitosterol, pentacyclictriterpenoid, guajanoic acid, uvaol, oleanolic acid and ursolic acid. $^{\rm 53}$
15	Saraca asoca	Flowers contain gallic acid; apigenin-7-O-beta- D-glucoside, cyanidin-3, pelargonidin-3, 5-diglucoside, quercetin. Barh contains <i>n</i> -octacosanol, leucocyanidin, catechin(+)-catechol, (–)-epicatechin, leucopelargonidin, procyanidin derivatives. <sup>53</sup>
16	Schima wallichii	Stem bark contains octacosanol, phytol, alpha-spinasterol and a saponin, schiwallin. <sup>53</sup>
17	Syzygium cerasoideum	Bark contains bergenin, myricyl alcohol, friedelan-3- alpha-ol, friedelin and betulinic acid, kaempferol, quercetin, betulinic acid and crategolic (maslinic) acid. <sup>53</sup>
18	Litsea glutinosa	Leaves and seeds contain pyrrolizidine alkaloids, caffeic, chlorogenic, rosmarinic acid as well as luteolin-7 beta-glucuronide, lithospermic acid and shikonin, acetyl-shikonin <sup>53</sup>
19	Artocarpus chama	Two new stilbenes with two isoprenoid groups, <i>E</i> and <i>Z</i> -4-[2-(7-methoxy-2, 2-dimethyl-6-(3-methylbut-2-enyl)-2 <i>H</i> -1-benzopyran-5-yl) vinyl] benzene-1, 2-diol <sup>53</sup>
20	Moringa oleifera	Leaves contain nitrile glycosides, niazirin, niazirinin, mustard oil glycosides, spirochin and $\ensuremath{\text{pterygospermin}}^{53}$
21	Croton tiglium	Seeds contain diterpene esters of the tigliane type (phorbol esters) <sup>53</sup>
22	Zanthoxylum armatum	Essential oil contains mono and sesquiterpenes, nerol acetate, beta- famesene, germacrene D, trans-nerolidol, 2-furanmetahnol, 3-Nonanol,6,7-dipoxy-3,7-dimethyle acetate. Seeds consists of Zanthoxylum flavone xyloside, Methoxysalicylic acid, Hydroxyanthraquinone, Diphenyl alatumoic dimethyl ester. <sup>53</sup>
23	Osbeckia chinensis	2-Furoic acid, succinic acid, ursolic acid, quercetin and daucosterol <sup>53</sup>
24	Smilax perfoliata	1,6-O-diferuloyl-(3-O-p-coumaroyl)-b-D-fructofuranosyl-2-O-acetyl-a-D-, gluco pyranoside rutin, narcissin, cassiamin A, cassiamin B and 1, 2, 3-trimethoxy-5-hydroxyphenol-1-O-b-D-glucopyranoside $^{53}$
25	Gynocardia odorata	Oil from seeds contains a triterpenoid ketolactone, odolactone <sup>53</sup> .
26	Gentiana pedicellata	Three new 6-aryl-2-pyrones pedicellin, pedicellanin, pedicellatin, triterpene, secoiridoid <sup>53</sup> , carotenoids.
27	Fagopyrum cymosum	Benzoic acid, beta-sitosterol, 5, 5'-di-alpha-furaldehyde dimethyl ether, p-hydroxybenzoic acid, rutin, quercetin, daucosterol, succinic acid <sup>53</sup> .
28	Dillenia pentagyna	Stems are found to contain naringenin-41-O-b-D-xylopyranoside, flavonoid glycosides, naringenin 7-galactosyl glucoside and dihydroquercetin 5-galactoside along with rhamnetin-3-glucoside, diterpene namely dipoloic acid, betulin, betulinic acid and $\beta$ -sitosterol <sup>53</sup> .
29	Bauhinia purpurea	Flowers contain astragalin, isoquercitrin and quercetin, also anthocyanins. Seeds contain chalcone glycosides <sup>53</sup> .

## CONCLUSION

Medicinal plants have great antioxidant potential due to the presence of phytochemical constituents. All plants discussed in this review exhibit pharmacological activities which are correlated to the present of antioxidant compounds in these plants. This review discussed medicinally significant plant species of North east India and showed that many have high antioxidant activity when compared to synthetic antioxidants. In addition, many of these species have a high phenolic content and a large amount of flavanoids and flavonols. The authors have tried to present the role of native herbs and the active principles present in many plants that can be explored as therapeutic agents in chronic diseased conditions. The work gives sufficient information for the clinicians as well as the researchers to exploit the naturally available antioxidants as therapeutic drugs for cure of untreated diseases like Alzheimer, cancer,

parkinsons, diabetes etc. However further *in vivo* studies of these species are required, and a systematic investigation of these antioxidant rich species is needed before they can be used in the food processing industry and as preventive medicines.

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