

The Legacy Goes on: Ethnobotanical Knowledge of Uzbekistan Koryoin (ethnic Koreans)

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Ethnobotany is an interdisciplinary science at the intersection of botany and ethnology. Currently, there is a sharply increasing need for the study and conservation of traditional knowledge about plants. The loss of traditional sources, knowledge, and practices in using plants is caused by the growth of technologies in all branches of production, widespread urbanization, and globalization of the economy. This study was conducted to collect and analyze the Koryoins (Koryo saram) traditional ethnobotanical knowledge, living in Uzbekistan, whose number 174,200 people. They are the descendants of Korean immigrants to the Russian Far East, who ended up in Central Asia as a result of the forced resettlement in 1937. In the processing of collected data, four main categories of uses were defined - Alimentary, Medicinal, Household/Handicraft, and Others. For quantitative data analysis, synthetic indices were used - RFC (Relative Frequency of Citation) and CI (Cultural Importance Index), which are commonly applied to assess the importance of plants. The respondents mentioned 72 plants belonging to 28 botanical families. A significant part of them was cultivar plants. The category that had the largest number of plants mentioned by the respondents was the Alimentary use category (51). According to quantitative indices rates, the most important plants are traditionally used for food. A comparison of ethnobotanical knowledge was made with the collected data of this study and Korean traditional knowledge.

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