

## **ASSESSMENT OF ANTHELMINTIC ACTIVITY OF *TAXUS BACCATA* LINN. BARK EXTRACT**

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The escalating pervasiveness of anthelmintic resistant strains of helminths, drug residues in animal products and high cost of conventional anthelmintics has created an interest in studying medicinal plants as an alternative source of anthelmintics. *Taxus baccata* Linn. listed in Avicenna's cardiac drugs, namely Zarnab was used as an antimalarial and antirheumatic, emmenagogue, sedative, antispasmodic, aphrodisiac and anti-asthmatic. The objective of this study was to evaluate the anthelmintic efficacy of crude 95 % ethanol and ether extracts of bark of *Taxus baccata* in comparison to reference standard, Piperazine citrate.

Significant anthelmintic effects of both the extracts on live adult *Pheretima posthuma* worms were observed in terms of the paralysis and death of the worms at different concentrations.

### **INTRODUCTION**

The increasing prevalence of helminth parasites those are resistant to conventional anthelmintics has been the spur for different research programs exploring alternative approaches to parasite control (Rang *et al.*, 2003). For much of our past history for ages, plant parts or extracts have been used to combat parasitism, and in many parts of the world such natural products are still in use for this purpose. *Taxus baccata* Linn. is one of the important medicinal plants growing in Bomdila, Shergaon and Tawang forest Divisions of Arunachal Pradesh, India. It is under threat due to indiscriminate collection of leaves. In historical documents from the Roman period, the plant was used as an antimalarial and antirheumatic, emmenagogue, sedative, antispasmodic, aphrodisiac and anti-asthmatic (Kupeli *et al.*, 2003). It was also listed in Avicenna's cardiac drugs, namely Zarnab. So far, the isolation of a large number of taxoids as well as lignans, flavonoids, steroids and sugar derivatives has been reported from different parts of various *Taxus* species (Nisar *et al.*, 2008). In this paper, we would like to describe the extraction and evaluation of anthelmintic activity of *Taxus baccata* Linn.

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