

Report on Digitization of Medicinal Plants used in Indian Medical Heritage held on 25 October 2016 at FRLHT-TDU campus, Bengaluru, India

Digitization of medicinal plants was held on 25 October 2016, held at FRLHT-TDU campus, with an objective to build a dataset for plant diversity of India - help digitize the medicinal plant wealth of India. The event was successful in digitizing 600 medicinal plant herbarium specimens collected at FRLH herbaria by 25 students. Jointly organized by: FRLH Herbarium, Centre of Excellence on Medicinal Plants and ENVIS Centre on Medicinal Plants, Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change (MOEF&CC), Southeast Regional Network of Expertise and Collections (SERNEC), Natural History Museum, University of Florida, Florida Museum, National Science Foundation (NSF), California Terrestrial Arthropod Database, and Florida State University.

Resource persons:

Dr. S. Noorunnisa Begum, FRLH Herbarium curator, FRLHT-TDU

Dr. K. Ravikumar, Professor, FRLHT-TDU



Participants digitizing FRLH medicinal plants herbarium sheets



Participants of WeDigBio 2016 event at TDU- FRLHT campus

Source- <http://www.thehindu.com/todays-paper/tp-national/tp-karnataka/taking-plants-and-their-stories-online/article9268867.ece>; Accessed on 26 October 2016.

Article from **THE HINDU**, on 26 October 2016

Taking plants and their stories online

Staff reporter

For botanists, herbariums - collections of preserved plant specimens and associated data — are a source of valuable research and information, capable of preserving plant specimens for more than a hundred years. Till recently, the only way to learn about the 45,000 specimens of medicinal plants at the Foundation for the Revitalisation of Local Health (FRLH) was to visit the herbarium in person. The herbarium is located at the Trans-disciplinary University near Yelahanka.

However, a group of 25 students, teachers and researchers on Tuesday made this easier by adding data on 600 plants to an online repository of plant specimens. This was part of WeDigBio 2016, an initiative held in institutes across the world to make scientific data on plants accessible to everyone. The Union government-supported FRLH herbarium has more than 89 per cent of the specimens included in the Indian Systems of Medicine.

Greater accessibility

The institute first uploaded herbarium sheets (containing dried parts of plants) of 1,300 species, based on which participants fed data into the online database, said Noorunnisa Begum, curator of the herbarium. “The aim is to make information on medicinal plants easily accessible to anyone anywhere. Using the online database makes it easy to study a particular group of

plants, say of the Western Ghats," said Dr. Begum.

Gokul, a post-doctoral fellow at the Central Institute of Medicinal and Aromatic Plants, Bengaluru, who participated in the event, said, "The FLRH herbarium has specimens collected from up to a hundred years back, some from areas which have now been urbanised. Studying these plants shows the effect of urbanisation, and gives more information about changes in the ecosystem over the years." He added that digitisation of records will help botanists like him access information on plant specimens easily without having to visit multiple institutions.

The other collaborating institutions for WeDigBio 2016 are Southeast Regional Network of Expertise and Collections (SERNEC), Natural History Museum, University of Florida, Florida Museum, National Science Foundation (NSF), California Terrestrial Arthropod Database, and Florida State University.

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Noorunnisa Begum, curator, FRLH herbarium

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Taking plants and their stories online

STAFF REPORTER

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GREEN TALES: WeDigBio 2016, an initiative to make scientific data on plants accessible to all, was held at the Transdisciplinary University in Bengaluru on Tuesday. — PHOTO: SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

For more information on event write to: k.ravikumar@frlht.org; noorunnisa.begum@tdu.edu.in