

Valeriana hardwickii

No Image

Family: Valerianaceae

Local/common names:
Muskbala, Tagar, Nihani,
Nakli jatamansi

Trade name: Data not
available

Profile:

Valeriana hardwickii is highly valued as a medicinal plant like *Valeriana jatamansi* which is also famous for its medicinal properties. Due to heavy extraction from the wild, the population of this species has been declining and the plant is in the threatened category.

Habitat and ecology: The plant occurs at an altitudinal range of 1500-4000 m. It is found on moist, open slopes or in the humus rich soil in the shrubberies. It is distributed from Pakistan to southwest China, Burma and southeast Asia in the Himalayas and Khasi hills. In Himachal Pradesh, it has been found in the Bharmour division of Chamba, Kanda area of Karsog and Chansil.

Morphology: It is an erect, pubescent herb, which grows up to a height of 20-60 cm. The leaves are radical, 3-7 in number, ovate-orbicular, entire or crenulate, pilose and cauline. The flowers are white and borne in axillary or terminal paniculate cymes or corymbs. The fruits are achenes and pubescent and longer than the upper bracts.

Distinguishing features: It is an erect, pubescent herb with white flowers in terminal, paniculate cymes. The fruits are achenes.

Life cycle: Flowering and fruiting take place from June-September.

Uses: The plant has several medicinal uses. It is an antispasmodic, aphrodisiac, carminative, diaphoretic, diuretic, emmenagogue, hypnotic and sedative. The root is nervine. It is used internally to treat menstruation cramps, hypertension and in irritable bowel syndrome. Externally, it is used to treat eczema, ulcers and minor injuries. The plant is a gentle stimulant, without narcotic effects. It is particularly recommended in hysteria, hypochondriasis, epilepsy, hemicrania, and low forms of fever attended with restlessness, morbid vigilance or other nervous disorders. The roots are also used as an insecticide. Local communities use the plant to scent hair and as a hair tonic. The plant is also used in the manufacturing of incense. It has been used in intermittent and acute rheumatism. Oil produced from the plant when taken in large quantities is said to produce drowsiness leading to sleep, reduced frequency of pulse and increased flow of urine.

Market rate: It is sold at the rate of Rs.105/- per kg.