

BOOK OF ABSTRACTS
THE 2ND BALKANS - CHINA
MINI-SYMPOSIUM ON NATURAL
PRODUCTS AND DRUG DISCOVERY



МИНИСТАРСТВО ПРОСВЕТЕ,
НАУКЕ И ТЕХНОЛОШКОГ РАЗВОЈА



11-13 April, 2019
Belgrade, Serbia

**Institute for Biological Research "Siniša Stanković",
University of Belgrade, Belgrade, Serbia**

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Ethnobotanical study of medicinal plants traditionally used in South-East Serbia (Pčinja district)

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Balkan Peninsula is one of the most important biodiversity centers in Europe. Despite that, the usage of plant species in traditional medicine of some Balkan regions remained largely unexplored in the past. This study aimed to collect and document data on the traditional use of medicinal plants in Pčinja district in South-Eastern Serbia, which is among the least developed regions in Serbia. The survey was carried out using semi-structured interviews and 113 informants were interviewed. Quantitative ethnobotany factors were calculated, allowing us discussing the results.

The informants reported data on 86 medicinal plants belonging to 43 families. The most dominant botanical families were Lamiaceae (30% of species), Asteraceae (26% of species) and Rosaceae (19% of species). Species with the highest number of use reports were *Mentha piperita*, *Hypericum perforatum*, *Matricaria chamomilla*, *Salvia officinalis*, *Urtica dioica*, *Thymus serpyllum* and *Tilia cordata*. The majority of the plants were reported to have 1-3 different usages and the species with most diverse uses were *Hypericum perforatum* and *Urtica dioica*. In Pčinja district folk medicine is primarily used for healing minor diseases with some exceptions. The most frequent medicinal uses were for treating diseases of the digestive system, respiratory system and diseases of the skin and subcutaneous tissue, followed by general and unspecified diseases (such as pain, fever and health prevention). Usually, the administration was primarily oral followed by topical applications. Leaves were dominantly exploited plant parts and the most frequent preparation form was infusion. The current study represents a useful documentation which can contribute to preserving ethnobotanical knowledge in South-Eastern Serbia. For some well-known plant species new applications have been recorded. This can present a good starting point for new investigations.