

12. *ADHATODA VASICA* (L.) Nees (ACANTHACEAE) — Malabar Nut, Adotodai, Pavettia

Plants grown for reclaiming waste lands. Because of its fetid scent, it is not eaten by cattle and goats. Leaves and twigs commonly used in Sri Lanka as green manure for field crops, and elsewhere in rice fields. Leaves, on boiling in water, give a durable yellow dye used for coarse cloth and skins; in combination with indigo, gives cloth a greenish-blue to dark green color. Also used to impart black color to pottery. Stems and twigs used as supports for mud walls. Wood makes good charcoal for gunpowder; used as fuel for brick kilns. Ashes used in place of crude carbonate of soda for washing clothes. In Bengal, heads are carved from wood. Leaves also used in agriculture as a weedicide, insecticide, and fungicide, as they contain the alkaloid, vasicine. As weedicide, it is used against aquatic weeds in rice-fields; as insecticide, used in same way on tobacco leaves; as fungicide, prevents growth of fungi on fruits which are covered with vasic leaves. Market gardeners place layers of leaves over fruit, like mangoes, plantains and custard-apples, which have been picked in an immature state to hasten ripening and to ensure development of natural color in these fruits without spoilage. Whole plant used in Sri Lanka for treatment of excessive phlegm, and in menorrhagia. Leaves are source of drug used as an expectorant and to relieve coughs.