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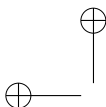
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Medicinal plants used by “Passo da Ilha” rural community in the city of Pato Branco, southern Brazil

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ABSTRACT

The scope of this work was to rescue and document the traditional knowledge regarding the medicinal plants used by Passo da Ilha rural community, in Pato Branco, Paraná State, Southern Brazil (26°11' S, 52°36' W and 760 m high). Structured interviews were made in field research with 16 informants who had the traditional knowledge about medicinal plants. The research was carried out from October to December 2000. The plants were collected in the field, identified and their vouchers were housed at the Herbarium “Irina Delanova De Gemtchjnicov” (BOTU) of São Paulo State University, in Botucatu. A total of 47 botanical families and 114 species of medicinal plants were identified. These plants were suitable for more than 30 different medicinal uses. The residents are mainly of European descent, which justifies the presence of many exotic plants. The knowledge on how to use medicinal plants properly is held mainly by the females, and decreases in the newer generations, denoting “cultural erosion” in progress.

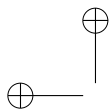
Key words: cultural erosion, ethnobotany, medicinal plants, traditional knowledge.

INTRODUCTION

The use of medicinal plants and their derived forms have produced the basis of the therapeutics through the centuries. With the Chemistry evolution, starting from the 19th century, the way in which plants were used changed: from the direct use of these plants alone or mixed to the artificial reproduction of isolated active substances through active molecules. As a consequence, the plants that form these substances were considered to be less important.

Therefore, the relative knowledge of the medici-

of this, most of the world's population has little access to conventional medical care – which relies on the prescription of synthetic medication that is usually expensive for them. In this sense, a considerable problem is the limited availability of synthetic medications for the poorer populations in the health service. One of the viable and inexpensive alternatives to access medication would be the use of medicinal plants and their mixtures by the community as a complementary form of therapeutics. Most populations present high cultural attachment to their traditions, a factor that would facilitate the development



tional uses of the plants in the communities (Farnsworth et al. 1985, Farnsworth 1988).

According to Farnsworth et al. (1985), and Elizabetzsky (1991, 2000), a fairly high percentage of useful plant-derived drugs was discovered as a result of scientific research of well-known plants used in traditional medicine, and the authors have concluded that this is a good approach for discovering other useful drugs derived from plants.

The scope of this work was to rescue and document the traditional knowledge regarding the medicinal plants used by the population of the rural community called “Passo da Ilha” in Pato Branco, Paraná State, Brazil.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

“Passo da Ilha” rural community in Pato Branco, Paraná State, Brazil, (26°11' S; 52°36' W) (Fig. 1), is mainly composed by small properties where subsistence agriculture is practiced. The first objective of this work was to have discussions in informal meetings with the community, so that they understand and allow the activities that would be carried out. The ethnobotanical survey was conducted by structured interviews with 16 informants who had the knowledge of medicinal plants usage in their families (Martin 1995, Alexiades 1996). The interviews were carried out from October to December 2000.

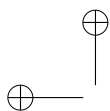
The plants were collected in field, pressed and labeled (Martin 1995, Ming 1995, Alexiades 1996). Plant species were identified and voucher specimens housed at the Herbarium “Irina Delanova De Gemtchjnicov” (BOTU) of São Paulo State University in Botucatu. For protection purposes, regarding the genetic resources and the traditional knowledge of medicinal use of these plants by the community, no information related to medicinal use was reported. This publication option is in agreement with other researcher's thoughts (Laird and Kate 2002) and we found it to be the more ethical form to communicate the results in ethnobotanical survey.

ilies were *Asteraceae* and *Lamiaceae*, with 20 and 16 species, respectively (Table I). These data agree with those of Dorigoni et al. (2001) and Garlet and Irgang (2001), in ethnobotanical studies that were carried out in the South of Brazil, where the dominant species was *Asteraceae*, followed by *Lamiaceae*. The high number of species mentioned for medicinal use is in contrast with the few informants interviewed (16), which shows a great knowledge of medicinal plants mainly by elderly people. These numbers reflect the value of the traditional knowledge kept by the elderly people from communities and their importance to both cultural and biological conservation (Heinrich et al. 1998, Amorozo 2002, Monteiro et al. 2006).

The medicinal plants were suitable for more than 30 different medicinal uses, predominantly for respiratory diseases and stomachic diseases, with 17.22% (57 citations) and 9.97% (33 citations), respectively (Table II). These data agree with those of Garlet and Irgang (2001) and Marodin and Baptista (2001) who found similar results in ethnobotanical studies that were carried out in the South of Brazil and in the West of Brazil by Amorozo (2002), where respiratory and stomachic diseases are the two main health problems. The cold and wet weather in winter could worsen the health conditions of the inhabitants in most parts of Paraná State and affect their respiratory conditions.

Motomiya et al. (2004), while investigating the use of medicinal plants in Cassilândia – Mato Grosso, Brazil, noticed that the most frequently mentioned plants are those used for stomach, intestine and breathing illness treatment such as flu, bronchitis and cough. Franco and Barros (2006) found that the greatest variety of different medicinal plants was for the control of breathing illnesses, coming to 26.7%, in Esperantina – Piauí, Brazil.

Figure 2 shows that many medicinal species were recurrently mentioned by different informants possibly due to the fact that they are long-standing inhabitants of the locations (Table III) and exchange plants and information. A great number of exotic plants were listed in the interviews (Fig. 2), and this is probably due to the



MEDICINAL PLANTS USED BY PASSO DA ILHA RURAL COMMUNITY

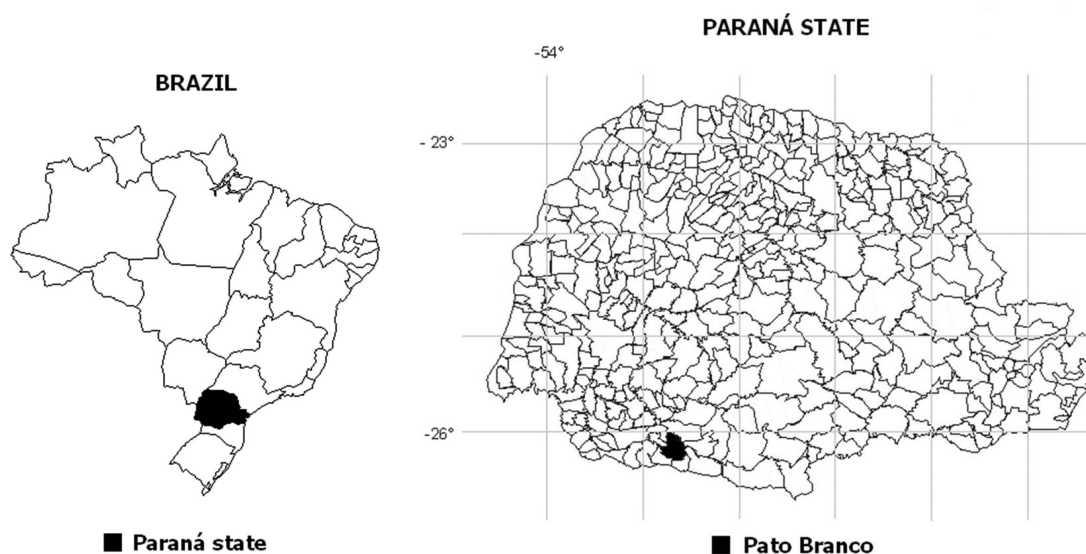


Fig. 1 – Geographical location of Pato Branco-PR, Southern Brazil (26°11' S; 52°36' W).

TABLE I
Botanical families and the number of species identified during the ethnobotanical survey carried out in “Passo da Ilha” rural community, in the city of Pato Branco, Southern Brazil.

Botanical families	¹ spp.	Botanical families	¹ spp.	Botanical families	¹ spp.
Agavaceae	1	Cucurbitaceae	1	Plantaginaceae	2
Alismataceae	1	Equisetaceae	1	Poaceae	2
Aloeaceae	1	Euphorbiaceae	2	Polygonaceae	1
Amaranthaceae	2	Fabaceae	4	Polypodiaceae	1
Apiaceae	3	Lamiaceae	16	Pteridaceae	2
Aristolochiaceae	1	Lauraceae	2	Punicaceae	1
Asteraceae	20	Liliaceae	3	Rosaceae	6
Bignoniaceae	1	Lythraceae	1	Rutaceae	1
Boraginaceae	1	Malvaceae	2	Simaroubaceae	1
Brassicaceae	3	Mimosaceae	1	Solanaceae	2
Caesalpinaceae	3	Moraceae	1	Urticaceae	1
Caprifoliaceae	1	Myrtaceae	5	Verbenaceae	4
Celastraceae	2	Papaveraceae	1	Violaceae	1
Chenopodiaceae	1	Passifloraceae	1	Vitaceae	1
Commelinaceae	1	Phytolaccaceae	1	Zingiberaceae	2
Crassulaceae	1	Piperaceae	1		

¹Number of different species found per botanical family.

ancestry. Paraná State is one of the Brazilian States that has received waves of European immigrants since end

I). These data are similar to those observed by D et al. (2001), Garlet and Irgang (2001) and Maro



TABLE II
Number and percentage of citations of the ethnotherapeutic uses by different informants during the ethnobotanical survey carried out in “Passo da Ilha” rural community, in the city of Pato Branco, Southern Brazil.

Ethnotherapeutic uses	Number of recurrently mentioned species	Percentage of recurrently mentioned species
Hypertension	6	1.81
Heart diseases	6	1.81
Urinary bladder diseases	7	2.11
Worms	7	2.11
Pains in the body	8	2.42
Anxiety	9	2.72
Fever	9	2.72
Hepatitis	9	2.72
Migraine	11	3.32
Infections	12	3.63
Bruise	14	4.23
Feminine diseases	14	4.23
Renal diseases	16	4.83
Intestinal diseases	26	7.85
Blood diseases	32	9.67
Stomachic diseases	33	9.97
Respiratory diseases	57	17.22
Others (less than five times mentioned)	55	16.62
Total	331	100.00

TABLE III
The informants’ gender and time of living in “Passo da Ilha” rural community, in the city of Pato Branco, Southern Brazil.

Informants	Gender	Amount of years living in the place	Informants	Gender	Amount of years living in the place
1	♀	23	9	♀	25
2	♀	23	10	♂	23
3	♀	20	11	♀	27
4	♀	24	12	♀	64
5	♀	15	13	♀	44
6	♀	20	14	♀	65
7	♂	20	15	♀	30

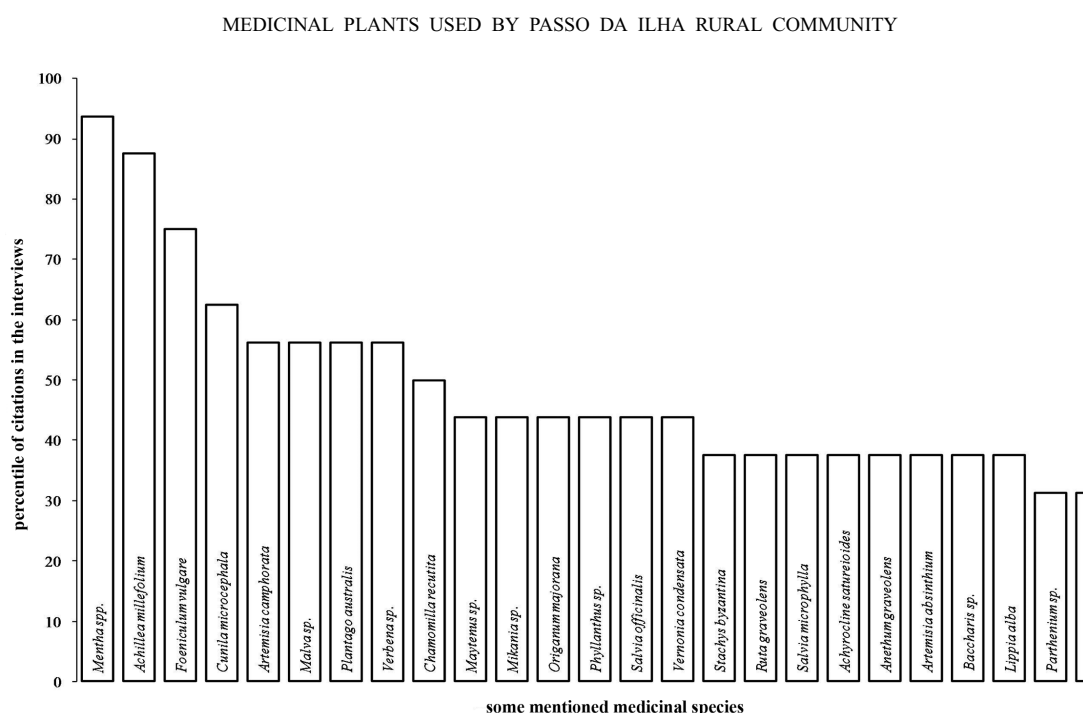


Fig. 2 – Percentages of recurrently mentioned species from different informants during the ethnobotanical survey carried out in “Passo da Ilha” rural community, in the city of Pato Branco, Southern Brazil.

Until 19th century the inhabitants of Paraná were indigenous and belonged to the Xetá, Guarani and Kaingang ethnic groups. The availability of land possessing one of the biggest reserves of *Araucaria angustifolia* (Brazilian pine) in Brazil and the regime of free properties attracted the immigrants to the region of Pato Branco (D.T.P. Menosso, unpublished data). It has been known that, between 1903 and 1910, there was the first settling of European immigrants in Pato Branco (Votolini 1996).

The question of gender related to the sharing of knowledge shows that the transfer of knowledge through the generations about the use of medicinal plants is of women’s responsibility. As a result, it is the mothers and grandmothers’ duty to look for some therapeutical resource when a relative is ill (Chrisman 1977).

According to Davim et al. (2003), women have been considered the custodians of the family in a dedicated and caring manner for years, assuring good health and a quick recovery in the event of an illness. They have

As reported by Monteiro et al. (2006), the differences in knowledge related to gender can be affected by cultural oscillations concerning factors such as the homogeneous distribution of medicinal plant knowledge and the generally small native population.

However, in Figure 3 a clear tendency of loss of this knowledge is noticed, as the youngest informants mentioned a lower number of plants than the older ones. This tendency shows the need of works about the recovery and practice of the knowledge of medicinal plants, clearly important in communities that lack therapeutic resources for the combat of illnesses.

Some authors have discussed this issue (Hart et al. 2000, Begossi et al. 2002, Amorozo 2003). The loss of that knowledge could be associated with the cultural disconnection of the generations.

All information found in this research, based on the scientific knowledge, was returned to the community through educational programs. When the ethnobotanical research was finished, a second study



APPENDIX I

List of medicinal plants used in “Passo da Ilha” rural community, in the city of Pato Branco, Southern Brazil.

MF = mentioning frequency; N = native; E = exotic; HB = herbaceous; SB = shrub; SS = subshrub;

AR = arboreous; EP = epiphyte; PC = plant creeper; A = annual; B = biennial; P = perennial.

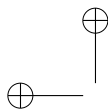
Botanical name	Common name	Voucher #	MF	N/E	Growing habit
Agavaceae					
<i>Sansevieria zeylanica</i> Willd.	espada-de-são jorge	24029	1	E	HB/P
Alismataceae					
<i>Echinodorus grandiflorus</i> (Cham. and Schltdl.) Micheli	chapéu-de-couro	24030	3	N	HB/P
Aloaceae					
<i>Aloe sp.</i>	babosa fininha	24031	4	E	HB/P
Amaranthaceae					
<i>Alternanthera brasiliana</i> (L.) Kuntze	terramicina; penicilina	24032	6	N	HB/P
<i>Gomphrena celosioides</i> Mart.	perpétua	24033	1	N	HB or SS/P
Apiaceae					
<i>Anethum graveolens</i> L.	endro; aipo; salsão; aipão	24034	6	E	HB/A
<i>Foeniculum vulgare</i> Mill.	endro; funcho	24035	12	E	HB/P
<i>Petroselinum crispum</i> (Mill.) Nyman ex A.W. Hill	salsinha	24036	4	E	HB/B
Aristolochiaceae					
<i>Aristolochia triangularis</i> Cham.	cipó-mil-homem; mil-homem	24037	3	N	PC/HB/P
Asteraceae					
<i>Achillea millefolium</i> L.	pronto-alívio; mil-folhas; novalgina	24038	14	E	HB/P
<i>Achyrocline satureioides</i> (Lam.) DC.	marcela	24039	6	N	HB/P
<i>Arctium minus</i> (Hill) Bernh.	bardana; terramicina	24040	1	E	SB/B
<i>Artemisia absinthium</i> L.	losna	24041	6	E	SS/P
<i>Artemisia camphorata</i> Vill.	cânfora	24042	9	E	SS/P
<i>Artemisia vulgaris</i> L.	artemisia	24043	2	E	HB/P
<i>Baccharis articulata</i> (Lam.) Pers	carqueja	24044	6	N	SS/P
<i>Bidens pilosa</i> L.	picão-preto	24045	3	N	HB/A
<i>Calendula officinalis</i> L.	calêndula	24046	1	E	HB/A or B
<i>Chamomilla recutita</i> (L.) Rauschert	camomila; maçanilha	24047	8	E	HB/A
<i>Cynara scolymus</i> L.	alcachofra	24048	4	E	HB/P
<i>Elephantopus mollis</i> Kunth	suçuaia	24049	3	N	HB/P
<i>Gochnatia polymorpha</i> (Less.) Cabr.	cambará	24050	1	N	AR/P
<i>Mikania glomerata</i> Spreng.	guaco	24051	7	N	PC/P
<i>Parthenium hysterophorus</i> L.	artemisia; crisântemo	24052	5	E	HB/A or P
<i>Senecio brasiliensis</i> Less.	maria-mole	24053	1	N	HB/P
<i>Tanacetum vulgare</i> L.	catinga-de-mulata; artemisia	24054	5	E	SS/P
<i>Taraxacum officinale</i> Weber	pesacam, dente-de-leão	24055	1	E	HB/A or P
<i>Vernonia condensata</i> Baker	figatil	24056	7	E	SB/P
<i>Wedelia paludosa</i> DC.	amarelinho	24057	1	N	HB/P
Bignoneaceae					
<i>Jacaranda sp.</i>	carova; paineira	24058	2	N	AR/P
Boraginaceae					
<i>Symphytum officinale</i> L.	confrei	24059	2	E	HB/P
Brassicaceae					
<i>Brassica oleracea</i> var. <i>acephala</i>	couve	24060	1	E	HB/A
<i>Coronopus didymus</i> (L.) Smith	mentruz	24061	3	E	HB/A



MEDICINAL PLANTS USED BY PASSO DA ILHA RURAL COMMUNITY

APPENDIX I (continuation)

Botanical name	Common name	Voucher #	MF	N/E	Growing habit
Caesalpiniaceae					
<i>Bauhinia forficata</i> Link.	pata-de-vaca	24063	1	N	AR/P
<i>Bauhinia microstachia</i> (Raddi.) Macbr.	cipó-escada	24064	1	N	PC/P
<i>Senna</i> sp.	sene	24065	1	N	SB/P
Caprifoliaceae					
<i>Sambucus australis</i> Cham. and Schldtl.	sabugueiro	24066	1	N	AR/P
Celastraceae					
<i>Maythenus aquifolium</i> Mart.	cancorosa	24067	5	N	AR/P
<i>Maythenus ilicifolia</i> Reissek	espinheira-santa	24068	2	N	AR/P
Chenopodiaceae					
<i>Chenopodium ambrosioides</i> L.	santa-maria	24069	2	N	HB/P or A
Comelinaceae					
<i>Tradescantia elongata</i> Meyer	troperova	24070	1	N	HB/P
Crassulaceae					
<i>Bryophyllum pinnatum</i> (Lam.) Oken	folha-gorda; folha-da-fortuna	24071	1	N	HB/P
Cucurbitaceae					
<i>Cayaponia tayuya</i> Vell.	taiuiá	24072	1	N	PC/P
Equisetaceae					
<i>Equisetum pyramidale</i> Goldn.	cavalinha	24073	1	N	SS/P
Euphorbiaceae					
<i>Euphorbia prostrata</i> Ait.	quebra-pedra-rasteiro	24074	1	E	HB/A
<i>Phyllanthus</i> sp.	quebra-pedra	24075	7	N	HB/P
Fabaceae					
<i>Acacia plumosa</i> Lowe	unha-de-gato	24076	3	N	SB-PC/P
<i>Dalbergia</i> sp.	gabriúva	24077	1	N	AR/P
<i>Desmodium adscendens</i> (Sw.) DC.	pega-pega	24078	1	N	HB/P
<i>Medicago sativa</i> L.	alfafa	24079	1	E	HB/P
Lamiaceae					
<i>Cunila microcephala</i> Benth.	poejo	24080	10	N	HB/P
<i>Lavandula angustifolia</i> Mill.	alfazema; osmarim	24081	2	E	SS/P
<i>Leonotis nepetaefolia</i> (L.) R.Br.	cordão-de-frade	24082	1	E	HB-SS/A
<i>Leonurus sibiricus</i> L.	arnica	24083	2	E	HB/A or B
<i>Melissa officinalis</i> L.	cidreira; melissa	24084	3	E	HB/P
<i>Mentha citrata</i> Ehrh.	alevante	24085	1	E	HB/P
<i>Mentha</i> spp.	hortelã; mentinha	24086	15	E	HB/P
<i>Nepeta cataria</i> L.	cidreira; melissa; cidró	24087	4	E	HB/P
<i>Ocimum selloi</i> Benth.	alfavaca	24088	2	N	SS/P
<i>Origanum majorana</i> L.	manjerona	24089	7	E	HB/P
<i>Origanum vulgare</i> L.	orégano	24090	1	E	HB/P
<i>Plectranthus barbatus</i> Andrews	boldo-do-chile	24091	1	E	HB-SS/P
<i>Rosmarinus officinalis</i> L.	alecrim	24092	3	E	SS/P
<i>Salvia microphylla</i> H.B.K.	melhoral; melhorar	24093	6	E	HB-SS/P
<i>Salvia officinalis</i> L.	sábia; sálvia	24094	7	E	HB/P
<i>Stachys byzantina</i> K. Koch ex Scheele	pulmonária	24095	6	E	HB/P
Lauraceae					
<i>Laurus nobilis</i> L.	louro	24096	2	E	SB-AR/P
<i>Persea americana</i> Mill.	abacate	24097	1	E	AR/P
Liliaceae					
<i>Allium cepa</i> L.	cebola	24098	1	E	HB/P



APPENDIX I (continuation)

Botanical name	Common name	Voucher #	MF	N/E	Growing habit
Lythraceae					
<i>Cuphea carthaginensis</i> (Jacq.) Macbr.	sete-sangrias	24101	3	N	HB/A
Malvaceae					
<i>Malva sylvestris</i> L.	malva	24102	9	E	HB/B or P
<i>Sida rhombifolia</i> L.	guanchuma	24103	2	N	HB-SS/A or P
Mimosaceae					
<i>Anadenanthera</i> sp.	anjico	24104	1	N	AR/P
Moraceae					
<i>Morus alba</i> L.	amora-branca	24105	1	E	SB-AR/P
Myrtaceae					
<i>Campomanesia xanthocarpa</i> O.Berg	guavirova; gaviroma; gabirola	24106	1	N	AR/P
<i>Eucalyptus</i> sp.	eucalipto	24107	2	E	AR/P
<i>Eugenia involucrata</i> DC.	cereja	24108	1	N	AR/P
<i>Eugenia uniflora</i> L.	pitanga	24109	4	N	AR/P
<i>Myrciaria cauliflora</i> (DC.) Berg.	jaboticaba	24110	1	N	AR/P
Papaveraceae					
<i>Argemone mexicana</i> L.	cardo-santo	24111	1	E	HB/A
Passifloraceae					
<i>Passiflora alata</i> Dryander	maracujá	24112	1	N	PC/P
Phytolaccaceae					
<i>Petiveria alliacea</i> L.	guiné	24113	5	N	SS-SB/P
Piperaceae					
<i>Piper mikanianum</i> (Kunth) Steud.	pariparoba	24114	3	N	SS-SB/P
Plantaginaceae					
<i>Plantago australis</i> Lam.	tansagem	24115	9	N	HB/A
<i>Plantago major</i> L.	tansagem	24116	1	E	HB/B-P
Poaceae					
<i>Bambusa</i> sp.	taquara	24117	1	E	SB/P
<i>Cymbopogon citratus</i> (DC.) Stapf	capim-limão; cidreira	24118	4	E	HB/P
Polygonaceae					
<i>Polygonum</i> sp.	erva-de-bixo	24119	3	E	HB/A-P
Polipodiaceae					
<i>Microgramma squamulosa</i> (Kaulf.) Sota	sordinha	24120	1	N	PC/HB/P
Pteridaceae					
<i>Adiantum raddianum</i> Presl.	avenca	24121	4	E	HB/P
<i>Adiantopsis chlorophylla</i> (Sw.) Fée	samambaia-roxa	24122	1	E	HB/P
Punicaceae					
<i>Punica granatum</i> L.	romã	24123	1	E	SB-AR/P
Rosaceae					
<i>Agrimonia eupatoria</i> L.	agrimonia	24124	1	E	HB/P
<i>Eriobotrya japonica</i> (Thunb.) Lindley	ameixeira-de-inverno; ameixa	24125	3	E	AR/P
<i>Fragaria vesca</i> L.	morango	24126	1	E	HB/P
<i>Prunus persica</i> (L.) Batsch.	pêssego	24127	1	E	AR/P
<i>Rosa</i> sp.	rosa	24128	1	E	SS/P
<i>Rubus brasiliensis</i> Mart.	amora-branca	24129	1	N	SB/P
Rutaceae					
<i>Ruta graveolens</i> L.	arruda	24130	6	E	SS/P
Simarubaceae					



MEDICINAL PLANTS USED BY PASSO DA ILHA RURAL COMMUNITY

APPENDIX I (continuation)

Botanical name	Common name	Voucher #	MF	N/E	Growing habit
Solanaceae					
<i>Solanum lycopersicum</i> L.	folha-de-tomate	24132	1	E	HB/A-P
<i>Solanum</i> sp.	erva-de-galinha	24133	1	N	SS/A-P
Urticaceae					
<i>Urera baccifera</i> (L.) Gaud.	urtigão	24134	1	N	SB/P
Verbenaceae					
<i>Stachytarpheta cayennensis</i> (Rich.) Vahl	gervão	24135	9	N	SS/P
<i>Aloysia citriodora</i> Palau	cidró	24136	1	E	SB/P
<i>Lippia alba</i> (Mill.) N.E.Br.	erva-cidreira; salva; sálvia	24137	6	N	SS/P
<i>Vitex megapota mica</i> (Spreng.) Moldenke	tarumã	24138	2	N	SB/P
Violaceae					
<i>Viola tricolor</i> L.	violeta	24139	3	E	HB/P
Vitaceae					
<i>Vitis vinifera</i> L.	parreira	24140	1	E	PC/P
Zingiberaceae					
<i>Zingiber officinalis</i> Rosc.	gengibre	24141	1	E	HB/P
<i>Alpinia zerumbet</i> (Pers.) B.L. Burt. and R.M.Sm.	nós-moscada	24142	1	E	HB/P

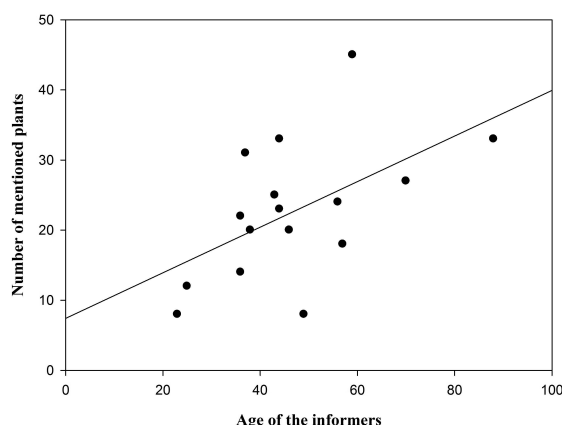


Fig. 3 – The influence of the informants’ age on the number of plants mentioned during the ethnobotanical survey carried out in “Passo da Ilha” rural community, in the city of Pato Branco, Southern Brazil.

consumer’s profile, some of the informers received financial support and orientation to start commercial cultivation of medicinal plants and spices.

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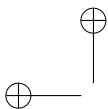
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RESUMO

O objetivo deste trabalho foi resgatar e documentar o conhecimento popular referente às plantas medicinais utilizadas na comunidade rural do Passo da Ilha, em Pato Branco (26°11’ S, 52°36’ W e 760 m de altitude). Optou-se por utilizar o modelo de entrevista estruturada com 16 informantes os quais possuíam o conhecimento sobre o uso das plantas medicinais em suas famílias. O período da realização das entrevistas foi de outubro a dezembro de 2000. As plantas foram coletadas no campo, identificadas e “vouchers” depositados no Herbário “Irina Delanova De Gemtel” (BOTU) da Universidade Estadual Paulista, em Botucatu. Foram identificadas 47 famílias botânicas e 114 espécies de plantas medicinais. Estas plantas foram indicadas para 30 usos medicinais diferentes. A comunidade é composta na maioria por descendentes de europeus, justificando a presença de muitas plantas exóticas. O domínio do uso das plantas é feminino, porém o conhecimento é menor nas gerações mais novas, denotando um processo de erosão cultural.

Palavras-chave: erosão cultural, etnobotânica, plantas medicinais, conhecimento tradicional.

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