Floristic study of Pennart in Isfahan province, Iran

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Abstract.

Pennart is a rangeland with a mean height of 1922 m, located to the southwest of Ardestan town, Isfahan Province. In this study, a floristic inventory of the Pennart area was prepared. Two hundred and one plant species were identified, belonging to 136 genera and 43 families. *Asteraceae* and *Brassicaceae* were the major plant families. According to the floristic analysis, therophytes (45.27%) were the dominant life forms and chorological characteristics have shown that the Irano-Turanian region is the most important phytochorion in the study area.

Key words: Ardestan, chorology, flora, life forms, Pennart

Introduction

Iran's territory, with an area of 1,648,195 km², comprises diverse topography of mountains, lowlands and plains, which ensure climate diversity. As climate is the main effective factor in the distribution of plants (Zhao & al. 2018), the country is geographically located in the following main phytogeographic regions: Irano-Turanian (Léonard 1981), Euro-Siberian (Zohary 1973; Akhani 2007) and Saharo-Sindian (Léonard 1981). Climate diversity has also had a considerable impact on the life forms of plants (Tadesse & al. 2017; Khan 2018).

Ardestan is located in the central Iranian plateau, Dasht-e-Kavir, Isfahan Province, with arid and semi-arid climate conditioned by low rainfall and high evaporation. In that area, steppe communities have set in with the dry climate, and xerophyte plants have spread as the dominant vegetation. Nevertheless, great floristic richness can be found at various altitudes and in the piedmonts. Some segments are also covered by rangeland. In the rangelands, anthropogenic activities, overgrazing, and mismanagement have entailed serious ecological degradation (Yazdanshenas & Jafari 2013; Kargar-

Chigani & al. 2017). On the other hand, climate conditions have changed in recent decades resulting in global warming and droughts.

Floristic studies play a crucial role in the conservation and planning of sustainable management policies. These studies also provide important information for evaluation of some ecological issues like biodiversity conservation and regulation (Moradi & al. 2019). Several floristic studies in the Irano-Turanian region in the Isfahan Province have been carried out as follows: Vanak region of Semirom (Parishani 2005), the no-hunting zone of Hanna (Khajeddin & Yeganeh 2010), Yahya Abad of Natanz (Abbasi & al. 2012), the Badrud north region (Abdi & Afsharzadeh 2012), and the Zar Cheshme protected region (Kharazian & Abaeian 2017).

Pennart is a mountainous rangeland to the southwest of Ardestan, which lies on the edges of the Dasht-e Kavir Desert and is known as the *Prunus scoparia* habitat. The current study is the first-ever investigation of Pennart, with the aim of identifying the floristic composition, life-form spectra and geographical plant distribution, as well as of assorting the plants according to their medicinal and poisonous properties.

Material and methods

Study area

The study area is part of Pennart, with approximately 850 ha located at 36°50′24" to 36°52′48" N and 60°53′59" to 61°12′E, and with a mean altitude of 1922 m. This area comprises a V-shaped valley with westerly and easterly aspects, crossed by a seasonal river leading to the Abdamdam waterfall (Fig. 1). According to the data obtained from the Ardestan Synoptic Station, the mean monthly minimum and maximum temperatures are 5.8°C in January and 33.5°C in July, respectively. The mean annual precipitation is about 123 mm. The climate data show that Pennart has suffered severe and long droughts in recent years (Fig. 2).

Data collection

Data were collected in the 2015–2016 period, at a regular interval covering all seasonal variations. The plant

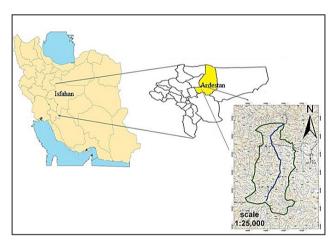


Fig. 1. The position and topographic map of the study area and Abdamdam river in Iran.

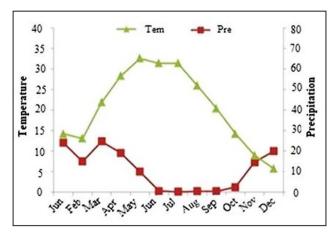


Fig. 2. Ombrothermic diagram for Pennart (1992–2014).

species were identified by using the authentic Floras (Ghahraman 1994; Mobayen 1975–1995; Mozaffarian 2005; Rechinger 1968-2005; Assadi 1988–2016). Life forms were determined following Raunkiaer's method (Raunkiaer 1934) and plant chorotypes were assessed in consultation with botanical literature (Browicz 1983–1996; Akhani 2005; Jankju & al. 2011; Abbasi & al. 2012; Kolahi & Atri 2014; Rahchamani & al. 2014) and *Flora Iranica* (Rechinger 1968–2005). The properties of plants were determined using the available sources (Zargari 1997; Mozaffarian 2012). The voucher specimens were stored in the Herbarium of University of Isfahan (HUI).

Results

Altogether, 201 plant species belonging to 136 genera from 43 plant families were recorded. Three families were related to Pteridophyta and Gymnospermae, the remaining were Angiospermae (Appendix 1). Asteraceae (28 genera, 42 species), Brassicaceae (12 genera, 15 species) and Lamiaceae (11 genera, 16 species) were the largest plant families presented in the study area (Fig. 3), whereas 20 families were represented by only a single species. Euphorbia (9 species) was the largest genus, second came Papaver (5 species), followed by Bromus, Veronica, and Valeriana (4 species each). Chenopodium opulifolium (Amaranthaceae) was recorded for the first time in the Isfahan Province. Therophytes (91 species, 45.27%) were the predominating life forms, followed by hemicryptophytes (69 species, 34.32%), chamaephytes (20 species, 9.95 %), phanerophytes (13 species, 6.47 %), and cryptophytes (7 species, 3.48%) (Fig. 4). The chorological characteristics of the recorded flora are summarized in Table 1. The Irano-Turanian region is

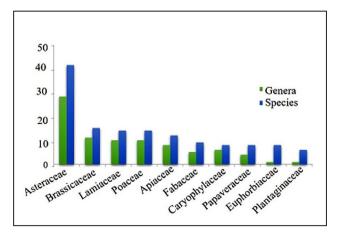


Fig. 3. The largest plant families in the study area.

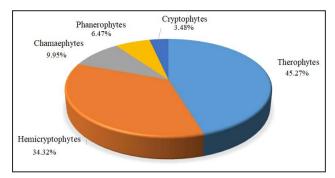


Fig. 4. The pie chart of plant life forms in the study area.

a specific phytogeographic unit with a large number of species (110, 54.72%). Considering the multi-regional elements influenced by the Irano-Turanian species, 98% of the flora of Pennart is also affected by it. Of the identified plants, 111 (55.22%) species were medicinal and a total of 16 plant species had poisonous properties (Appendix 1)

Table 1. Percentage of different chorotypes in the study area. Abbreviations: ES: Euro-Siberian Region, IT: Irano-Turanian Region, M: Mediteranean Region, SS: Saharo-Sindian Region, SA: Saharo-Arabian Region, Pl: Pluriregional, Cosm: Cosmopolite.

Chorotypes	Number of species	Percentage
IT	110	54.72 %
IT, M	20	9.95 %
IT, ES, M	16	7.96%
IT, SS	12	5.97 %
IT, ES	12	5.97 %
Pl	10	4.97 %
Cosm	7	3.48 %
IT, SS, M	5	2.48 %
M	2	1 %
IT, ES, SS	1	0.5 %
ES	1	0.5 %
SA	1	0.5 %
SS	1	0.5 %

Discussion

Analysis of the phytochorion has shown that Pennart belongs to the Irano-Turanian region with 110 (54.72%) corresponding species. *Asteraceae, Brassicaceae*, and *Lamiaceae* were the dominant families, which is in accordance with some other floristic studies of the Irano-Turanian region (Batouli 2004; Khajeddin & Yeganeh 2010; Yavari & Shahgolzari 2010; Abbasi & al. 2012). Furthermore, 29

endemic species of Iran have been found in the study area, 25 of which belonged to the Irano-Turanian region (Appendix 1). Four monotypic genera, including Asperugo (Boraginacea), Zataria (Lamiaceae), Euclidium, and Moriera (Brassicaceae), have been identified, all of them non-endemic to the flora of Iran (Jalili & Jamzad 1999). The most frequent life forms were the therophytes, followed by hemicryptophytes. The frequency of hemicryptophytes such as Astragalus, Cousinia, and Acantholimon, which are more abundant in the mountainous areas of the Irano-Turanian region (Yousofi 2009), was significantly lower in the study area. A probable explanation could be that the area is located in the vicinity of the Dasht-e Kavir Desert, which means a long period of aridity during the growing season. This has resulted in the spread of drought-resistant plants known to be highly tailored to the adverse environmental conditions. Considering the fact that climate changes are important factors (Kazemian & al. 2004) and in view of the recent droughts, the plant species should either adapt to the climate changes or should be replaced with some more compatible species. Another outcome of this condition is the wide spread of annual plants which are known to adapt to aridity and rainfall shortage because of environmental encouragement of their growth (Asri 2003; Hasanzadeh Gorttapeh & Panahy 2007; Khajeddin & Yeganeh 2012). However, dominance of the therophytes in the mountainous regions could be indicative of damages and destruction (Gurgin & al. 2014).

Another reason for the observed degradation of the area might come from early and excessive grazing, which has caused changes in the vegetation. Plenty of thorny and poisonous plants can be regarded as evidence of this fact. *Euphorbia*, the major genus with nine poisonous species, demonstrates degradation caused by grazing pressure (Wu & al. 2015). According to different reports, an increase in the number of some plants such as *Asteraceae* also testifies to degradation of the area (Archibold 1995; Vakili Shahrebabaki & al. 2001; Dolatkhahi & al. 2012). The impressive presence of *Asteraceae* as the largest family in the study area confirms this assumption.

Assessment of biodiversity is imperative for describing the ecological status in the management of natural ecosystems (Abbasi & al. 2016). The pattern of species richness as a main factor of biodiversity

differs along the aspects of the mountains (Yang & al. 2016). The results showed that in that area the western aspect with its large number of species is a more important contributor to the species richness than the eastern one. Furthermore, more than half of the identified plants in the study area had medicinal properties. Considering the global interest in the use of medicinal plants, identification of these plants is essential for protection of the environment (Yazdanshenas & al. 2016).

In general, considering the high species richness in a small area, abundance of medicinal plants, presence of a beautiful seasonal river, and the Abdamdam waterfall, Pennart merits great attention in carrying out research, biodiversity investigation and tourist activities. Therefore, adoption of appropriate conservation and management policies by the responsible organizations is inevitable.

Acknowledgments. The authors are grateful to the University of Isfahan for the support rendered to their research.

Appendix 1. Floristic list of Pennart. Abbreviations: Chorotype: **ES**: Euro-Siberian Region, **IT**: Irano-Turanian Region, **M**: Mediteranean Region, **SS**: Saharo-Sindian Region, **SA**: Saharo-Arabian Region, **Pl**: Pluriregional, **Cosm**: Cosmopolite, Life form: **He**: Hemicryptophytes, **Ch**: Chamaephytes, **Th**: Therophytes, **Cr**: Cryptophytes, **Ph**: Phanerophytes.

Taxa	Chorotype	Life form	Properties	Iran endemic
Pteridophyta				
Equisetaceae				
Equisetum arvense L.	Pl	Cr	*	
Pteridaceae				
Adiantum capillus-veneris L.	M	Cr	*	
Gymnospermae				
Ephedraceae				
Ephedra intermedia Schrenk & C.A. Mey.	IT, SS	He	*	
E. major Host	IT, SS	Ch		
Angiospermae				
Amaranthaceae				
Amaranthus retroflexus L.	IT, ES	Th	*	
Chenopodium album L.	Cosm	Th	**	
C. novopokrovskyanum (Aellen) Uotila	IT	Th		
C. opulifolium Schrad. ex W.D.J. Koch & Ziz	IT	Th		
Amaryllidaceae				
Allium leucosphaerum Aitch. & Baker	IT	Cr	*	
Anacardiaceae				
Pistacia atlantica Desf.	IT	Ph	*	
P. khinjuk Stocks	IT	Ph	*	
P. vera L.	IT	Ph	*	
Apiaceae				
Apium nodiflorum (L.) Lag.	IT, M	He	*	
Eryngium bungei Boiss.	IT	He	*	
Ferula sp.	-	He		
F. assa-foetida L.	IT	He	*	
F. ovina Boiss.	IT	He	*	
Pimpinella aurea DC.	IT, SS	He	*	

Taxa	Chorotype	Life	Properties	Iran
	IT	form He	*	endemic
Prangos uloptera DC. Scandix aucheri Boiss.	IT	пе Th	•	
S. pecten-veneris L.	IT, ES, M	Th		
S. stellata Banks & Sol.	IT, ES, M	Th		
Sium sisarum L.	11, E3, M Pl	He	*	
	Pl	Th	*	
Torilis arvensis (Huds.) Link	IT	He	*	
Zosima absinthiifolia (Vent.) Link	11	пе		
Asparagaceae	IT	Cr		
Leopoldia longipes (Boiss.) Losinsk. Asteraceae	11	Ci		
Achillea santolinoides subsp. wilhelmsii (K.Koch) Greuter	IT, ES	Не	*	
Anthemis odontostephana Boiss.	IT, ES	Th	*	
Calendula arvensis M. Bieb.	11, 33 IT	Th	*	
	11	Th	*	
C. palaestina Boiss.	IT, M	Th	*	
Carduus pycnocephalus L.	•	He		*
C. transcaspicus Gand.	IT, ES	Th	*	
Centaurea benedicta (L.)L.	IT, M IT		*	*
C. ispahanica Boiss.		Не	*	
Cirsium arvense (L.) Scop.	IT	Не	•	*
C. spectabile DC.	IT	Не		*
Cousinia eriobasis Bunge	IT	Не		7
C. myriolepis Rech.f. & Köie	IT	Не	*	*
Echinops cephalotes DC.	IT	Не	•	*
E. macrophyllus Boiss. & Hausskn.	IT, ES	He		7
Filago arenaria (Smoljan.) Chrtek & Holub	IT CC M	Th		
F. eriocephala Guss.	IT, SS, M	Th		
F. hurdwarica (Wall. ex DC.) Wagenitz	IT	Th		
Garhadiolus hedypnois Jaub. & Spach	Pl	Th		
Helichrysum luteoalbum (L.)Rchb.	Cosm	Th	*	*
Hertia angustifolia Kuntze	IT	Ch	4	1
Jurinea berardioides (Boiss.) O.Hoffm.	IT	He	7	
Koelpinia tenuissima Pavlov & Lipsch.	IT	Th	*	
Lactuca orientalis Boiss.	IT	He	*	
L. glauciifolia Boiss.	IT	Th	7	
Launaea acanthodes (Boiss.) Kuntze	IT	Ch		
Outerya carduformis Jaub. & Spach (Cynareae)	IT	He		
Phagnalon nitidum Fresen.	IT	Ch		
P. rupestre (L.) DC.	-	Ch		
Picnomon acarna (L.) Cass.	IT	Th		
Picris strigosa M. Bieb.	IT	Ch		
Pulicaria gnaphalodes (Vent.) Boiss.	IT	Ch	4	
P. undulata (L.) C.A.Mey.	SA	Ch	*	v
Scorzonera mucida Rech.f., Aellen & Esfand.	IT	Cr	.,	*
S. tortuosissima Boiss.	IT	He	*	*
Senecio glaucus L.	IT, SS	Th	*	

Taxa	Chorotype	Life form	Properties	Iran endemic
S. vernalis Waldst. & Kit.	IT	Не		
Seriphidium sieberi (Besser)	IT	Ch	*	
Tanacetum pinnatum Boiss.	IT	He		
Taraxacum roseum Bornm.	IT	He		*
Tragopogon caricifolius Boiss.	IT, SS	He	*	*
T. collinus DC.	IT	He	*	
Zoegea purpurea Fresen.	IT, SS	Th	*	
Berberidaceae				
Berberis integerrima Bunge	IT, M	Ph	*	
Boraginaceae				
Asperugo procumbens L.	IT, ES, M	Th	*	
Nonea caspica (Willd.) G. Don	IT, ES	Th	*	
Rochelia disperma (L.f.) K. Koch	IT	Th	*	
Brassicaceae				
Chorispora persica Boiss.	IT	Th	*	*
C. tenella (Pall.) DC.	IT, M	Th		
Clypeola jonthlaspi L.	IT, M	Th		
Descurainia sophia (L.) Webb ex Prantl	IT, ES, M	Th	*	
Draba minima (C.A. Mey.) Steud.	IT, ES	Th		
Euclidium syriacum (L.) R. Br.	IT, M	Th		
Lepidium draba L.	IT, M	Cr	*	
Malcolmia africana (L.) R. Br.	IT	Th		
Meniocus linifolius (Stephan ex Willd.) DC.	IT	Th	*	
Moriera spinosa Boiss.	IT	Ch	*	
Pseudocamelina glaucophylla (DC.) N. Busch	IT, M	He		
Sisymbrium integerrimum Rech. f. & Aellen	IT	He	*	*
S. loeselii L.	IT	Th		
Sterigmostemum sulphureum Bornm.	IT	Th		
	IT	Th		
Strigosella strigosa (Boiss.) Botsch Capparaceae	11	111		
Capparis spinosa L.	IT, SS, M	Ch	*	
Caprifoliaceae	11, 33, 141	CII		
Lomelosia olivieri (Coult.) Greuter & Burdet	IT	He	*	
Valeriana oxyrhyncha (Fisch. & C.A. Mey.) Christenh. & Byng	IT	Th		
V. plagiostephana (Fisch. & C.A. Mey.) Christenh. & Byng	IT, ES	Th		
V. szovitsiana (Fisch. & C.A. Mey.) Christenh. & Byng	IT, L3	Th		
V. tuberculata (Boiss.) Christenh. & Byng	IT	Th		
Caryophylaceae	11	111		
* = *	IT	Ch	*	*
Acanthophyllum crassifolium Boiss. A. laxiusculum Schiman-Czeika	IT IT	Ch		
Cerastium dichotomum L.	IT IT	Cn Th		
Holosteum umbellatum L.		rn Th		
	IT, M			
Lepyrodiclis holosteoides (C.A. Mey.) Fenzl ex Fisch. & C.A. Mey.		Th		
L. stellarioides Schrenk Mingartia grangi (Paice) Parama	IT	Th		
Minuartia meyeri (Boiss.) Bornm.	IT	Th		

Taxa	Chorotype	Life form	Properties	Iran endemic
Silene conoidea L.	M	Th	*	
Stellaria apetala Ucria	IT, SS, M	Th		
Cyperaceae				
Scirpoides holoschoenus (L.) Soják	IT	He		
Euphorbiaceae				
Chrozophora tinctoria (L.) A. Juss.	IT	Th		
Euphorbia densa Schrenk	IT	Th	**	
E. granulata Forssk.	SS	He	***	
E. helioscopia L.	IT	Th	***	
E. heteradena Jaub. & Spach	IT	He	***	
E. microsciadia Boiss.	IT	He	***	*
E. microsphaera Boiss.	IT	Th	**	
E. peplus L.	IT, M	Th	***	
E. szovitsii Fisch. & C.A. Mey.	IT	Th	**	
E. teheranica Boiss.	IT	Th	**	*
Fabaceae				
Alhagi maurorum Medik.	IT	He	*	
Astragalus sp.	IT	-		
A. verus Olivier	IT	Ch	*	*
Ebenus stellata Boiss.	IT, SS	Ch	*	
Glycyrrhiza glabra L.	IT, ES, M	He	*	
Medicago lupulina L.	Pl	He		
M. persica (Boiss.) E. Small	IT	He		*
M. sativa L.	IT	He	***	
Trigonella aphanoneura Rech.f.	IT	Th	*	*
T. spicata Sm.	IT, M	Th		
Geraniaceae				
Erodium pulverulentum (Cav.) Willd.	IT, M	Th	*	
E. cicutarium (L.) L'Hér.	Pl	Th	*	
Iridaceae				
Iris songarica Schrenk	IT	Cr	*	
Juncaceae				
Juncus inflexus L.	Pl	He	**	
Lamiaceae				
Eremostachys molucelloides Bunge	IT, SS	He	*	
Hymenocrater bituminosus Fisch. & C.A. Mey.	IT	He	*	
Lamium amplexicaule L.	IT, ES, SS	Th	*	
Marrubium vulgare L.	Pl	He	*	
Mentha longifolia (L.) L.	IT	He	*	*
M. spicata L.	ES	He	*	
Nepeta bracteata Benth.	IT	Th	*	
N. ispahanica Boiss.	IT	Th	*	*
N. prostrata Benth.	IT	He		*
Salvia ceratophylla L.	IT	He		
S. eremophila Boiss.	IT	Ch	*	*

Таха	Chorotype		Properties	Iran endemic
S. palaestina Benth.	IT, SS	He		
Stachys inflata Benth.	Cosm	He	*	
Teucrium polium L.	IT	Ch	*	
Zataria multiflora Boiss.	IT, SS	Ch	*	
Ziziphora tenuior L.	IT	Th	*	
Lythraceae				
Lythrum salicaria L.	Pl	He	*	
Malvaceae				
Alcea kurdica (Schltdl.) Alef.	IT, ES, M	He	*	
Malva neglecta Wallr.	IT, ES, M	He	*	
M. sylvestris L.	IT	He	*	
Moraceae				
Ficus johannis Boiss.	IT, M	Ph	*	
Morus alba L.	IT	Ph	*	
Nitrariaceae				
Peganum harmala L.	IT, SS, M	He	***	
Oleaceae				
Fraxinus angustifolia Vahl	IT, ES, M	Ph	*	*
Orobanchaceae				
Orobanche aegyptiaca Pers.	IT, ES, M	Th		
Papaveraceae				
Fumaria vaillantii Loisel.	IT	Th	*	
F. asepala Boiss.	IT, ES, M	Th	*	
Glaucium elegans Fisch. & C.A. Mey.	IT	Th		
Hypecoum pendulum L.	IT, M	Th		
Papaver decaisnei Hochst. & Steud. ex Elkan	ÍT	Th	*	
P. dubium L.	IT	Th	*	
P. tenuifolium Boiss. & Hohen.	IT	Th		*
P. dodecandrum (Forssk.) Medik.	IT, SS, M	Th	*	
P. refractum (DC.) K F.Gunther	IT	Th		
Plantaginaceae				
Plantago evacina Boiss.	IT	Th		*
P. lanceolata L.	Cosm	Не	*	
P. major L.	IT, ES	Не	*	
Veronica campylopoda Boiss.	IT	Th		
V. hederifolia L.	IT, ES, M	Th		
V. anagalloides Guss.	IT, ES	Th	*	
V. anagallis-aquatica L.	IT, ES	Th	*	
Plumbaginaceae	11, 20	111		
Acantholimon aspadanum Bunge	IT	Ch	*	*
Poaceae	1.1	011		
Bromus danthoniae Trin.	IT	Th		
B. madritensis L.	IT, M	Th		

Taxa	Chorotype	Life	Properties	Iran endemic
B. tectorum L.	IT, ES, M	form Th		endemic
B. tomentosus Trin.	II, ES, M IT	He		
Cenchrus orientalis (Rich.) Morrone	IT, SS	He		
Henrardia persica (Boiss.) C.E. Hubb.	IT	Th		
Hordeum murinum subsp. glaucum (Steud.) Tzvelev	IT, ES, M	Th		
Lolium rigidum Gaudin	IT, M	He		
Poa nemoralis L.	Cosm	He		
Schismus arabicus Nees	IT	Th		
Setaria viridis (L.) P. Beauv.	IT, M	Th	*	
Stipa barbata Desf.	IT	He	*	
S. hohenackeriana Trin. & Rupr.	IT	He		
Taeniatherum caput-medusae (L.) Nevski	IT	Th		
Vulpia myuros (L.) C.C. Gmel.	IT, M	Th		
Polygonaceae	11, 111	111		
Pteropyrum aucheri Jaub. & Spach	IT	Ph	*	*
Rheum ribes L.	IT	Не	*	
Rumex conglomeratus Murray	IT, ES	Не	*	
Primulaceae	,			
Samolus valerandi L.	Cosm	Не	*	
Ranunculaceae				
Ranunculus chius DC.	IT, ES, M	Th	**	
R. macropodoides Briq.	IT	Th	***	
Resedaceae				
Reseda buhseana Müll. Arg.	IT	He	*	*
Rosaceae				
Prunus scoparia (Spach) C.K. Schneid.	IT	Ph	*	
Sanguisorba minor Scop.	IT, ES, M	He	*	
Rubiaceae				
Galium tricornutum Dandy	IT, M	Th		
Salicaceae				
Salix alba L.	IT, ES, M	Ph	*	
Scrophulariaceae				
Scrophularia leucoclada Bunge	IT	Ch		
Verbascum speciosum Schrad.	IT	He		
Simaroubaceae				
Ailanthus altissima (Mill.) Swingle	Pl	Ph	*	
Solanaceae				
Lycium depressum Stocks	IT	Ph	*	
Solanum americanum Mill.	Cosm	Th	***	
Tamaricaceae				
Tamarix ramosissima Ledeb.	IT, ES	Ph	*	

^{*:} medicinal plants, **: poisonous plants, ***: medicinal and poisonous plants

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