

Features of the use of certain plant species in folk practices by small
peoples of the North
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Peculiarities of using certain plants in folk practices by small peoples of the north
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RESUME

Many folk medical-prophylactic, hygienic beliefs and rituals are associated with a bath. It performs a huge health, hygienic and ritual role in the life of the people. It is an important attribute of life. A special analysis of the published scattered ethnobotanical data on the use of different wild-growing plant species of the local flora in a bath by small peoples of the north (for example, Veps, Karelians, Izhora, Vod, Estonians-Seto) has not been made yet. Ethnobotanical studies conducted over the past 20 years in a limited area of the North-West Federal District of the European part of Russia among the small Finno-Ugric peoples of the North, compactly residing in the North-West of the Russian Federation, and Russians living with them, have revealed similarities and differences in use of one and the same wild plant species of local flora. The main species of woody and herbaceous plants that are used for the sauna and bath are given, not only as a physiotherapeutic and hygienic procedure, but also shown as how these wild plants are used in various folk practices and beliefs. Attention is drawn to the need to organize and conduct large-scale works on the collection and accumulations of ethnobotanical data for a small peoples of ethnic groups living in our country.

keywords:ethnobotany, folk remedial practices, Veps, Karelians, Izhora, Vod, Komi, Seto, Russian, North-West flora, sauna, brooms, firewood, beliefs.

SUMMARY

Many folk therapeutic and preventive, hygienic beliefs and rituals are associated with a bath. It performs a huge health-improving, hygienic and ritual role in folk life. It is an important household item. There has not yet been a special analysis of published scattered ethnobotanical data on the use of various wild plant species of the local flora in the bath by small peoples of the north (for example, Veps, Karelians, Izhora, Vod, Seto Estonians). Ethnobotanical research conducted over the past 20 years in a limited area of the Northwestern Federal District of the European part of Russia among the small Finno-Ugric peoples of the north, compactly living in the Northwest of the Russian Federation, and Russians living with them, made it possible to identify similarities and differences in the use of the same wild plants of the local flora as useful. The main types of wild-growing woody and herbaceous plants are given, which are used not only for baths as a physiotherapeutic and hygienic procedure, but also in various folk practices and beliefs. Attention is drawn to the need to organize and conduct large-scale work on the collection and accumulation of ethnobotanical data of small peoples living in our country.

Key words: ethnobotany, folk healing practices, Vepsians, Karelians, Izhora, Vod, Komi, Seto, Russians, flora of the North-West, bath, sauna, brooms, firewood, beliefs.

Many folk therapeutic and prophylactic, hygienic beliefs and rituals are associated with

bath. The influence of the bath (sauna) on the physical condition of people, the use of the bath as one of the methods of physiotherapy for the treatment and prevention of various diseases is widely studied in the Scandinavian countries [1–7]. So far, there has not been a special analysis of published scattered ethnobotanical data on the use of various wild plant species of local flora in the bath by small peoples of the north (for example, Veps, Karelians, Izhora, Vod, Seto Estonians). The bath (sauna) as a valuable clinical tool for the physiotherapy of the peoples of the north has occupied and occupies a significant place in the folk practice of treating and preventing various diseases (cardiovascular, autoimmune, toxic and other chronic health problems). It plays a huge health-improving, hygienic and ceremonial role in folk life, is an important attribute of everyday life. In the process of collecting ethnobotanical materials on the use of wild plant species by small peoples of the north of the European part of Russia (Vepsians, Karelians, Izhors, Vods, Seto Estonians, Saami and Russians, with whom all these peoples have long lived in close geographical and cultural contact), attention was drawn to on various aspects of the use of certain plant species. This paper summarizes the collected materials on the peculiarities of the use of different types of plants in pre-wedding and wedding, funeral and memorial rituals and in some beliefs by the Baltic-Finnish peoples of the north of the European part of the Russian Federation. with whom all these peoples have long lived in close geographical and cultural contact), attention was drawn to various aspects of the use of certain plant species. This paper summarizes the collected materials on the peculiarities of the use of different types of plants in pre-wedding and wedding, funeral and memorial rituals and in some beliefs by the Baltic-Finnish peoples of the north of the European part of the Russian Federation. with whom all these peoples have long lived in close geographical and cultural contact), attention was drawn to various aspects of the use of certain plant species. This paper summarizes the collected materials on the peculiarities of the use of different types of plants in pre-wedding and wedding, funeral and memorial rituals and in some beliefs by the Baltic-Finnish peoples of the north of the European part of the Russian Federation.

The aim of the work is to analyze ethnobotanical materials on the peculiarities of the use of wild-growing plant species as useful in various practices of the home cycle, related to physiotherapy and hygiene measures, rituals and folk beliefs of the material and spiritual life of the Baltic-Finnish peoples of the north of the European part of the Russian Federation.

Materials and methods

The places of research, features and methods of collecting ethnobotanical data are described in our works [8–12].

Results and discussion

This review is based on ethnographic works published in Russian on the culture of the Veps, Karelians, Izhora, Vodi, Seto Estonians, Saami and Russians, with whom all these peoples have long lived in close geographical and cultural contact. The material is presented in the form of tables (Tables 1–6).

Table 1

Plants in the pre-wedding and wedding ceremonies of the small peoples of the north

Вид	Народ	Органы и продукты	Назначение	Функция	Источник
<i>Alnus incana</i> /Ольха	Карелы	Древесина	Дрова	Пригодны для обрядовой бани; для поднятия лемби*	13, 14, 15
<i>Sorbus aucuparia</i> /Рябина	Карелы	Древесина	Дрова	Пригодны для обрядовой бани; для поднятия лемби	13, 16
<i>Betula sp.</i> /Береза	Карелы	Древесина	Дрова	Не пригодны для обрядовой бани; для поднятия лемби	13, 14
<i>Betula sp.</i> /Береза	Карелы	Ветви	Веник	Для поднятия лемби	13, 16
<i>Betula sp.</i> /Береза	Карелы	Ветви	Веник	Свадебная магия	17, 18
<i>Betula sp.</i> /Береза	Коми	Ветви	Веник	Свадебная магия для подруг невесты	19
<i>Betula sp.</i> /Береза	Карелы	Ветви	Веник	Свадебная магия для подруг невесты	19, 20, 21
<i>Alnus incana</i> /Ольха	Карелы	Ветви	Веник	Для поднятия лемби; обряд приворота	14, 15, 16
<i>Alnus incana</i> /Ольха	Карелы	Древесина	Древесина	Посох патьвашки	13
<i>Pinus sp.</i> /Сосна	Карелы	Древесина	Дрова	Не пригодны для обрядовой бани	15, 16
<i>Juniperus communis</i> /Можжевельник	Карелы	Ветви	Добавка в веник	Для поднятия лемби	14
<i>Phleum sp.</i> /Тимофеевка	Карелы	Надземная часть	Добавка в веник	Для поднятия лемби	22
<i>Acer platanoides</i> /Клен	Карелы	Ветви	Составляющее веника	Пригодны для обрядовой бани жениха	14, 15
<i>Tilia cordata</i> /Липа	Карелы	Древесина	Дрова	Пригодны для обрядовой бани	15
<i>Picea abies</i> /Ель	Карелы	Древесина	Дрова	Не пригодны для обрядовой бани	14, 15
<i>Populus tremula</i> /Осина	Карелы	Древесина	Дрова	Не пригодны для обрядовой бани	14
<i>Salix sp.</i> /Ива	Карелы	Древесина	Дрова	Не пригодны для обрядовой бани	14, 15

Примечание: * – лемби (фин. Lempi) – эротическая, сексуальная привлекательность. Обозначает репутацию и спрос девушки как невесты [23].

As can be seen from the data given in the tables, birch (all its parts and products from it) very often finds application in many moments of life (ceremonies, beliefs) of the small peoples of the north. The material culture of any nation has always been inextricably linked with beliefs and rituals. Therefore, when faced with such familiar things as a bathhouse, a broom and firewood, one should remember that traditional culture sees in them not only material for medical and hygienic procedures or heating. As can be seen from the tables above, they were also used for various sacred purposes.

table 2

Plants in the funeral and memorial actions of the small peoples of the north

Растение	Народ	Органы и продукты	Назначение	Функция	Источник
<i>Pinus sylvestris</i> /Сосна	Сету	Древесина	Доски	Гроб	24
<i>Pinus sylvestris</i> /Сосна	Сету	Дерево целиком	Растение целиком	Ритуальное прощание с покойным	24
<i>Betula sp.</i> /Береза	Сету	Листья	Листья	Содержимое похоронной подушки	24
<i>Betula sp.</i> /Береза	Вепсы	Листья	Листья	Кладут в гроб	25, 26
<i>Betula sp.</i> /Береза	Карелы	Веник	Листья	Кладут в гроб	27
<i>Betula sp.</i> /Береза	Карелы	Ветви	Веник	«Опахивание» могилы	28
<i>Betula sp.</i> /Береза	Коми	Ветви	Веник	Клали покойному под голову	29 – 31
<i>Betula sp.</i> /Береза	Коми	Ветви	Листья или Рубленые ветви	Клали покойному под голову	29 – 33
<i>Betula sp.</i> /Береза	Вепсы	Ветви	Веник	Обметание дома после выноса тела; оберег от покойного	26
<i>Betula sp.</i> /Береза	Коми	Береста	Посуда	Обмывание умершего	30 – 33
<i>Betula sp.</i> /Береза	Коми	Береста	Листы бересты	Гроб	30 – 33
<i>Populus tremula</i> /Осина	Вепсы	Древесина	Дрова	Оберег от покойного	26
<i>Picea abies</i> /Ель	Карелы	Надземная часть растения	Растение с обрубленной верхушкой	При выносе покойного	28
<i>Juniperus communis</i> Можжевельник	Сету	Дерево целиком	Растение целиком	Ритуальное прощание с покойным	24

Table 3

Plants in folk medicine and hygiene among the small peoples of the north

Растение	Народ	Органы и продукты	Назначение	Функция	Источник
<i>Betula sp.</i> /Береза	Карелы	Ветви	Веник	Гигиена	15
<i>Betula sp.</i> /Береза	Карелы	Зола	Щелок	Гигиена	15
<i>Betula sp.</i> /Береза	Вепсы, русские	Ветви	Веник	Гигиена, замена мочалок	Собственные данные, 34
<i>Juniperus communis</i> / Можжевельник	Вепсы, карелы, сето, русские	Ветви	Медицина	Банные процедуры и ингаляции	Собственные данные
<i>Lepidotheca sucveolens</i> / Лепидотека	Русские	Надземная часть	Надземная часть	Гигиена	35
<i>Leucanthemum vulgare</i> / Нивяник	Русские	Надземная часть	Надземная часть	Гигиена	35
<i>Melampyrum nemorosum</i> / Марьянник	Русские	Надземная часть	Надземная часть	Гигиена	35
<i>Mentha arvensis</i> / Мята	Русские, сето	Надземная часть	Надземная часть	Гигиена	35
<i>Picea abies</i> / Ель	Карелы	Ветви	Ветви	Гигиена, добавка к веникам	27
<i>Quercus robur</i> / Дуб	Вепсы, сето	Ветви	Веник	Гигиена, чистый или в смеси	Собственные данные
<i>Urtica dioica</i> / Крапива	Вепсы	Надземная часть	Веник	Лечение радикулита	Собственные данные
<i>Urtica dioica</i> / Крапива	Русские	Надземная часть	Трава	Ингаляции в бане	Собственные данные
<i>Urtica dioica</i> / Крапива	Русские	Надземная часть	Надземная часть	Гигиена	35

Table 4

Plants used in Karelian folk practices for childbirth and childcare

Растение	Народ	Органы и продукты	Назначение	Функция	Источник
<i>Populus tremula</i> / Осина	Карелы	Древесина	Утварь	Первое купание новорожденного	21
<i>Betula sp.</i> /Береза	Карелы	Ветви, верхушки	Веник	Первое купание новорожденного	21
<i>Betula sp.</i> /Береза	Карелы	Ветви	Веник	Оберег	21, 36, 37
<i>Betula sp.</i> /Береза	Карелы	Ветви	Место связывания ветвей	Держали пуповину	36

Table 5

Wild-growing plant species in the beliefs and rituals of the small peoples of the north

Вид	Народ	Органы и продукты	Назначение	Функция	Источник
<i>Picea abies</i> / Ель	Карелы	«Ведьмина метла»	Через нее обдают водой ребенка	Лечение от сглаза	38
<i>Betula sp.</i> /Береза	Вепсы, карелы, воль, ижора, коми, русские	Ветви	Веник	Гадание на судьбу	29, 38, 39
<i>Betula sp.</i> /Береза	Вепсы, карелы	Древесина	Дрова	Пожелание богатой жизни	Собственные данные
<i>Betula nana</i> / Ерник	Коми	Надземная часть	Веник	Лечение от порчи в бане	38, 40
<i>Sorbus aucuparia</i> / Рябина	Коми	Ветви	Ветви	Добавляют в веники на Иванов день	33, 38, 41
<i>Trollius europaea</i> / Купальница	Коми	Надземная часть	Надземная часть	Добавляют в веники на Иванов день	33, 38, 41, 42
<i>Ranunculus acris</i> , <i>R. polyanthemos</i> / Лютик	Русские	Надземная часть	Надземная часть	Добавляют в веники на Иванов день	34

Table 6

Data on the use of wild plants (without specifying the species) in various ceremonies

Народ	Органы и продукты	Место применения	Функция	Источник
Карелы	Деревья, поваленные бурей, разбитые молнией, принесенные водой	Баня невесты	Дрова для топки, очищение	43
Карелы	Ветви	Веник для бани невесты	Невеста дарила новый единожды использованный ею веник незамужней сестре или подруге	20
Карелы	Дрова от трех разбитых молнией деревьев, от дерева с несколькими вершинами	Обрядовая баня	Поднятие лемби	21
Карелы	Дрова от разбитых молнией деревьев	Послеродовая баня	Магическая процедура	21
Карелы	Листья	Для скота	До Иванова дня их только рвали, а не срезали	39
Карелы	Ветви	Магическая баня	Для лечения радикулита	27
Карелы	Хвойное дерево	Карсикко *	Посредник в культе мертвых родственников	28, 44
Карелы	Древесина	Проводы в бурлаки	Дрова приносят в дом после проводов	39
Коми	Дерево с двумя и более вершинами или засыхающие	Строительство или отопление	Примета смерти или несчастья	29
Коми	Ветви	Новый веник	Баня перед уходом на промысел	45
Коми	Ветви	Веник подвешенный на матице	Поиск потерянного	40
Коми	Ветви	Веник, которым парились молодые	Скармливали скоту: магия плодородия	46
Коми, русские	Ветви	Баный веник Иванова дня	Веник берет на себя нечисть и становится нечистым. Гадание на нем о будущей судьбе	41

Примечание: ** – Карсикко (фин. – karsikko) – особым образом обрубаемое или срубаемое хвойное дерево. Обычай делать карсикко, достаточно распространенный у финно-угорских народов (карел, финнов и др.), был связан с переходными и иными важными для отдельной личности и родовой общины жизненными ситуациями – свадьбой, удачей на охоте и, конечно, смертью почитаемого человека [44].

The presented data show that different small peoples living in relatively close geographical boundaries sometimes use the same plant species differently. Identical plants do not occupy the same position in folk practices, and they are credited with different magical effects.

There is very little data on the use of wild plants of the local flora in the folk practices of small peoples (for example, Seto, Sami, Vod). As soon as possible, it is necessary to organize expeditions to the places of compact residence of these peoples in order to collect outgoing information about the use of wild plants by them in various folk practices of material and spiritual cultures.

The data presented by us will help develop methodological approaches for the treatment and prevention of various diseases based on the experience of folk practices in the field of traditional medicine and physiotherapy [47, 48].

On the example of the small peoples of the north, living in a number of regions of the North-West of Russia, there are similarities and differences in the use of local wild plant species in various folk practices, including for medical (in folk medicine) and hygiene purposes, care for brides, children, in funeral rites and various beliefs.

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