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## BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION AND ECOSYSTEM MANAGEMENT

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**Pathila concept: Ten traditional leafy vegetables from South Indian wild flora****Mini N Vijayan**

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Indigenous communities are resourceful in relation to eco-centric knowledge base which is acquired through life experiences in their struggle for survival. Oral transmission of such treasured lessons will be lost forever if not documented and preserved for the posterity. The science behind ancient cultures is now being studied with more urgency as the modern world is getting to understand the need to codify the same. Ethnobotany in part deals with the knowledge about local plants, their uses and their cultural values and one such study is done in this paper, documenting ten species of leafy vegetables which grow in and around homesteads and backyards during the monsoon season in Kerala (South India). The book written in Malayalam language by Late Smt. Parvathy Antherjanam- 'Antherjanangalude aacharanushtanangal' (Customary rituals and religious rites observed by women of Brahmin community, 2002) has helped the author to know the local names of the species so that the scientific documentation could be done of the same. Pathila (Pathu means ten and Ila means leaf) is a group of ten wild plants which come up in abundance effortlessly in accordance with the torrential southwest monsoons, which are cooked together as a side dish. In this paper, all ten species are documented, nutritional and medicinal values are reviewed. All of them have great nutritious value and some among them can even reduce hyperglycemia. *Sauropus androgynus* is an example in this regard. In this era of modern food preferences involving expensive exotic ingredients, awareness regarding indigenous edible species and their valuable properties which come to the doorsteps of humanity at no cost, can boost conservation, sustainable utilization and a sustainable economy.

**Biography**

Mini N Vijayan is an Associate Professor from the Department of Botany, Carmel College for Women, Goa, India. She has a Doctorate degree in Plant Anatomy and a Postgraduate Diploma in Ecology and Environment. She is passionate about biodiversity concerns and is presently documenting plant diversity in cultural practices of a specific indigenous community of Indian Peninsula.

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