

COMMON FLORA *of* SOUTH SIKKIM

A GLANCE TO ETHNICITY AND DIVERSITY
OF COMMON FLORA OF SOUTH SIKKIM



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Contents

<i>Foreword</i>	<i>vii</i>
<i>Preface</i>	<i>xi</i>
<i>Acknowledgements</i>	<i>xv</i>
<i>Introduction</i>	<i>xix</i>
<i>Picture Courtesies</i>	<i>xxv</i>
Herbs	1
Shrubs or Small Trees	131
Trees of South Sikkim	250
Miscellaneous	353
Orchids	440
<i>Reference</i>	<i>461</i>
<i>Reflections</i>	<i>463</i>



SCIENTIFIC NAME: *Achyranthes aspera* L.

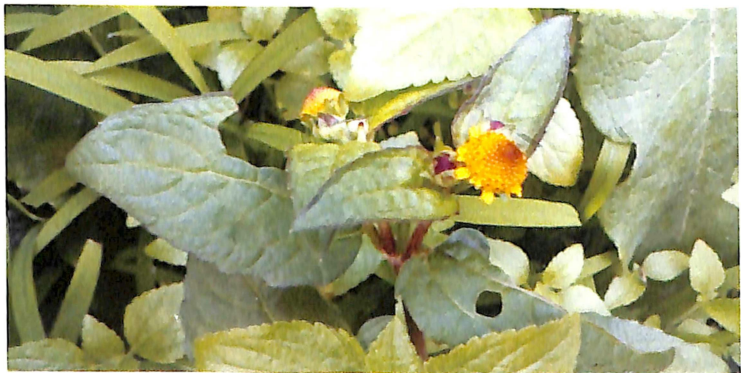
COMMON NAME: Ox knee.

VERNACULAR NAME: Datiwan (Nepali).

FAMILY: Amaranthaceae.

HABIT: A herb.

DESCRIPTION: This herb is very common at roadsides and open fallowlands. It can reach a height of 2–4 feet tall erect or slightly bowing to the ground. Each node is bulged with a reddish colour, producing opposite leaves. Leaves are simple, elliptic, finely hairy all over. 5–7 cm long by 2–4 cm across with tapered ends. Flowers are produced on a long thyse, 10–35 cm long. Clustered flowers are pointed at the tip that can pierce soft clothes and skin.



SCIENTIFIC NAME:	<i>Acmella redicans</i> (Jacq.) R.K. Jansen
COMMON NAME:	White spot flower.
VERNACULAR NAME:	Pat patey jhaar (Nepali), You – see-lee (Lepcha).
FAMILY:	Asteraceae.
HABIT:	A herb.

DESCRIPTION: An annual herb growing up to the height of 2–3 feet in open areas. Leaves are simple, ovate with entire margins, 3–4 cm long and 2–3 cm wide. Stem are white and cylindrical. Fowers are disk-shaped, borne on long stalks, white, 1–2 mm in diameter.

The plant is used as fodder in rural areas and is also given to pigs. Flowering occurs in April–May.



SCIENTIFIC NAME:	<i>Acorus calamus</i> L.
COMMON NAME:	Sweet flag.
VERNACULAR NAME:	Bhojo (Nepali), Lupka-aak, Sidakpa (Limboo).
FAMILY:	Acoraceae.
HABIT:	A rhizomatous herb.

DESCRIPTION: Sweet flag grows in a wet habitat or around the hydrants. The plant propagates through the rhizome. Leaves are sword-like, smooth, shiny, full and tapering at the apex. The leaves produce a characteristic smell on crushing.

The plant is often grown for the medicinal applications. Rhizomes are used against the swellings.



SCIENTIFIC NAME: *Aeginetia indica* L.

COMMON NAME: Forest Ghost flower.

FAMILY: Orobanchaceae.

HABIT: A holoparasitic herb.

DESCRIPTION: Flowering shoot appears out of the ground during July–August. Flowers are produced at the top of 3–7 cm-tall brownish shoot, which is funnel-shaped.



SCIENTIFIC NAME: *Ageratum conyzoides* (L.) L.

COMMON NAME: Chickweed, Goatweed, Whiteweed.

VERNACULAR NAME: Eelamey (Nepali), Gyalaa-yum (Bhutia), Pichal-pey (Lepcha), Kenjo, Pakkambha (Limboo).

FAMILY: Asteraceae.

HABIT: A herb.

DESCRIPTION: It is an erect, softly hairy herbaceous plant that grows up to a height of 2.5 feet. It is an obvious weed in tropical hills. Oppositely arranged leaves are ovate to lance-like, coarsely rounded and have a toothed margin. Numerous pale-blue or whitish flowerheads are 6 mm across, often forming dense domes to flat-topped clusters in leaf axils or at the ends of the branches. Flowers are produced throughout the year. The stems are often red and ciliate. The weak, aromatic, unpleasant-smelling leaves are also covered with fine hair. The dark seeds have scales and ends in a needle-like shape.

In Sikkim, although it is commonly referred to as a weed, it also has a medicinal usage. Along with the leaves of *Artemisia vulgaris* (teetaypattee) and *Eupatorium cannabinum* (kaalo banmaaro), its leaves are crushed simultaneously to yield a blood-clotting sap that is applied to normal fresh cuts.



SCIENTIFIC NAME: *Ageratum houstonianum* Mill.

COMMON NAME: Floss flower, Blue mink, Pussy foot.

FAMILY: Asteraceae.

HABIT: A herb.

DESCRIPTION: The appearance of the plant seems nearly similar to *A.conyzoides* but, if neatly observed, one can find a great difference, especially in flowers and leaves. The plant grows in cooler places to a height of about 2 feet. Leaves are simple, oval and hairy, most often constricted. Flower heads are very attractive and blue. Flowering seen in December–April.



- SCIENTIFIC NAME:** *Ageritina adenophora* (Sprengel) R. King and H Robinson.
- COMMON NAME:** Crofton weed, Sticky snake root.
- VERNACULAR NAME:** Kaalo banmara (Nepali), Mug-nok (Lepcha), Tapsakchiya (Limboo).
- FAMILY:** Asteraceae/compositae.
- HABIT:** A herb.

DESCRIPTION: It is locally called 'kaalo banmaaraa' in Sikkim, due to its dark stem, and is commonly known as crofton weed or sticky snakeroot. It is a species of flowering plant in Asteraceae, common in open wetlands and valley areas from foothills to middle-hill forests in the state and can grow in the wild as well as farmlands as a weed. Locally, it can be seen as a thick, dark-stemmed bush nearby on the roadside and any fallow land. Growing upto 4–6 feet in height, it is a herbaceous shrub. Leaves are simple, opposite, ovate-rhomboid, with serrated margins, an entire acute base and an acute tip, all in deep green.