

THE PLANT BIODIVERSITY MENTIONED IN THE HOLY QURAAAN

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ABSTRACT

Twenty two plant species belonging to 21 genera and 17 families have been mentioned in the Holy Quraan. They include: *Ficus carica* L., *Olea europaea* L., *Phoenix dactylifera* L., *Vitis vinifera* L., *Punica granatum* L., *Ocimum basilicum* L., *Zingiber officinale* Roscoe., *Cinnamomum camphora* L., *Brassica nigra* L., *Salvadora persica* L., *Tamarix aphylla* L., *Ziziphus Spina-christi* L., *Opuntia dellinii* L., *Cucurbita pepo* L., *Cucumis sativus* L., *Allium sativum* L., *Allium cepa* L., *Lens culinaris* Medic., *Musa paradisiacal* L., *Hordeum vulgare* L., *Triticum aestivum* L. and *Trifolium* spp. The present study describes the plants mentioned in the Holy Quraan along with the surahs (chapters) and Aayat (verses) where these plants are mentioned. The Taxonomic position, common names, economic and medicinal uses and distribution of these plants are mentioned.

Key words: Plant Biodiversity, Quraanic plants, plants uses, Botanical Garden

INTRODUCTION

The Holy Quraan is a religious and last Holy book more than 1400 years old sent by Almighty Allah on last Prophet Mohammad (PBUH). It was completed in 22 years, 4 months and 7 days. It has 114 Surahs (chapters) and 6666 Aayat (verses). Of them about 1000 verses explain scientific and technological principles (Bucaille 1989). The Holy Quraan guides us by describing the life style and religious faiths of pre-Islamic ancient nations, civilizations and religions. Some of them accepted the path of Allah and became successful but majority were wrongdoers, who were punished with terrible results and were examples for coming mankind. The Holy Quraan highlights diverse important scientific avenues such as astronomy, geology, embryology, genetics, botany, zoology, archaeology, mathematics, statistics and environmental biology etc. The Quraan reveals the secrets of critical issues, such as big bang model of the origin of the universe, the days and nights duration, universe expansion, the presence of sun's orbits and the revolving planets around it, the fixed position of mountains, the heavy seas and oceans, the huge ships moving in seas, the pairs of each creation, the development of babies in the mother's womb (embryology) and other universe related facts (Bucaille, 1989). The Holy Quraan is the word of Allah transmitted by the angel Gabrielle in the Arabic language through Prophet Mohammad (PBUH). The Quraan has been translated and interpreted in more than 100 languages of the world. It is not only a religious book to read, but is a complete code of life and source of true success for all the human beings and provides solution for all problems of life.

Many plants have also been mentioned very often in both the prophetic medicines and the Hadith due to their nature as natural remedies for the management of simple ailments like headache, fever and sore throat etc. and for improving diet and general health (El-Batanony, 1986). Several hundred medicinal plant species from Arabian area have also been identified (Khatibi *et al.*, 1989; Khafagi and Dewedar, 2000). Many workers have worked out the plants, seeds, grains, gardens, trees and fruits are mentioned in Holy Quran (Khafagi, *et al.*, 2006). Plants of the Holy Quraan, their botanical names, Arabic names, common names, number of times they mentioned and history of the Quraanic plants has been mentioned (Farooqi, 1989). The fruit plants and their ethnobotany is also cited (Marwat, 2009).

The Botanical Garden, University of Peshawar is an educational, conservational and research institution spreading over an area of 100 acres of land in Azakhel, District Nowshera. The garden has many thematic and scientific gardens such as Flora of Pakistan section, Medicinal garden, Palm garden, Gymnosperms garden, Rose garden, Hydrophyte garden and Horticultural and Agricultural research fields. Quraanic Garden is a unique concept, and the first of its nature. Except *Dryobalanops camphora* (Camfor plant) all plants have been planted which are successfully growing in this Quraanic garden. This present paper describes the Quraanic plants.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The present findings are confined to 22 plant species belonging to 21 genera and 17 families. The research work was conducted by reviewing Holy Quraan and Islamic literature. Comprehensive and detailed work has been done to describe the plants, their botanical names, Arabic (A), English (E), Urdu (U), Pashto (P), family names, medicinal uses, distribution, times they have been mentioned and Surahs (chapters) and (Aayat) verses where these plants are mentioned.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Twenty two identified plant species belonging to 21 genera and 17 families have been mentioned in the Holy Quraan. They include: *Allium sativum* L., *Allium cepa* L., *Brassica nigra* L., *Cinnamomum camphora* L., *Cucurbita pepo* L., *Cucumis sativus* L., *Ficus carica* L., *Hordeum vulgare* L., *Lens culinaris* Medic., *Musa paradisiacal* L., *Olea europaea* L., *Ocimum basilicum* L., *Opuntia dellinii* L., *Phoenix dactylifera* L., *Punica granatum* L., *Salvadora persica* L., *Tamarix aphylla* L., *Trifolium* spp. *Triticum aestivum* L., *Vitis vinifera* L., *Zingiber officinale* Roscoe. and *Ziziphus Spina-christi* L. All these plants are described below with complete details:

1. ***Ficus carica* L.** (Family Moraceae)
 “I swear by the fig and the olive”. Surah “Etteen” (95); Verse No. 1
Mentioned in Holy Quran: One time / once
Local names: Fig (E), Etteen (A), Injeer (U), Inzer (P).
Distribution: Mediterranean Regions, Pakistan, Afghanistan and India
Uses: Remove kidney and urinary bladder stone, release intestinal pain, pile and dyspepsia. Reduce blood triglyceride level.

2. ***Olea europaea* L.** (Family Oleaceae)
 “I swear by the fig and the olive”. Surah “Etteen” (95); Verse No. 1.
Local names: Olive (E), Zaytoon (A, U), Khona (P).
Mentioned in Holy Quran: 06 times
Distribution: Found in Central Asian countries.
Uses: Strengthen body muscles, clear the blood, remove the measles spot, tuberculosis, baldness, kidney pain, common cold, stomach and respiratory pains.

3. ***Phoenix dactylifera* L.** (Family Palmae/Arecaceae)
 And He it is who produces gardens (of Vine); trellised and untrellised and palms and seed produce of which the fruits are of various sorts and olive and pomegranates, like and unlike; eat of its fruit when it bears fruits and pay the due of it on the day of its reaping, and don’t act extravagantly; surely He does not love the extravagant.
 (Surah”An-aam (6), Verse No. 141).
Mentioned in Holy Quran: 20 times
Local names: Date-palm (E), Nakhla, Nakil (A), Kajoor (U, P).
Distribution: North Africa, Pakistan, India and Iraq.
Uses: The *date-palm* is a high range of energy. Helpful in heart and skin diseases, sexual weakness, stomach pain, intestinal pain and swelling of kidney.

4. ***Vitis vinifera* L.** (Family Vitaceae)
 Does one of you like that he should have a garden of palms and vines with streams flowing beneath it; he has in it all kinds of fruits, and old age has overtaken him and he has weak off spring, when, a whirlwind with fire in it smites it so it becomes blasted; thus Allah makes the communication clear to you, that you may reflect.
 (Surah-Baqara (2) Verse No. 226).
Mentioned in Holy Quran: 11 times
Local names: Grapes, vine (E), Enab (A), Angoor (U), Angur (P)
Distribution: France, Germany, Spain, Pakistan and India.
Uses: Helpful in common cold, muscles, cough, kidney pain, dog bite, liver and lung disorder, relax brain and body and clear face.

5. ***Punica granatum* L.** (Family Punicaceae)
 And He it is who produces gardens (of Vine); trellised and untrellised and palms and seed produce of which the fruits are of various sorts and

- olive and pomegranates, like and unlike; eat of its fruit when it bears fruits and pay the due of it on the day of its reaping, and don't act extravagantly; surely He does not love the extravagant. Surah"An-aam (6), Verse No. 141.
- Mentioned in Holy Quran:** 03 times
Local names: Pomegranate (E), Romman (A), Anar (U, P)
Distribution: Chili, India, Pakistan, Afghanistan and Europe.
Uses: Cooling and refrigerant, Anthelmintic, Cardiac, stomachic, Astringent, anthelmitic stomachic.
6. *Ocimum basilicum* L. **(Family Lamiaceae)**
 Therein are fruit and palms having sheathed clusters (Verse No.11) and the grain with (its) husk and fragrance. Surah-Ar-Rahman (55) (Verse No.12).
Mentioned in Holy Quran: 02 times
Local names: Sweet Basil (E), Raihan (A), Niazbo (U), Kashmalo/Kashmale (P).
Distribution: Asia, Australia, Malaysia and South Arabia.
Uses: Carminative, diuretic, stimulant and demulcent. Useful in pimples, asthma and for croup for which the warm juice with honey is given. Bowel complaints of children. Dysentery and Chronic diarrhea.
7. *Zingiber officinale* Roscoe **(Family Zingiberaceae)**
 And they shall be made to drink there in a cup the admixture of which shall be ginger. Surah-Dahar (76), Verse No.17.
Mentioned in Holy Quran: One time
Local names: Ginger (E), Zanjabeel (A), Adrak, Sonth (U, P).
Distribution: Pakistan, India, Oman, Yaman and Bangladesh.
Uses: Stimulant, aromatic, Carminative, Sialogogue expectorant, dyspepsia, colic vomiting, rheumatism, piles, dropsy and toothache.
8. *Brassica nigra* L. **(Family Brassicaceae)**
 And we will setup a just balance on the day of resurrection, so no soul shall be dealt with unjustly in the least; and though there be the weight of a grain of mustard seed, (yet) will we bring it, and sufficient are we to take account.
 Surah- Ambia (21), Verse No.47.
Mentioned in Holy Quran: One time
Local names: Black Mustard (E), Khardel (A), Sarsoo (U), Sharsham (P).
Distribution: Asia, Australia, Malaysia and South Arabia.
Uses: Condiment, emetic, irritant and fabricant.
9. *Salvadora persica* L. **(Salvadoraceae)**
 But they turned aside, so we sent upon them a torrent of which the rush could not be withstood, and in place of their two gardens we gave to them two gardens yielding bitter fruit and (growing) tamarisk and a few lote-trees. Surah-Saba (34), Verse No.16.
Mentioned in Holy Quran: One time
Local names: Toothbrush tree (E), Arak (A), Miswak (U, P).
Distribution: In Desert parts of the world.
Uses: Dental diseases, arthritis, oral diseases, headache, antidote and diabetes.
10. *Tamarix aphylla* L. **(Family Tamaricaceae)**
 But they turned aside, so we sent upon them a torrent of which the rush could not be withstood, and in place of their two gardens we gave to them two gardens yielding bitter-fruit and (growing) tamarisk and a few lote-trees. Surah-Saba (34), Verse No.16.

- Mentioned in Holy Quran:** One time
Local names: Tamarisk (E), Tay, Tarfa, Tarfaa (A), Ghaz (P).
Distribution: North Africa, Pakistan, India and Iraq.
Uses: The branchlets and the leaves are astringent and diuretic. An external compress is applied to wounds to stop the bleeding. The manna produced on the plant is detergent, expectorant and laxative. Galls produced on the plant as a result of insect damage are astringent. They are used in the treatment of diarrhea and dysentery.
11. *Zizyphus spina-christi* L. **(Family Rhamnaceae)**
 But they turned aside, so we sent upon them a torrent of which the rush could not be withstood, and in place of their two gardens we gave to them two gardens yielding bitter fruit and (growing) tamarisk and a few lote-trees. Surah-Saba (34), Verse No.16.
Mentioned in Holy Quran: One time
Local names: Sidr/ Nabaq (A), Christ's-thorn (E), Bera (P), Beer (U).
Distribution: African and Asian continents.
Uses: *Zizyphus* is pleasantly acidic when fresh and becoming sweeter with ripening. Frequently used in the dried or fresh condition, this is good source of glucose and vitamins.
12. *Cucurbita pepo* L. **(Family Cucurbitaceae)**
 And we cause to grow up for him a gourd- plant. Surah- saaffaat (37), Verse No. 146.
Mentioned in Holy Quran: One time
Local names: Qarah, Yakteen (A), Pumpkin, (E) Kaddo (U, P).
Distribution: Cosmopolitan
Uses: *Pumpkin* an effective tapeworm remover in children and pregnant women for whom stronger acting and toxic remedies are unsuitable. The seeds along with the husk are used to remove tapeworms.
13. *Cucumis sativus* L. **(Family Cucurbitaceae)**
 And when you said: O Musa! We can't bear with one food, therefore pray lord on our behalf to bring forth for us out of what the earth grows, of its herbs and its cucumbers and its garlic and its lentils and its onions. He said: will you exchange that which is better for that which is worse? Enter a city, so you will have what you ask for. And abasement and humiliation were brought down upon them, and they became deserving of Allah's wrath; this was so because they disbelieved in the communications of Allah and killed the prophets unjustly; this was so because the disobeyed and exceeded the limits. Surah-Baqara (2), Verse No. 61.
Mentioned in Holy Quran: One time
Local names: Baqal, Kiar, Qiththa (A), Cucumber (E), Keera (U), Badrang (P).
Distribution: Cultivated all over the world.
Uses: Reduce cholesterol, triglyceride, phospholipids and free fatty acids. It also has refreshing properties.
14. *Allium sativum* L. **(Family Alliaceae)**
 And when you said: O Musa! we can't bear with one food, therefore pray lord on our behalf to bring forth for us out of what the earth grows, of its herbs and its cucumbers and its garlic and its lentils and its onions. He said: will you exchange that which is better for that which is worse? Enter a city, so you will have what you ask for. And abasement and humiliation were brought down upon them, and they became

- deserving of Allah's wrath; this was so because they disbelieved in the communications of Allah and killed the prophets unjustly; this was so because the disobeyed and exceeded the limits.
Surah-Baqara (2), Verse No. 64.
- Mentioned in Holy Quran:** One time
Local names: Garlic (E), Foom (A), Lehsan (U), Oga (P).
Distribution: Pakistan, India, Egypt, Italy, France and USA.
Uses: Anti-arthritis, Anti-inflammatory, stimulant, carminative, anthelmintic, dyspepsia, antiseptic, asthma, control whooping cough and is anti-spasmodic in action.
15. *Allium cepa* L. **(Family Aliaceae)**
And when you said: O Musa! we can't bear with one food, therefore pray lord on our behalf to bring forth for us out of what the earth grows, of its herbs and its cucumbers and its garlic and its lentils and its onions. He said: will you exchange that which is better for that which is worse? Enter a city, so you will have what you ask for. And abasement and humiliation were brought down upon them, and they became deserving of Allah's wrath; this was so because they disbelieved in the communications of Allah and killed the prophets unjustly; this was so because the disobeyed and exceeded the limits.
Surah-Baqara (2), Verse No. 64.
- Mentioned in Holy Quran:** One time
Local names: Onion (E), Basal (A), Piaz (U, P).
Distribution: Pakistan, India, Egypt, Italy, France, China and USA.
Uses: Juice is aphrodisiac, hypoglycemic, stimulant, diuretic, expectorant, fungitoxic and anti-microbial.
16. *Lens culinaris* Medic. **(Family Fabaceae)**
And when you said: O Musa! we can't bear with one food, therefore pray lord on our behalf to bring forth for us out of what the earth grows, of its herbs and its cucumbers and its garlic and its lentils and its onions. He said: will you exchange that which is better for that which is worse? Enter a city, so you will have what you ask for. And abasement and humiliation were brought down upon them, and they became deserving of Allah's wrath; this was so because they disbelieved in the communications of Allah and killed the prophets unjustly; this was so because the disobeyed and exceeded the limits.
- Mentioned in Holy Quran:** One time
Local names: Lentils (E), Addas (A), Masoor dal, (U, P).
Distribution: Widely cultivated in Asia and Europe.
Uses: Anti-atherogenic; lows serum and liver cholesterol level. Help in Paralysis and common cold.
17. *Musa paradisiaca* L. **(Family Musaceae)**
And banana-trees (with fruits) one above other.
Surah-Waqia (56), Verse No.(29).
- Mentioned in Holy Quran:** One time
Local names: Banana (E), Muse (A), Kela (U, P).
Distribution: Sri Lanka, Pakistan, India and Saudi Arabia
Uses: Laxative, demulcent, emollient and anti-ulcerogenic.
18. *Hordeum vulgare* L. **(Family Poaceae)**
And the kind said; Surely I see seven fat kine which seven lean ones devoured; and seven green ears and (Seven) other dry; O chiefs! Explain to me my dream! If you can interpret the dream.

- Mentioned in Holy Quran:** Surah Yousaf (12), Verse No. 43.
Local names: One time
Distribution: Barley (E), Al-sheir (A), Jao (U), Orbashe (P).
Uses: India, Pakistan and USA
 Increase immunity, Nutritive, demulcent, protective, maintain cholesterol level, help in jaundice and antifungal.
19. *Triticum aestivum* L. **(Family Poaceae)**
 The parable of those who spend their property in the way of Allah is as the parable of a grain growing seven ears (with) a hundred grains in every ear; and Allah multiplies for whom He pleases; and Allah is Ample-giving, knowing.
 Surah-Baqara (2), Verse No.261.
Mentioned in Holy Quran: One time
Local names: Wheat (E), Al-Qameh (A), Gandam (U), Ghanum (P).
Distribution: Cultivated worldwide
Uses: Nutritional and Source of Vitamin E and fatty acids. Used as main source of food in most part of the world.
20. *Trifolium* spp. **(Family Fabaceae)**
 Then we cause to grow therein the grain and grapes and clover.
 Surah-Abasa, Verse No. 27 & 28.
Mentioned in Holy Quran: One time
Local names: Qasb (A), Clover (E), Shaftal (U), Shotat (P).
Uses: Common fodder
21. *Opuntia dellini* L. **(Family Cactaceae)**
 Is this better as an entertainment or the tree of zaqqum.
 Surah-Saaffaat (37), verse No. 62.
Mentioned in Holy Quran: 20-times
Local names: Opuntia (E), Hanzal, Zaqqum (A), Zahre-Zaqqum (U, P).
Distribution: Pakistan, India and Middle East.
22. *Cinnamomum camphora* L. **(Lauraceae)**
 Surely the righteous shall drink of a cup the admixture of which is camphor. Surah-Dahar (76), verse No. 5.
Mentioned in Holy Quran: One time
Local names: Camphor (E), Kafoor (A).
Distribution: India, Sri Lanka, Japan and China
Uses: Narcotic, irritant, sedative, anodyne, antispasmodic, diaphoretic, and anthelmintic.

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