

Ethnobotany of Jangjangbureh Island, The Gambia, West Africa

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In 1999, interviews were conducted with a village artisan, Mr. Baba Jarra, in Janjangbureh, The Gambia, West Africa. Mr. Jarra was respected as the most knowledgeable member of the village in local medicine. These interviews produced a transcript covering thirty-seven local plants with uses ranging from medicine, to crafts, to magic. For the present study, I identify nine of these plants, report Mr. Jarra's claims as to their uses, and determine whether or not the same uses have been documented in previous research, focusing especially on medicinal applications. This study covers nine plants: *Adansonia digitata* L. (Baobab), *Azadirachta indica* (Neem), *Ziziphus mauritiana* (Tomborrong), *Lippia multiflora* (Sisiliñamo), *Acacia sieberiana* (Naning-Kayo), *Ceiba pentandra* (Cotton Tree), *Mitragyna inermis* (Jungo), *Daniellia oliveri* (Santango), and *Combretum glutinosum* (Jambakato). The plants of interest thus far are three that had not been previously documented. These plants are *Ziziphus mauritiana* (Tomborrong), *Mitragyna inermis* (Jungo) and *Acacia sieberiana* (Naning-Koio). This can lead to future studies in ethnobotany, folk medicine, and ethnopharmacology.



Jungo (*Mitragyna inermis*)

Local Uses:
Medicine - treats wounds, relieves sores from childbirth

Documented Uses:
Agricultural - livestock food
Construction - firewood, utensils, furniture, roofing
Medicine - treats liver ailments, treats fevers, stomach pains, rheumatic pains, treats boils, larvicidal, molluscicidal, radical scavenging activities, antimalarial
Nutrition - antioxidants

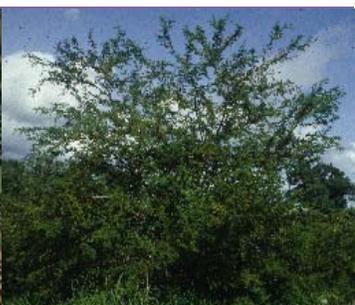




Naning-Kayo (*Acacia sieberiana*)
Paperbark thorn

Local Uses:
Medicine - toothaches, stomach pains

Documented Uses:
Agriculture - fodder for livestock
Construction - firewood
Medicine - treats gonorrhea, syphilis, rheumatism, acne, and eye diseases, antimicrobial, antiviral, antidiarrheal, infusions for backpain, treats inflammations



Tomborrong (*Ziziphus mauritiana*)
bear tree, ber, Chinese apple, Chinese date, common jujube, desert apple, dunks, geb, Indian cherry, Indian jujube, Indian plum, jujube

Local Uses:
Medicine - high blood pressure

Documented Uses:
Construction - fencing for corral, wood, used as hedges
Food - ripe fruit eaten raw/stewed, young leaves eaten, powder from fruit used in baking to make jam and bread, used to make chutney, jam, jelly, soups, gruel, mixed with water to make drink, porridge, traditional cakes
Magic - used to make spirit called Kachasu
Medicine - antiulcer, antibacterial, antioxidant, poultices on sores and cuts, treats asthma, liver problems, fever, inhibits high fat content, stops diarrhea, laxative, treats gingivitis, alleviates gout and rheumatism, antisalmonella, eye lotion, immune stimulant, anticancer, painkiller, tonic, removes flu-like symptoms, antiperspirant, astringent, antifungal, sedative, treats nausea, vomiting, and abdominal pains relating to pregnancy
Nutrition - source of linoleic acid, iron, calcium, magnesium, zinc, protein, vitamin C, fructose, glucose, galactose, citric, malic, and malonic acid





Baobab (*Adansonia digitata* L.) Neem (*Azadirachta indica*) Sisiliñamo (*Lippia multiflora*) Cotton Tree (*Ceiba pentandra*) Santango (*Mitragyna inermis*) Jambakato (*Combretum glutinosum*)

FUTURE PLANS

The next steps of this project would be to complete plant reports for the remaining 28 plants from the transcript. Following this would be a compilation of all of the plant reports into an informational booklet. This would serve as a guide from which further research in herbal medicine can be conducted.