The Contribution of a Wild Edible Plant to Human Nutrition in Tunceli Region of Turkey

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The plants have been used as food, dye, ornamental and medicinal purposes by people since old ages. Wild plant species provide minerals, fibre, vitamins and essential fatty acids and also enhance taste and colour in diets. Wild edible plants can also be used to prevent chronic diseases (cardiovascular disease, diabetes) in general population, as well as diseases due to under nutrition (anemia, stunting) [1]. Ethno botanical studies are becoming more popular throughout the world, and these studies are focused on documenting the traditional uses of plants by native cultures [2,3].

Anchusa azurea is a species of flowering plant known by the common name Italian bugloss. It is a bristly perennial which reaches just over half a meter in height. It has straight lance-shaped leaves and petite tubular flowers of bright violet-blue. This species are native to Europe and western Asia and eastern Maghreb but they are well-known elsewhere as a noxious weed. In Crete, it is called agoglossos and the locals eat the tender stems as boiled, steamed or fried.

Wild edible plants are widespread in Tunceli Region of Turkey and people has been consumed them as food and used them for some medicinal purposes due to economical and geographical reasons. The antioxidant content of wild edible plant may contribute to the protection human from diseases. Because plant foods contain many different classes and types of antioxidants, be aware of their total antioxidant capacity, which is the cumulative capacity of food components to scavenge free radicals, would be useful for epidemiologic purposes. In this study, Anchusa azurea which was used as food in Tunceli city region was investigated. Total phenolic content of Anchusa azurea was determined using Folin–Ciocalteau reagent. The absorbance was measured at 760 nm (Schimadzu-1800 UV/VIS spectrophotometer) and the total phenolic content was expressed as mg of gallic acid equivalents per g dry material. Minerals such as Na, K, Ca, Mg and Mn of Anchusa azurea were determined by Inductively Coupled Plasma Optical Emission Spectrometry (ICP-OES).

KEYWORDS: wild edible plant, anchusa azurea, total phenolic content, minerals, UV/VIS, ICP-OES

REFERENCES: