

## Biographical Note

After raising her family and getting a bachelor's degree in environmental studies, Verna came to St Lucia in 1982 as a Peace Corps volunteer. She helped set up the herbarium in the forestry department and went on innumerable collection field trips. She also interviewed many local herbalists and this resulted in this document detailing traditional herbal uses. She thanks Laurent Jean-Pierre and the forestry department for their help and support.

In 1987 she returned to Oregon and worked for the U.S. Forest Service in the Silviculture Department, identifying plant communities and surveying for rare and endangered plants. She "retired" in 1999 and now has Depot Gardens. It's a gift shop and public gardens of flowers, herbs and vegetables.

Many thanks to Armanda Augustin who volunteered to type this difficult document. Somehow she managed to do it quickly and accurately in March 2001.

**Roger Graveson**

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## Edited Uses of Plants in St Lucia

Abrus precatorius

Fabaceae

gwen legliz; graines l'eglise; jumbie bead; crab eyes; lickrish

The leaves of crab eyes are used with other bush to make a syrup for chronic asthma. The seeds are sometimes used in crafts, but this is discouraged because of the toxicity. The seeds are also put in lamps to make the oil last longer. One herbalist uses of leaves or the seeds to stop hemorrhage in women. For this remedy the seeds are parched with a dry ochra pod (*Abelmoschus esculentus*) then boiled with three leaves of lozey (sorrel) (*Hibiscus sabdariffa*) and some chouvalyé wonzé leaves (*Portulaca pilosa*), strained, and given to the person to drink. Drink a tea of the flowers to become a duppy man or women. The seeds of this plant contain the phytotoxin abrin, a protein molecule of high toxicity when chewed. It is destroyed by heat.

### **Acacia farnesiana**

#### **Mimosaceae**

#### **zakasya; acacia**

The seed pod is this small tree, which grows profusely in the dry parts of St. Lucia, has been used as a source of tannin by leather workers. Fishermen sometimes take the bark; five or six long pieces, and build it into their fishpots for good luck.

### **Achyranthes aspera var aspera**

#### **Amaranthaceae**

#### **Man-better-man**

For fever man-better-man root is boiled with chadon benni (*Eryngium foetidum*) and gwen anbayfey blan (*Phyllanthus amarus*) and one cup drink three times daily ``very hot'' after meals. Also it is used alone for bellyache or diarrhea either as a tea or a decoction from the root.

### **Ageratum conyzoides**

#### **Asteraceae**

zeb a mouton; zeb a fanm; latifi; labonn fanm

Labonn fanm is widely used in a leaf infusion for high inflammation, ``urine burns,`` blood in the urine, and as a diuretic. Less often it is used to treat diabetes, high blood pressure, and as a cooling. Containing hydrocyanic acid, coumarin, and an alkaloid, labonn fanm is toxic to animals.

### **Alium sativum**

#### **Liliaceae**

#### **lay; laye (F); garlic**

If you bathe with garlic essence or sprinkle your house with it, it is said to prevent or break an obeah spell. Or spray your place of business to prevent someone from ``tining`` it. For itch all over your body, a rub is made with nine drops of olive oil, nine drops of turpentine and coupida oil then white wine drunk into which has been added nine drops of blood from a rooster's comb, nine garlic cloves and a teaspoon of reindeer horn powder. For gas a decoction is made of leaves of patjouli (*Pogostemon cablin*) the yellow one is better; vane van (*Ocimum gratissimum*), a branch six to eight inches; and the skin of the garlic. For hoarseness, rub the soles of the feet before the fire with garlic and lard well beaten together. For foule crushed garlic is added to crushed pata gonn (*Boerhavia species*) and tied on the heel. The raw juice of garlic, if applied directly to the skin, can cause blistering.

**Allium schoenoprasum**

**Liliaceae**

**ti lonyon; chives**

For tonsillitis the bulb end of the chives is crushed and rested on the handle of a spoon and the handle rested on the tonsil. Then a twist of hair on top the head is twisted tight and tied with a string.

**Aloe Vera**

**Liliaceae**

**lalwé; aloes**

Extensive use of aloes for a variety of maladies is common. Taken internally, the slime, or center part of the leaf, is usually beaten up with the white of an egg and a little honey or molasses and swallowed for cancer, stomach pain, bles, inflammation, or mixed with olive oil for a general cooling and cleaning. For burns and other skin problems, it is applied topically. For earache and eye troubles, mix with a little sterile water. For hemorrhoids a two-inch peeled section of the stem is inserted in the rectum and left all day. The bitter part is smeared on a mother's breast to wean a child or on the child's thumb to stop thumb sucking. It is also used as a shampoo and hair treatment. Plant aloes by your house to keep evil away and under citrus trees to keep off black mould.

**Ambrosia hispida**

**Asteraceae**

**lapsent; wormwood; gap fwize**

For female the following plants are placed in a bottle and covered with rum; laspsent; kachou (*Mikania micrantha*); chinna (*Exostema sanctae-luciae*); twef (*Aristolochia trilobata*); tiel (*Tilleul carpentras*), purchased; konmonmi (*Matricaria chamomilla*), also purchased; and patjouli (*Pogostemon cablin*). Wormwood is also put in rum to soak and taken by the teaspoon for hernia and bellyache.

**Anacardium occidentale**

**Anacardiaceae**

**nwa; cashew**

The nut is roasted until burned then pulverized to use with a combination of other ingredients in dry gin to treat hernia in men. The nut is roasted and eaten traditionally in connection with some ceremonies. The fleshy part of the fruit is eaten and enjoyed fresh, especially by children. The bark and seeds of this tree are toxic, possibly because of the alkaloid andirine of the resin urushiol and can cause severe dermatitis in some people. Care should be taken when the nuts are roasted.

**Andira sapinodoides**

**Fabaceae**

**Syn. A. inermis**

**Angelin; anndjelinn**

This forest tree, which is more prevalent in the north of the island, has become rare, it is never found in stands anymore. Used for saw timber, only a tree every three or four months is now harvested.

**Anethum graveolens**

**Ammiaceae**

**lanni; dill**

Dill is grown in herb gardens for use on cocoa tea and in other teas, cereals, food preparations and drinks which includes one made especially at Christmas. The name ``lanni'' is more correctly applied to anise (*Pimpinella anisum*). These herbs look alike and are often used interchangeably.

**Ananas comosus**

**Bromeliaceae**

**Pineapple**

Pineapple is combined with gayak (*Guaiacum officinale*) as an abortifacient. It contains a proteolytic enzyme, which can cause irritant dermatitis.

### **Annona muricata**

#### **Annonaceae**

#### **Soursop; kosol**

The leaves of soursop, a popular fruit for eating and juicing in St. Lucia, are made into a tea and taken at bedtime as a mild sedative. The veins (called bones) are removed before drawing. For a sore foot take two dry leaves. Make a cross, and tie on the spot. As a diaphoretic or for cooling, draw young leaves, with veins removed, for a tea. A few leaves and a branch of balyé dou (*Scoparia dulcis*) are pounded together, the juice is squeezed, added to a spoon of olive oil, and taken for asthma. A tea made from nine leaves of soursop and nine leaves of avocado (*Persea americana*) is recommended for high blood pressure. A small, immature soursop, along with pounded leaves of kod-a-vyelon (*Desmodium incanum*), pistach mawon (*Desmodium barbatum*), mayok chapel (*Entada polystachya*), lyenn chasen (*Pinzona coriacea?*) and ti patat (*Ruellia tuberosa*) is put in water and drunk as a tisane for gonorrhea. When menstruation continues longer than normal, take nine leaves of soursop and draw for a tea. The second day use eight leaves and continue down to zero. Also for cooling, peel and chop and immature fruit, soak in water and drink the liquid. For fever boil with lime (the fruit poked full of holes) and three leaves of medsinnyé benni (*Jatropha curcas*) each cut in three pieces.

### **Annona squamosa**

#### **Annonaceae**

#### **Sugar apple; ponm kannel; kachiman blan**

Use three brown leaves of sugar apple in a tea for high blood pressure. Also for high blood pressure, three leaves boiled with a piece of breadfruit leaf (yellow) (*Artocarpus altilis*) and three leaves of gorela (*Momordica charantia*) and drink as a tisane. For indigestion boil three leaves with three yellow leaves of bamboo (*Bambusa vulgaris*) and a piece of jejanm root (*Zingiber officinale*). Or, for the same purpose, boil it with zeb a ve (*Chenopodium ambrosioides*), a little piece of avocado (*Persea americana*), guava leaves (*Pisidium guajava*) and ponm kannel leaves.

**Anredera leptostachys**

**Basellaceae**

**djewi tout; guerit-tout (F)**

For abscess, or ``when a blow you get and the blood dies and turns to pus,`` use Barbados oil and djewi tout.

**Aristolochia constricta**

**Aristolochia trilobata**

**Aristolochiaceae**

**twef; tref; trefle caraibe (F)**

Leaves of the Aristolochia species or the caterpillar of Battus polydamas that feeds on them are soaked in rum and taken as a protection against evil, to break charms, and for bellyache. For epwidan make a tea of leaves together with those of go ponpon (Leonotis nepetaefolia), chadon benni (Eryngium foetidum), lime (Citrus aurantifolia), and gwen anbafey blan (Phyllanthus amarus).

**Artocarpus altilis**

**Moraceae**

**bwapen; breadfruit**

For diabetes the yellow leaf is boiled, cold water added and the liquid drunk. Boil a little piece of the bwapen leaf, three korela leaves (Momordica charantia), and three leaves of ponm kannel (Annona squamosa), add water and drink as a tisane for a high blood pressure. A plaster is made of the sap of breadfruit for internal injuries. This tree is utilized for saw timber if there is a straight piece and also for charcoal.

**Asclepias curassavica**

**Asclepiadaceae**

**koton kadwin**

Put the milk of koton kadwin into an aching tooth. It stops the ache but may break the tooth and the dentist doesn't like that.

**Azadiracta indica**

**Meliaceae**

**Neem tree**

This sacred tree from India, where it is used for many purposes, was probably brought to St. Lucia by indentured servants. Very few if any still

exist on the island. The leaves made into a tea are used to treat many ailments including stomach disorders, diabetes, heart and blood circulation problems, and nervous system problems, and to promote general good health. (Update RG 2001 – neem is now quite widely planted as an ornamental)

**Bacopa monnieri**

**Scrophulariaceae**

**kwinin pavé**

Take five of six branches, draw, cool and drink for high inflammation. For fever, a handful is boiled with salt in three cups of water. It is drunk three times a day and reportedly improves the appetite and cleans the tongue.

**Bambusa vulgaris**

**Poaceae**

**Bamboo; banbou**

For indigestion, three yellow leaves of the bamboo are boiled with the root of jejanm, (*Zingiber officinale*). Bamboo shoots are eaten as a vegetable. The wood is used in crafts, for musical instruments, fences and buildings. It is reported that, as a fatal poison, the bamboo prickles are put into a drink, usually beer, of the person to be destroyed. This may explain why, at a bar in St. Lucia, a beer is always opened in front of the customer. Antidote for this poisoning is the gwenn djiné (*Cyperus rotundus*). It is also believed that possessing the seed of the bamboo gives you power to become a duppy person. A tea for gas is made of three leaves of bamboo, three of koton (*Gossypium barbadense*), and a stem of mint (*Mentha nemorosa*).

**Bidens pilosa**

**Asteraceae**

**zeb a zedjwi; needlegrass; zherb zed pruit (F)**

zeb a zedjwi reportedly helps women with sore breasts or lumps on the breast. To make a poultice for this problem mix the plant with lard, take a cabbage leaf, pass it over fire, put the mixture on it and wrap the breast. For children with bles, pound the plant, put in a little water, squeeze it, and a little coconut oil (*Coco nucifera*) and salt to this water and give to the child first thing in the morning, about a teaspoonful. An infusion of needlegrass is

drunk for diabetes or, for cooling, five leaves of needlegrass and five lemon buds are drawn separately in four ounces of water. Drink 40 ounces a day. For fevers, boil the leaves and sweeten.

**Bixa orellana**

**Bixaceae**

**woukou; roucouyer (F); annatto; achiote; roucou**

Woukou as a food additive is used only as a coloring, but also to add vitamins A and D to the diet. The seed is washed and the water poured over meat and fish. It is thought to help to dissolve blood clots of inside injuries after a blow. For this, squeeze the seeds and boil for a tea. For diabetes three leaves are boiled daily for a cup of tea.

**Blechum pyramidatum**

**Acanthaceae**

**zo new; fonn san**

fonn san is used in a tea to give to someone who has had a stroke. Also in the tea is planten (*Plantago major*), miskad (*Myristica fragrans*), cinnamon (*Cinnamomum verum*), and half a sour orange (*Citrus aurantium*). A pinch of sugar and a pinch of salt are added to the warm tea. This tea is called sangwi.

**Boerhavia coccinea, Boerhavia diffusa?**

**Nyctaginaceae**

**pata gonn**

For fouli, ``when a stone hurt you on the heal,`` pata gonm pounded with crushed garlic and tied on the heel.

**Bryophyllum pinnatum**

**Crassulaceae**

**kawakté lezom; wonder-of-the-world; leaf -of-life**

For athlete's foot or ground itch, pass the leaves over fire and put them on or between the toes. Or for a child with bles, boil in water and give to drink a little everyday.

**Bursera simaruba**

**Burseraceae**



**gonmyé modi; gommier maudit (F); birch**

A syrup is made of acajou blan (Guarea sp.) tjitjima (Curcuma domestica) and bark of gonmyé modi. The tjitjima is grated and pounded, water added and all the liquid squeezed out. This water is strained and put to boil with a quart of honey, two pieces of bark of gonmyé and acajou. It is boiled down to a syrup and used for “anything wrong inside.” A similar medication, a tea, without the acajou but using four leaves of chapantyé (Justicia pectoralis), is also recommended for bles. Another herbalist adds even more herbs in a tea for bles. Also for bles, especially in children, a piece of bark is combined with three leaves of black sage (Cordia martinicensis); three leaves of kalbas (Crescentia cujeta); a little turmeric (Curcuma longa); a branch of fonbwazen (Ocimum micranthum) and three to five leaves of zeb a goudon. A little sugar is added plus salt and rum for adults and ½ cup drunk three times a day.

**Byrsonima spicata**

**Malpighiaceae**

**bwa tan (si); bois tan**

The bark of this tree is used in the process of tanning leather. The berries are eaten by children who have given it the name “sweetie gwan bwa”. A similar species, bwa tan rouj, (B. martinicensis) can be used for dye and the wood is sometimes used in St. Lucia for boards and posts.

**Caesalpinia bonduc**

**Caesalpinaceae**

**kannik; gwenzyé bouwik konic**

kannik is used for gas and also to bring mother’s milk. The whole seed is usually roasted until burned then pulverized and used by the teaspoon in rum for gas or in dry gin with other ingredients for men with hernia. It is also used to treat impotency in men.

**Caesalpinia pulcherrima**

**Caesalpinaceae**

**fle makata; pride-of-Barbados**

fle makata flowers are reportedly used for abortion. One herbalist says it’s good when “blood goes up in somebody’s head and make them kind of crazy.” A drink is made of the fle makatata, bonmidjez and lard and the head is wrapped with ponm pwezon (Solanum capsicoides).

**Cajanus cajan**

**Fabaceae**

**pwa angol; pois d' angole (F); pigeon pea**

If you have been in a draught, ``don't feel yourself right,`` use white pigeon peas with chadon benni (*Eryngium foetidum*), boil, put in salt and drink. To use pigeon peas as a laxative, take a handful of leaves, pound and extract the juice and add it to three oils: Barbados oil, castor oil, and cooking oil. Swizzle well and drink. To treat white blood cell disease, parch the peas and pulverize them. Use a tablespoon in two quarts of water as tisane. For bles, pound the leaves, squeeze out the liquid, add a little water, salt, and any oil to it and drink warm. Also used for bellyache.

**Calophyllum calaba**

**Clusiaceae**

**Galba**

Water-loving, this tree is recommended for watershed protection. The shallow root system does not take the deep ground water and the tree had a low transpiration rate. It is often used for windbreaks, less often for saw timber.

**Cannabis sativa**

**Euphorbiaceae**

**Marijuana; ganja; kalli**

Marijuana leaf is an ingredient in a syrup used for asthma or cough. Also boiled and used as a poultice on bruises and to wash your hair if you have dandruff. For tuberculosis take leaves of marijuana and tomato, chop, add a little oil and eat as a salad.

**Canna indica**

**Cannaceae**

**toloman; malobi**

The root of malobi is grated, strained through a cloth, and put to dry. The meal is made into a porridge for babies five or six months of age or older. The seeds of malobi are used for crafts and in the musical instrument, chak chak.

**Capraria biflora**

**Scrophulariaceae**

### **dité peyi; du the pays (F)**

A tea of dité peyi is used for fever, alone or sometimes in combination with chapantyé (*Justicia pectoralis*) or go ponpon (*Leonotis nepetaefolia*). Also a tea of this plant is believed to help people adapt to a severe change of climate. A tea made of a small branch is drunk three times a day for gas.

### **Capsicum frutescens**

#### **Solanaceae**

#### **piman gwiv; bird pepper**

Leaves of piman gwiv are warmed over the fire or boiled and placed on a wound to keep away insects and extract pus. The pepper is also used in combination with zeb a pik (*Neurolaena lobata*) for fever, including malaria. Eight leaves of the zeb a pik are soaked in vermouth for 21 days. The pepper, cut in half into a cup of hot water, is for sweating (“Go under a blanket to sweat”) followed by the vermouth preparation, a wineglass full twice a day. For carbuncles, the pepper leaves are washed and covered with a paste made of lard and ripe pawpaw (*Carica papaya*) or soft candle then placed over the carbuncle. For sore throat gargle with coconut water and crushed bird pepper. Soak an ounce of pepper in rubbing alcohol and mix with coconut oil for rheumatism or arthritis and when you have flu cut a little and boil with a piece of lime, sweeten with honey and drink. It is also used for wounds. Peppers give off a noxious gas when burned causing sneezing and choking. Chroniclers tell of it being used in warfare and hunting but current uses of burning is apparently confined to ridding an area of evil spirits.

### **Cardiospermum microcarpum**

#### **Sapindacea**

#### **bonné kawé; bonnet carre (F); lyenn pok pok**

bonné kawé is most often used for a tea after childbirth to contract the uterus and expel blood. One herbalist recommends it as a nine-day tisane with sour orange (*Citrus aurantium*), miniroot (*Ruellia tuberosa*) and hog plum bark (*Spondias mombin*). For skinny people or when “your bone dry, shabby,” drink as a tea.

### **Carica papaya**

## **Cariacaceae**

### **Paw paw; papaya; papay**

Green paw paw is used for high blood pressure. Cut the paw paw into pieces and use two or three pieces to make a tea twice a day. Too much can make your pressure go too low. The ripe fruit is also eaten for the heart. Paw paw is beaten to a paste with lard, smeared on a clean pepper leaf (*Capsicum frutescens*) and placed on a carbuncle to draw it out. The seeds are eaten as an anthelmintic. As a cooling, grate and pour boiling water over it and drink twice a day. The root is boiled and used to treat gonorrhoea. To treat froule, a green paw paw is boiled, a poultice made with lard and applied warm. The latex of paw paw, used in meat tenderizer, can cause irritant dermatitis.

## **Cassia alata**

### **Caesalpiniaceae**

#### **kasialata; Christmas candle**

kasialata is most commonly used in a tisane for cooling or as a laxative. As a bath for itching, crush kasialata and kaka betje leaves (*Senna bicapsularis*) in water and bathe with the liquid. One herbalist uses kasialata, three to five leaves, with china (*Exostema sanctae-luciae*), an inch of the bark, when "the blood is dirty, have boils on the skin, have pus." kasialata leaves are boiled and the water used to wash the face or if something "comes up on the skin" A bath made of these leaves makes the skin "come shiny."

## **Cassia fistula**

### **Caesalpiniaceae**

#### **kas; casse; golden shower tree**

kas is used as a purgative, about half of a pod crushed and steeped in boiling water. For cooling use only the leaves. For itch in children, the seeds are boiled in milk. This is said to be an African medicine.

## **Casuarina equisetifolia**

### **Casuarinaceae**

#### **Casuarina; whistling pine; jiwof fley; fi laho**

Needles of this tree are used in a bath for old people. Wash them and put them in the bath at dawn. By noon the water has changed color. Bathe the person. Also, a pillow of the needles makes you sleep soundly. Casuarina is often planted as a windbreak and an ornamental tree.

## **Catharanthus roseus**

## **Apocynaceae**

### **kaka poul; periwinkle; caca poule**

Only the one with a white flower is used. For diabetes the whole plant is used, flower, leaves, and root, in a tea. Or an ounce of the root is taken in six ounces of whiskey. Phytochemical studies prompted by the use of this plant for diabetes led to the discovery of the drug's leurocristine and vincal leukoblastine, both effective against the cancer, leukemia.

## **Cecropia peltata**

### **Moraceae**

#### **bwa kannou; bois canot (F)**

Boil together the heart of bwa kannou and three branches each of chadon benni (*Eryngium foetidum*) and gwen anbafeý blan (*Phyllanthus amarus*) and drink for epwidan. Boil the leaves, strain with a fine cloth to remove hairs, and drink for flu. bwa kannou is also used for animals to dispel the placenta after giving birth. Rafts and musical instruments are made from this bwa kannou. Caution: bwa kannou may harbor stinging ants.

## **Cedrela odorata**

### **Meliaceae**

#### **acajou; red cedar**

Unfortunately, this important species of forest tree, which grows well in dryer areas, is in danger of disappearing from St. Lucia. Very few of these trees remain in the natural forest. It is highly prized as saw timber for making furniture, beds, and cabinets and for internal finishing and decorating.

## **Ceiba pentandra**

### **Bombacaceae**

#### **fonmajé; silk-cotton tree; fromager (F)**

The fonmajé is closely associated with spirits. "The Devil like that tree." The prickles are placed over doors and windows as a protection against black magic. The seed, which is gathered when the wind blows the cotton about, is considered powerful and a tea is made of it with the seed of fey do blan (*Chaptalia nutans*) and drunk to invoke the Devil. The leaves are cooked and eaten and a tea made for children "when their teeth starts to

come out'' to prevent disease. As a forest tree, it is found in the drier areas of the island. The cotton is utilized as filling for pillows and similar items.

**Chamaesyce hirta**

**Euphorbiaceae//**

**Syn. Euphorbia hirta**

**zeb malonmen; herbe mal-nomme (F); malomae; milkweeds**

For measles, take a branch of the ``male,`` (``which is brownish, not whitish like the ``female``) and wash it. Take nine grains of corn, two inches of pumpkins and 12 grains of barley, boil them and use the water to draw the zeb malonmen. Take for no longer than nine days. A similar tisane for measles used rice instead of barley. The milky juice of this plant is used to remove warts.

**Chaptalia nutans**

**Asteraceae**

**fey do blan; feuille dos blane (F)**

It's claimed that if you tell fey do blan you love it, it will grow by your house. This way you have dependable supply. The leaves are boiled and drunk for gas. A tea of the seeds of fonmajé (Ceiba pentantra) and leaves of fey do blan will allow you to invoke the Devil. If you need to vomit because your stomach hurts and you think someone might have put something in you drink, a tea of fey do blan may help. mawi pouwi (Petiveria alliacea) and chapantye (Justicia pectoralis) may be added. For diarrhea a tea of mawi powi, chapantye, fey do blan, djapanna (Eupatorium triplinerve) and guava (Psidium guajava) is recommended.

**Chenopodium ambrosioides**

**Chenopodiaceae**

**zeb a ve; semen contra (F); simen kontwa; wormgrass**

A tea of zeb a ve is the most common vermifuge in St. Lucia. Oil is sometimes added. The leaves made into a poultice with other herbs are used to treat wounds and sores. For combining it with other herbs in a syrup for asthma and cough. It is thought to benefit the pancreas, and aid digestion and clean the womb after childbirth.

**Chimarrhis cymosa**

**Rubiaceae**

**bwa wivyé; bois riviere**

A large soft-wood, wet area tree, bwa wivyé is common along riparian zones where it is important for protection of streamside areas. It is seldom used for timber, though sometimes for posts.

**Chrysobalanus icaco**

**Chrysobalanaceae**

**ponm zikak; pomme icaque (F); fat pork**

The root of ponm zikak is boiled to treat diarrhea. The fruit of this common shrub is eaten by children and adults as they walk the paths of St. Lucia's drier areas, especially by the sea.

**Lauraceae**

**Syn. Phoebe elongata**

**lowyé kannel; laurier cannelle (F)**

Unfortunately, because of the popularity of this tree due to its lasting qualities, it has nearly disappeared from the St. Lucian forests. If, while walking a forest path, you notice old stumps, they are most likely lowyé kannel which takes years to disintegrate.

**Cinnamomum verum**

**Laureaceae**

**kannel; spice, cannelle (F); cinnamon**

The most common use of the kannel other than making a refreshing tea as a flavoring is to combine it with other bush in various remedies. Asthma, clods menstrual problems, convulsions, rheumatism and stroke are among the maladies these tonics are used for.

**Cissus verticillata**

**Vitaceae**

**lyenn godmo**

lyenn godmo provides a useful material for the basket, makers of St. Lucia. Because it is soft and limber it is used for the first few rounds in the bottoms of baskets. Medicinally the leaves serve as a poultice with soft candle or pawpaw (*Carica papaya*) and a lard for carbuncles. It is said to be poisonous to rabbits.

**Citharexylum fruticosum**

**Citharexylum spinosum**

**Verbenaceae**

**bwa koklet; bois cocklet; bwa leza**

bwa koklet treats asthma. Five or six leaves are pounded and the juice extracted and mixed with a spoon of Barbados oil. On one occasion, a woman who was carrying a dead fetus reported that a person appeared in a dream and showed her the bwa koklet. She said she boiled the leaves and after the second dose delivered the fetus. For a bad chest cold with phlegm, juvenile leaves are pounded in a little water to extract the juice and a teaspoon each of olive oil and castor oil or coconut oil added, swizzled well, and given to drink. For rheumatism, remove the thick bark of the tree, dry it, and put it in a pint of wine. Drink a small wine glass full every morning. This is to purify the blood.

**Citrus aurantifolia**

**Rutaceae**

**siton; lime; citrus**

siton is used for fevers, colds and pneumonia in conjunction with other herbs, usually as a decoction. go ponpon (*Leonotis nepetaefolia*), chadon benni (*Eryngium foetidum*), gwen anbafey blan (*Phyllanthus amarus*) and china (*Exostema sanctae-luciae*) are most commonly used. For burns the juice is mixed with sea water as a wash and, for warts, with salt as a rub. leaves are passed in the fire and put between the toes to treat athlete's foot.

**Citrus aurantium**

**Rutaceae**

**jowanj si; Sour orange; citrus**

For post-delivery and other female health care, sour orange is often used, combined with other herbs, especially bonné kawé (*Cardiospermum microcarpum*), as a tisane or tea. The juice, added to the water used to boil a shoot of pistach mawon (*Desmodium barbatum*), with a little salt is said to bring in the mother's milk. It is also used for colds with china (*Exostema sanctae-luciae*). An inch of china bark is boiled in little water; the juice of ½ sour orange and a spoon of whale oil is added. Also warm a sour orange in hot ashes, cut it and rub it on the feet for athlete's foot. I children eat large quantities of the peel of sour orange it can cause violent colic and death.

**Citrus sinensis**

**Rutaceae**



**jowanj; orange; citrus**

To stop vomiting, the white part of an orange skin, the pith, is boiled and given to the person to drink. For colds, the yellow rind is pared very thin, rolled inside out and thrust in each nostril.

**Clusia alba**

**Clusia plukenettii**

**Clusiaceae**

**awali; aralie**

The roots of awalie are important for weaving baskets especially the larger market baskets, baby bassinets, and clothes hampers. Awalie is thought to keep away evil spirits. Nine leaves and a pack of sulphur are burned with nine pieces of charcoal to keep the spirits away for three months.

**Cocos nucifera**

**Areaceae**

**(Palmae)**

**koko; coconut**

The coconut is probably the most exploited plant in St. Lucia with no part left unused. Leaves are plaited for crafts and used for thatching and, tightly bundled, lit as a torch. The trunk is sawed into lumber, burned as fuel, and made into crafts. The nut is eaten or the oil extracted for cooking and medicine. The nutritious and thirst quenching water of the green nuts is considered sterile enough to use as an eye wash. An unverified report states that in an emergency the matter was given intravenously to a child dying of dehydration by inserting the needle into the coconut eye. The water is considered effective against bladder infection and drunk for cooling. The shell and husk are burned to dry copra and the husks are also used for a mattress stuffing. To treat a toothache, the shell is lighted and covered to catch the condensation which is applied to the tooth. As a rub for bles the oil is mixed with soft candle, lard, grated miskad (*Myristica fragrans*) and la bom de jes (sp). If caught in a draught, a three-inche piece of the root of a young coconut is boiled with a fit weed (*Eryngium foetidum*), gwen anbafey blan (*Phyllanthus amarus*) and an inch of spice root (*Cinnamomum verum*) with a little salt. An inch of the root in rum treats impotency in men. For sore throat a gargle of coconut water and crushed bird pepper (*Capsicum frutescens*) is recommended. The shell is used in tanning leather.

**Coccothrinax barbadensis**

**Areaceae**

**latannyé; latanier (F); thatch palm**

A small palm growing in the drier areas, it is used extensively for making brooms. This tree is overexploited and good fronds are getting hard to find.

**Coleus amboinicus**

**Lamiaceae**

**Syn. C. aromaticus**

**go ditén; gross ditay; big leaf thyme**

As a diuretic three leaves of go ditén and a pye poul plant (*Eleusine indica*) are boiled together and drunk cold. Go ditén is most commonly used for seasoning foods and, to relieve gas, steeped in a tea with various mint species or ti bonm blan (*Croton bixoides*)

**Colubrina elliptica**

**Rhamaceae**

**mobi; mouby, mabi (F)**

mobi, made from the bark of this species, is a popular drink in St. Lucia and around the Caribbean. It is also an ingredient of the mildly alcoholic drink, Porter, which is frequently used as a base of bush medicine. Mobi is used to treat high blood pressure. A similar species, *C. arborescens*, also grows in St. Lucia.

**Commelina elegans**

**Commelina diffusa**

**Commelinaceae**

**zeb gwa; watergrass; cockroach grass**

From zeb gwa a tisane is made to treat high blood pressure and bladder infection. A suppository of the stem lubricated with castor oil (*Ricinus communis*) is used for infants to move their bowels. The plant is fed to chickens and rabbits and the sticky juice was once used by school children for glue. zeb gwa is also used with the juice of a yellow lime (*Citrus aurantifolia*) (peel it first) as a wash for vaginal rashes.

**Cordia martinicensis**

**Boraginaceae**

**maho nwe; mahaut noir (F); black sage**

For diarrhea, three yellow leaves of maho nwe, three leaves of guava (*Psidium guajava*) and three leaves of blackberries (*Myrcia citrifolia*) are made into a tea and drunk with a little sugar. For bles a tea is made of three leaves of maho new, three leaves of the large kalbas (*Crescentia cujete*),

three inches of turmeric (*Curcuma longa*) and a branch of fonbwazen (*Ocimum micranthum*.) Or use chapantye (*Justicia pectoralis*) instead of kalbas and sweet basil. As a shampoo and tonic for dandruff boil a handful of the leaves with a handful of nettle (*Laportea aestuans*) and add a little rosemary or green tea if desired.

### **Cordia obliqua**

#### **Boraginaceae**

#### **kaka poul; caca-poule; clam-cherry; gumtree**

kaka poul is used by leather tanners as a source of tannin. The fruit is chewed by children and used as a glue. Other cordia species such as *C. sulfate*, known as sip, are utilized for posts and charcoal and *C. sebestana* is a popular ornamental.

### **Cornutia pyramidata**

#### **Verbenaceae**

#### **bwa kasav; bois cassave**

For a poultice on sprains and strains or dislocated joints bwa kasav is boiled in salt water. When salted beef was shipped to St. Lucia, this brine was used because it ``cured better.’’ The fruit of bwa kasave is used for a blue dye.

### **Crescentia cujete**

#### **Bignoniaceae**

#### **kalbas; calabash; calebassier (F)**

The kalbas, St. Lucia’s national tree, has a long cultural history. Probably brought here by the very early island inhabitants, folklore attending this most useful plant remains as evidence of its importance as a holding vessel and utensil. It was believed that feeding a child from a kalbas bowl would help in learning to talk. Boys thought if they rubbed their penis on a young kalbas still on the tree, (or girls their breasts), as the fruit grew these parts would develop. To release a bad spell, bath with seven kalbas leaves then throw them over the shoulder and don’t look back. For blood clots, nine leaves of kopi le bwa (*Polypodium phyllites*) put in a new kalbas and water added. This liquid is drunk every day for nine days with one less leaf every day.

### **Crotalaria retusa**

#### **Fabaceae**

#### **chak chak**

The flowers are used in a infusion for chest colds in children in combination with chapantye (*Justicia pectoralis*), djapanna (*Eupatorium triplinerve*) and fle siwo flowers of elder (*Sambucus simpsonii*). The herbalist cautions that only the short chak chak that is covered with caterpillars is used. Some doctors claim the alkaloid monocrotaline found in this plant is seriously harmful to kidneys, especially in children.

### **Croton bixoides**

#### **Euphorbiaceae**

##### **ti bonm blan; ti bonm; go bonm**

A suggested preventative for lota is to pick a handful of ti bonm leaves when you're walking and sweating, wipe your skin, then throw the leaves over your shoulder without turning back (looking back) until you get home. The berries of ti bonm are used as acauterizer and an antibiotic and the wood is used for making chairs. For flatulence ti bonm is boiled with go diten (*Coleun amboinicus*) and lanmant fanm (*Mentha nemerosa*). Or when you're "feeling weak" three leaves are boiled and drunk with a little salt. *Croton bixoides*, *C. Flavens*, and other *Croton*s species grow profusely in St. Lucia covering the dry slopes. They are utilized for making charcoal. The leaves often turn red in dry season providing color for these otherwise drab areas.

### **Cucurbita pepo**

#### **Cucurbitaceae**

##### **jonmou; pumpkin, squash**

jonmou, commonly called pumpkin, serves as a food staple in St. Lucia and doubles as a medicinal component in folk medicine for measles, jaundice, insomnia, colic, and treatment for amoebas. For jaundice a three-inch piece is boiled with nine grains of corn and 11 grains of barley and the water poured over a grated carrot. This water is mixed half and half with one bottle of Porter, and one-third drunk hot three times a day for nine days. For colic in babies a male flower is boiled with three inches of khus khus (*Petiveria alliacia*) and a branch of mint. Nine seeds of pumpkin boiled in water and poured over three leaves of lettuce (the kind with long leaves that sends milk) make a tea for insomnia. For parasites, a pound of seeds are pulverized, mixed with water and allowed to ferment in the hot sun for four or more hours until the fermentation odor is obvious and the mixture looks green. Two glasses are given at night on an empty stomach followed by a dose of castor oil the next morning. For measles a piece of pumpkin is boiled with three leaves of malomain (*Chamaesyce hirta*). And lawzé or

gwen anbafeý blan (Phyllanthus amarus), chadon benni (Eryngium foetidum) and six grains of rice.

**Curcuma domestica**

**Zingiberaceae**

**Syn. C. longa**

**tjitjima; turmeric; chichima**

tjitjima, a common seasoning, is used medicinally for bles, as a poultice or with other herbs in a tea. As a poultice, it is pounded and applied or the juice squeezed and mixed with oil, salt, keg butter and bonmidjez. As a tea the root is boiled 10 to 15 minutes and drunk with a little salt or a two-inch piece boiled with gonmyé modi (Bursera simaruba), (a two-inch piece with outer layer removed), and four leaves of chapantyé (Justicia pectoralis). Another tea made with three leaves of black sage (Cordia martinicensis), three leaves of the large calabash (Crescentia cujete), three inches tjitjima and a branch of sweet basil (Ocimum micranthum), is also for bles. For a cough, two inches of tjitjima is boiled with four inches of jiwof fle (Lantana camara) and four inches of charpantyé, a little sugar added. tjitjima root may also be used as dye for natural fibers used in crafts. ``If you put it in your food it gives it taste and cleans up the blood’’.

**Cyathea tenera**

**Cyatheaceae**

**fwijé; tree fern; fougere**

The heart of fwijé is cut out, sliced, put in a jar of water and the water drunk all day for cooling. In a disturbed forest, where moisture is sufficient, this tree is a natural colonizer.

**Cymbopogon citratus**

**Poaceae**

**Syn. C. nardus**

**sitonnél; citronnelle; lemon grass**

sitonnél is made into a refreshing tea or drunk for colds and flu. The leaves are burned to keep away mosquitoes.

**Cyperus rotundus**

**Cyperaceae**

**gwen djine; Guinea seed**

An odd number of seeds (actually tubers) are ``knocked'' to split them open then soaked in brandy and given as a antidote for bamboo poisoning. They are also used to treat stomach upset, bile and gallbladder problems.

**Daphnopsis macrocarpa**

**Thymeleaceae**

**maho piman gwan bwa; mahot piment grand bois**

The wood of this small endemic tree is sometimes used in the pack saddles for donkeys or horses. The bark, strong and stringy, is used for tying bundles or fastening things together. A similar species, *D. Americana*, is used in the same way.

**Dacryodes excelsa**

**Burseraceae**

**gonmyé; gommier (F)**

A giant of the major rainforest, this tree is legendary as source material for fishing canoes. Its huge size and straight bole free of buttresses make it ideal for this purpose and for saw timber. Those persons who spend much time in the rainforest use the sap of the gonmyé to start their fires. The tree is especially important for wildlife, being the prime nesting species for the St. Lucia parrot, *Amazona versicolor*.

**Daucus carota**

**Ammiaceae**

**kawot; carrot**

For a mild cooling some Rastafarians drink the water in which grated carrots have been soaking. Carrots are also grated and soaked for measles and as part of a preparation for jaundice.

**Delonix regia**

**Caesalpiniacea**

**flanboyan; flamboyant**

The seeds of the showey flanboyan tree are used for beads and curtains. It reproduces easily so in common all about, making great splashes of color during the late dry season.

**Desmodium barbatum**

## **Fabaceae**

### **pistach mawon; pistache marron (F); wild peanut**

pistach mawon and kod-a-vyelon (*Desmodium incanum*) are crushed in water and drunk as a tisane to treat gonorrhoea. Sometimes, also to treat gonorrhoea, mayok chapel (*Entada polystachya*), lyenn chasen (*Pinzonia coriacea*) and ti patat (*Ruellia tuberosa*) are pounded and put in water with a chopped, immature soursop (*Annona muricata*) then the water is drunk as tisane. pistach mawon is also used to bring in mother's milk.

## **Dioscorea cayenensis**

### **Dioscoreaceae**

#### **yanm matwitan; yellow yam**

Three yellow leaves of yam matiwitan, boiled and drunk with a little sugar, is believed to help a woman deliver her child if she is tied (a spell cast on her). Also a tea of three yellow leaves of yanm matwitan may help a baby with colic. This and other yams should be properly washed and cooked before eating to remove poisonous saponins.

## **Diospyros revoluta**

### **Ebenaceae**

#### **babawa; Barbara; babaoua**

babawa, a source of rotenone, is used to poison fish. This is a forest tree important for watershed and wildlife habitat.

## **Eclipta alba**

### **Asteraceae**

#### **kongolala; congolala**

For skin problems, teething, thrush in children, and athlete's foot, kongolala heads the list of treatments. The leaves are pounded or melted in water as a bath or mixed with lard and applied topically. For thrush, a boiled solution is used with magnesia to bathe the gums of teething children. Warmed or fresh, the leaves are rubbed on the foot for athlete's foot.

## **Elephantopus crispus**

### **Asteraceae**

#### **tet neg**

For bles, the tet neg plant and leaves of logwood (*Haematoxylon campechianum*) are pounded together, salt added and the mixture placed on the spot.

**Eleocharis interstincta**

**Cyperaceae**

**jonn; jaune**

This rush-like plant of swampy areas is used to weave the seats for handcrafted chairs.

**Eleusine indica**

**Poaceae**

**pyé poul; foul foot**

As a diuretic, uproot a whole plant, boil it with three leaves of go ditén (Coleus amboinicus) and drink. For an abscessed tooth, boil the plant and soak the gums with the liquid.

**Entada polystachia**

**Mimosaceae**

**mayok chapel; manioc-lackapelle**

mayok chapel is mainly used for treating venereal disease. An inch of it is peeled and grated and put in a quart of cold water. A wine glass full is given three times a day. Sometimes an inch of bark from gayak (Guaiacum officinale) is included. Another treatment uses kod-a-vyelon (Desmodium incanum), pistach mawon (Desmodium barbatum), ti patat (Ruellia tuberosa) and lyenn chasen (Pinzonia coriacea) with the mayok chapel. To improve your appetite, grate a piece of root into a glass of water and drink it.

**Eryngium foetidum**

**Ammiaceae**

**chadon benni; blessed thistle; chadron beni**

chadon benni is commonly used for epwidan fever, colds from draughts and whenever a diaphoretic is needed. The entire plant is used or just the leaves, usually as an infusion with a little salt added. Sometimes it is boiled with white pigeon peas (Cajanus cajan) or with man-better-man root (Archyranthes aspera) and gwen anbayfey blan, Phyllanthus amarus, and one cup is given three times daily, very hot, after meals. Another herbalist uses the of bwa kannou (Cecropia schreberiana) instead of man-better-man and yet another, go ponpon (Leonotis nepetaefolia), lime leaf (Citrus aurantifolia) and twef (Aristolochia trilobata). Still another combination with the chadon benni and gwen anbayfey blan is three inches of root from a young coconut and an inch of root of spice (Cinnamomum verum). Salt is added and sometimes lemon grass (Cymbopogon citratus). For measles chadon benni and gwen anbayfey blan are boiled with zeb malonmen



(Chamaesyce hirta), a piece of pumpkin (Cucurbita pepo) and six grains of rice. Chadon benni is also used along for bellyache. For treating early stages of cancer, chadon benni is mixed with other herbs in a tea. (See Eupatorium odoratum) Finally, it is used to wash down fishing boats to take out the ``evil eye'' that prevents a good catch. To ``free the body of a shame'' see Leonotis nepetaefolia.

### **Erythrina corallodendrum**

#### **Fabaceae**

#### **motel; immortelle**

For problems of menstruation motel is often used. For pains during period, three yellow leaves are boiled with an inch of cinnamon (Cinnamon verum). To start a period, take a nutmeg (Myristica fragrans) and cut it into three pieces. Add a branch of jiwof glo (Ludwigia octovalvis), three leaves of fonn san (Blechnum brownie) and a branch of bouton do (Spilanthes uliginosa). Boil these together. Each day use fresh leaves but the same nutmeg until period starts. Because of the longevity of this species it is often used to mark boundaries. The seeds of Erythrina species are potentially dangerous if eaten.

### **Eucalyptus deglupta**

#### **Myrtaceae**

#### **Eucalyptus**

A tea of two or three leaves of eucalyptus is drunk for stress, for restoring your body, and purifying your blood. To clear blocked nasal passages, inhale the steam of boiling leaves. Eucalyptus can cause allergic reactions in some people.

### **Eupatorium odoratum**

#### **Asteraceae**

#### **Christmas bush; flewl nwel**

For colds and flu the leaves are pounded to extract the juice, which is mixed with a tablespoon each of honey, castor oil and olive oil. A tea of the leaves is recommended for bles. For early stages of cancer flewl nwel is boiled with tabak djab (Pluchea odorata), ti patat (Ruellia tuberosa), chadon benni (Eryngium foetidum) (the whole plant with roots), and a planten leaf (Plantago major). It makes three cups and a cup should be drunk three times a day.

### **Eupatorium triplinerve**

## **Asteraceae**

### **Japana; djapanna; ayaoana (F)**

djapanna commonly treats colds, fever, bles, and an upset stomach. Although usually combined with other herbs, it can be used alone in a tea. For colds it is combined in a tea with la fle siwo (*Sambucus simpsonii*), chapantyé (*Justicia pectoralis*) and chak chak (*Crotalaria retusa*). Sometimes cinnamon and mint is used instead of chak chak (also used for convulsions), or when vomiting and diarrhea occurs, turmeric (*Curcuma longa*), a three-inch piece with three leaves each of djapanna and chapantyé, boiled and sweetened and ½ cup given four times a day. It is also an ingredient in a syrup for asthma. For an upset stomach a tea is made with djapanna, or add gwen anbafey blan (*Phyllanthus amarus*) a la fle siwo.

## **Exostema sanctae-luciae**

### **Rubiaceae**

#### **chinna; chinchona; Peruvian bark**

First discovered and used as a quinine substitute by Alexander Anderson in the late 18th century, china is a common and irreplaceable ingredient of many of the tonics produced by St. Lucia herbalists, mostly for fever, the complications of colds such as switcouch and fe mal and blood purification in the case of boils and skin ulcers. These tonics are varied but most often use the pulverized bark in wine or rum with cinnomon (*Cinnamomum verum*), nutmeg (*Myristica fragrans*) and cloves (*Syzygium aromaticum*). If used as a blood purifier, kasialata (*Cassia alata*) is added as a purge. Or, when there is fever, go ponpon (*Leonotis nepetaefolia*) and lime (*Citrus aurantifolia*), three leaves of each. Chinna bark is put in wine and a wine glass full drunk every morning for rheumatism, worms and for ``inward fever that is hot inside, cold outside, with a bitter feelings in the mouth.’’

## **Ficus citrifolia**

### **Moraceae**

#### **Figuier (F); fijé; fije la ba**

Two pieces of the fije root with split ends are tied together and put around the waist like a belt to treat ailments known as bad waist (mal wen).

## **Gliricidia sepium**

## **Fabaceae**

### **Glory cida; lily post glorysidat**

Glory cedar has been promoted in St. Lucia as a soil-building legume and planted as forage and a living fence. It is also used medicinally for cough, five leaves for children, ten for adults in a tea with a little sugar. For ``attack`` asthma (coughing too much), use seven leaves, sweeten the tea and add three drops of iodine. It is also reported good as a bath for skin infection. The roots, leaves, and seeds of this tree have been used in some countries to poison rodents.

## **Gossypium barbadense**

### **Malvaceae**

#### **Koton**

A tea for gas is made of three young leaves of koton, five leaves of bambou (Bambusa vulgaris) and a stem of mint (Mentha nemorosa). Koton was first utilized by the early indigenous people for making hammocks, clothing, boat sails, and ornaments.

## **Gouania lupuloides**

### **Rhamnaceae**

#### **lyenn savon; liane savan; chewstick**

As a dentifrice; the frayed end of a six-inch section of the stem of lyenn savon is rubbed against the teeth making a foaming cleanser.

## **Guaiacum officinale**

### **Zygophyllaceae**

#### **Lignum vitae; tree-of-life; gayak**

As a treatment for venereal disease one inch each of gayak bark and mayoc chapel bark (Entada polystachya) are grated and covered with two quarts of cold water. Dosage is one cup three times a day. In addition, an inch of gayak bark is boiled in a cup of water and a teaspoon taken four times a day. Potassium nitrate in coconut water or with glauber salt and potassium of iodine in Porter, completes this treatment. Gayak, preferably the bark, may be used with great caution with Lipton tea and a young pineapple (Ananas comosus) for abortion. Gayak is also used for rheumatism and fever. Resins in the wood and fruit of gayak can cause poisoning if ingested in quantity.

## **Haematoxylon campechianum**

### **Caesalpiniaceae**

#### **kanmpech; campeche (F); logwood**

Leaves of kanmpech and tet neg are pounded, a little salt added, and the mixture applied as a poultice for blisters. Or use djewi tout (*Anredera leptostachys*) and kanmpech (the extracted juice) with the juice of a small kalbas (*Crescentia cujete*) that has been heated in the fire; give as a drink. The wood is soaked in boiling water and used to dye materials used in basketmaking. Often used to make charcoal, kanmpech attracts bees so is important in producing honey.

**Heliconia caribaea**

**Heliconiaceae**

**balizé; heliconia; balisier**

The large leaf of balizé is used to cover bread as it's rising. The root is boiled and used to wash varicose veins.

**Heliotropium angiospermum**

**Boraginaceae**

**kwep kodenn**

“When you take a blow on the eye and blood die in your eye,” kwep kodenn is passed in the fire, cleaned, and the juice squeezed into the eye.

**Hibiscus elatus**

**Malvaceae**

**Blue mahot; blue maho; blue mahaut**

An introduced species, this tree with showy yellow to orange flowers had a lovely wood, streaked with blue that is used for making furniture. The St. Lucia Forestry Division maintains many acres of blue mahot plantations and has planted it along the boundaries of the forest and watershed reserves.

**Hibiscus rosa-sinensis**

**Malvaceae**

**Hibiscus**

Hibiscus leaves are crushed and used as a shampoo. The hibiscus flower is made into a tea or the double flower is used as a juice by drawing it and adding lime juice and sugar.

**Hibiscus sabdariffa**

**Malvaceae**

**lozey; sorrel**

For hemorrhage in women, the seeds of gwen legliz (*Abrus precatorius*) are parched with a dry ochra pod (*Abelmoschus esculentus*) then a tea made with three leaves of lozey. chouvalyé wonzé (*Portulaca pilosa*) is also added.

**Hieronyma caribaea**

**Euphorbiaceae**

**bwa danmann; bois d'amande**

This indigenous tree is lauded as a substitute for mahogany. It is common, regenerates easy, and mills well for lumber used in buildings, furniture and internal finishing.

**Hirtella pendula**

**Chrysobalanaceae**

**zikak fwans; icaque (F); pan zowey; pend oreille**

The showy flowers and fruit of zikak fwans decorate the secondary forest of transitional wet and dry zones. People of the woods often lunch on the fruit as does the wildlife. This medium-sized tree is important for habitat and watershed protection.

**Hura crepitans**

**Euphorbiaceae**

**Sandbox tree; gogo tree; sablyé**

Sections of the seedpod of sandbox are used in crafts for making earrings, necklace and pins that look like dolphins. The pod was at one time used as a penholder. The sap of this tree and the seeds can cause vomiting and diarrhea if ingested.

**Hymenaea courbaril**

**Caesalpiniaceae**

**koubawi; kouboubawi; coubaril; locust**

The seed pod of koubawi may be tossed into the coal pot to keep mosquitos away. Some people eat the pulp around the seeds. koubawi is a large tree and may be utilized for a saw timber.

**Ipomoea tiliaceae**

**Convolvulaceae**

**lyenn dous; liane douse**

lyenn dous is sometimes used in snake bite formulas. The leaves are fed to rabbits.

**Jatropha curcas**

**Euphorbiaceae**

**medsinnyé benni; physic nut; medicinier beni (F)**

Leaves are pounded, olive oil or lard added and used as a poultice to heal sores. For fever three leaves cut in three pieces are boiled with a small siton (*Citrus aurantifolia*) poked full of holes and one soursop leaf (*Annona muricata*) cut in three pieces. The seeds are pounded and mixed with linseed or castor oil to treat sick animals. If the medsinnyé benni is used as a purge caution should be exercised. No more than one drop mixed with another oil should be used. Death could occur. For carbuncles, the leaves are boiled or crushed and applied. The seeds are roasted or parched and eaten like nuts to destroy all worms in the body, but makes you feel weak. The oil contains the phytotoxin curcin which causes nausea, vomiting and diarrhea.

**Jatropha gossypifolia**

**Euphorbiaceae**

**zeb zotolan; herbe z'ortolan (F)**

The frayed stem of this plant is used like a toothbrush to clean and prevent pyorrhea. But be careful, it stains your clothes.

**Justicia pectoralis**

**Acanthaceae**

**chapantyé; charpentier; carpenter grass; garden balsam**

chapantyé finds its way into many herbal remedies and for a variety of common ailments. It is frequently used alone in a tea for colds or, for children's chest colds, combined in a tea with chak chak (*Crotalaria retusa*), djapanna (*Eupatorium triplinerve*), and flowers of elder (*Sambucus simpsonii*). For adult colds with just djapanna, or sometimes with djapanna, cinnamon and mint (*Mentha nemorosa*), it is sweetened with honey and drunk three times a day. For coughs four inches of chapantyé are boiled with three or four inches of jiwof fle (*Lantana camara*), and two inches of tjitjima (*Curcuma domestica*.) The liquid is sweetened with a bit of sugar and drunk. For bles, alone in a tea or a tea made from two six-inch pieces, a piece of tjitjima, pounded, and three leaves of maho nwe (*Cordia*

martinicensis) is drunk with a little sugar. Instead of the maho nwe, a two inch piece of bark of gonmyé modi (*Bursera simaruba*) with the outer part removed may be used. A two-part treatment for bles consists of a tea of chapantyé leaves, kalbas leaves (*Crescentia cujeta*, go ponpon leaves (*Leonatis nepetaefolia*), planten leaves (*Plantago major*), motel leaves (*Erythrina corallodendrum*), and a piece of gun of gonmyé modi followed by a rub made of soft candle, coconut oil, lard, grated nutmeg, and la bom de jes. chapantyé is also frequently used with other herbs for diarrhea or alone for bellyache. To ``free up`` from ``sham`` see *Leonotis nepetaefolia*.

### **Justicia secunda**

#### **Acanthaceae**

#### **St. John's bush**

St. Johns bush has two major uses—to treat red-eye and to start menstruation (an abortifacient). In both cases it is boiled and strained. When menstruation is scanty a decoction can be of three leaves each of St. John's bush, planten (*Plantago major*), mint (*Mentha nemorosa*) and cinnamon (*Cinnamomum verum*), sweetened and ½ cup drunk morning and night. For red-eye, planten and dité peyi (*Capraria biflora*) is drawn with the St. John's bush. Some golden seal powder may be added. For diabetics steep three leaves in a cup of hot water and drink twice daily.

### **Lablab purpureus**

#### **Fabaceae**

#### **pwa boukousou**

The seeds of this wild pea are cooked and eaten or added to stews.

### **Laguncularia racemosa**

#### **Combretaceae**

#### **paltivyé; paletuvier (F); white mangrove; mang blan**

White mangrove grows in the mud and silt deposits at the mouth of streams. For wildlife habitat and protection of a fragile ecosystem this tree is of vital importance.

### **Lantana camara**

#### **Verbenaceae**

#### **bwa wa tou; bwisé; white sage; pis-a-bed; jiwof fle; lantana**

Suggested as a remedy for cough, three leaves of this plant and three leaves each of tabak djab (*Pluchea odorata*) and fe manme (*Annona glabra*) are boiled and drunk as a tea. Or, also for coughs, four inches of white sage, two inches of tjitjima (*Curcuma domestica*) and four inches of chapantyé

(*Justicia pectoralis*) are boiled together and sweetened. White sage is also recommended for hoarseness (anwé). This plant has been used to clear the urine of diabetics but warning is given not to use it too often. For skin rash on the head, white sage leaves are mixed with two ounces of lard which has been washed seven times and one tablespoon each of cold liver oil and powder sulphur. This is rubbed on the head twice a day. For sores, kasialata leaves (*Cassia alata*), white sage leaves (handfuls), chinna bark (*Exostema sanctae-luciae*) and sassafras bark are crushed in water and the water used to wash the sores. The fruit of white sage contains a toxic triterpene derivative, lantadene A. Children have been fatally poisoned by eating these berries.

### **Laportea aestuans**

#### **Urticaceae**

#### **zoti; nettle; ortie**

zoti is recommended as a blood purifier and as a diuretic for men. When touched, the hairs of zoti transfer a histaminelike substance from bladders within the leaf causing stinging and burning.

### **Leonotis nepetaefolia**

#### **Lamiaceae**

#### **go ponpon; gros pompon**

For fever, colds and related maladies St. Lucians think first of go ponpon, used alone or combined with other herbs such as konkonm kouli (*Momordica charantia*) or chinna (*Exostema sanctae-luciae*) and lime leaves. For epwidan, it is combined with chadon benni (*Eryngium foetidum*), lime leaf, gwen anbafey blan (*Phyllanthus amarus*) and twef (*Aristolochia trilobata*) in a tea. For hoarseness caused by a cold, a leaf of pwin (*Spondias purpurea*) and planten (*Plantago major*) are boiled with the go ponpon. For women after childbirth venvenn kawayib (*Wedelia trilobata*), twef (*Aristolochia* spp.), bonné kawé (*Cardiospermum microcarpum*), bark of hog plum (*Spondias mombin*) and sour orange (*Citrus aurantium*) is combined with the go ponpon and given us a tisane. Go ponpon is also used to treat bellyache and hoarseness. According to an informant, "if you feel tired like you can't do anything, a special evil spirit has come in the night, and given you a "sham" To "free up" the body, a tea is made of any of the following: chadon benni (*Eryngium foetidum*), chapantyé, (*Justicia pectoralis*), tabak djab (*Pluchea odorata*) of go ponpon. Go ponpon can cause allergic symptoms in some people.

### **Lippia alba**



## **Verbenaceae**

### **twa tas**

twa tas is used alone or with soursop leaves (*Annona muricata*) for treatment of colds. If a cold or complications has stopped menstrual flow, pound the twa tas leaves, extract the juice, mix it with a little salt and water and drink it very hot.

## **Lonchocarpus pentaphyllus**

### **Fabaceae**

#### **Syn. *L. latifolius***

#### **savonnet; savonnet gwan fey; savonnette (F); bwa savonnet**

Because the leaves of this lather like soap they are often used for that purpose. This species is also made into charcoal. It grows abundantly along streams in mid elevations. A similar species, *L. violaceus* (savonnet le ba) is found mostly along the seashore and river mouths.

## **Ludwigia octovalvis**

### **Onagraceae**

#### **jiwof glo; girofla-ma; water cloves**

jiwof glo is used with other herbs to bring on menstruation. It is drunk as a tea with fonn san (*Blechum brownie*) or in a complicated formula using, in addition to a branch of jiwof glo, three leaves of fonn san, a nutmeg (*Myristica fragrans*) cut in thirds, three leaves of planten (*Plantago major*), three leaves of motel (*Erythrina corallodendrum*) and a branch of bouton do (*Spilanthes uliginosa*) boiled together. Each day fresh leaves are used with the same nutmeg. This plant is also used for ground itch by boiling it and washing the feet with the hot water.

## **Luffa aegyptiaca**

### **Cucurbitaceae**

#### **tochon; torchon (F); luffa**

The young fruits of this plant are often eaten in a salad and when the fruits is large the fibers are used for baskets and hats. The most common use, however, is for scrubbing.

**Lycopersicon esculentum**

**Solanaceae**

**tanmadoz; tomato**

Besides being a substantial food source, the fruit of the tomato plant is claimed to be good for tonsillitis. Its leaves are made into a tea to prevent shortness of breath. There are also chopped with kalli (*Cannabis sativa*), a little oil added, and eaten as a salad to treat cough.

**Mammea Americana**

**Clusiaceae**

**zabwiko; mammea; mamey apple; apricot**

Leaves of zabwiko are made into a tea for colds. The fruit is eaten raw or made into jam.

**Manihot esculenta**

**Euphorbiaceae**

**manyok; cassava; farine (the grated and processed root); kasav**

manyok has been a staple food in St. Lucia since Amerindian times but it has medicinal uses as well. The starch, mixed with vinegar, is used to treat wezipel. Sometimes it is mixed with blue and sometimes with powdered milk of magnesia. A paste is made and applied to affected areas. Some people recommend rubbing the leg with the belly of a frog in addition to the starch treatment. For ground itch, the leaves are boiled and the feet wash with the water. For inflammation, grated watjet (*Opuntia dillenii*) is put in water with farine and drunk. Raw roots and leaves contain hydrodynamic acid that can cause death if not removed in the grating and washing process done in preparation for eating.

**Manilkara bidentata**

**Sapotaceae**

**balata**

balata is a saw timber tree used extensively for rafters, framing, walls and subflooring as the lower montane rainforest. It should not be confused with balata chyen (*Pouteria pallida*) which is difficult to work and of little value except as wildlife habitat and ecological protection.

**Maranta arundinaceae**

**Marantaceae**

**djitanm; arrowroot; toloman**

The roots are grated, washed, strained through a cloth and put to dry. When dry it is made into a porridge for babies. *Maranta arundinaceae* should not be confused with *Canna indica* that is used much the same way and often given the same common name.

**Mentha nemorosa**

**Lamiaceae**

**lanmant fanm; mint**

For gastritis lanmant fanm is boiled with vanné van (*Ocimum Micranthum*) and a little lesane lanmant added before drinking. Also ti bonm blan (*Croton bixoides*) and go ditén (*Coleus amboinicus*) are boiled with lanment fanm for the same problem. For a common cold lanment fanm is boiled with chapantyé (*Justicia pectoralis*), djapanna (*Eupatorium triplinerve*), and an inch of cinnamon (*Cinnamomum verum*). This tea is sweetened with honey and drunk three times a day. For part of this treatment coconut oil (*Cocos nucifera*) is mixed with menthol crystals to rub on the head and chest morning and night. For problems with menstrual flow a decoction is made of mint. St. John's bush (*Justicia secunda*) and planten (*Plantago major*), three leaves of each, and cinnamon. One-half cup is drunk morning and night. Lanmant tea is also drunk for gas.

**Merremia dissecta**

**Convolvulaceae**

**noyo; noyeau (F)**

An essence made with the leaves of noyo is used to flavor cakes. Also a tea of the leaves is drunk for fresh cold.

**Micropholis chrysophylloides**

**Sapotaceae**

**fey dowé ; feuille doree (F)**

A large tree of the lower montane rainforest. fey dowé is sometimes utilized as saw timber. It is, of course, valuable for ecological protection and wildlife habitat.

**Microtea debilis**

**Phyto; accaceae**

**alatoukay**

For cooling, hot water is poured over the plant and when it ``comes green'' cold water added to drink as a tisane. Also for upset stomach, it is crushed and out in water to drink or a few leaves boiled.

## **Mikania micrantha**

### **Asteraceae**

#### **kacho**

kacho is boiled and drunk like a tea for loss of appetite. For fe mal the following are put in rum: kacho, lanmant gapsyal, chinna (*Exostema sanctae-luciae*), lapsent (*Ambrosia hispida*), twef (*Aristolochia trilobata*), tiel (*Tilleul carpentras*), which is purchased, kanmommi (*Matricaria chamomilla*), also purchased, and patjouli (*Pogostemon cablin*) For skin eruptions, the plants is crushed in water and used for bathing. To stop vomiting a tea of three yellow leaves of kacho are made into a tea and sweetened. For a cut still bleeding the kacho is ground and juice squeezed onto the cut. kacho should not be fed to animals.

## **Mimosa pudica**

### **Mimosaceae**

#### **Shame marie; mayhont; ti mawi; sensitive plant**

Mayan is used with kafé zepyant (*Senna occidentalis*) and matnithen (*Parthenium hysterophorous*) if you fall and ``your whole inside shake'' (dewajé). First, manipulation is used to ``put everything back in place'' then the plants are crushed and soaked in rum. After soaking, the leaves are tied on the stomach and the liquid is drunk. mayhont may also be mixed with mawi pouwi (*Petiveria alliacea*) and a little coarse salt added to make you vomit if someone has put something in your food or drink.

## **Mirabilis jalapa**

### **Nyctaginaceae**

#### **Four-o'clock**

For black spots on a person's skin the four-o'clock flower is pounded, mixed with mineral oil and applied as a poultice. If children eat the roots or seed it causes gastritis.

## **Momordica charantia**

### **Cucurbitaceae**

#### **konkonm kouli; pomme coolie, Indian's cucumber; karela; gorela; coraila**

The young fruit of this plant serves as an addition to stews but the leaves commonly treat high blood pressure. They are used alone in a tea or as a

tisane with three leaves of karela, a little piece of yellow breadfruit leaf (*Artocarpus altilis*) and three leaves of ponm kannel (*Annona squamosa*) boiled together with cold water added. Caution: the seeds and wall of the ripe fruit contain alkaloids which can cause vomiting and diarrhea.

**Mucuna pruriens var-utilis**

**Fabaceae**

**kafé go bouwo; café brazilliana**

Often grown as an additive to coffee, kafé go bouwo is especially recommended for people with rheumatism. It is roasted in an earthen pit, pounded with a mortar and pestle, and added to regular coffee. The pod of the main species, *M. pruriens*, is covered with tiny barbed spines which contain a highly irritating proteolytic enzyme, mucunian. This variety is used for worms. Two or three pods are put in a quart of honey, shaken well, and taken by the spoonful. A little cod fish is eaten a while before taking the medicine.

**Mucuna sloanei or Mucuna urens**

**Fabaceae**

**zyé bouwik**

The bean, which is found on the beach, is roasted until black, pulverized, and put in rum to take for gas. This bean is often polished and used as a good luck charm, worn around the neck or placed in the cash drawer. It is believed to keep you from evil forces.

**Musa x**

**Musaceae**

**Banana**

The fruit of the banana is not only St. Lucia's largest export product but is also one of the top staples in the St. Lucian diet. While still immature, the fruit is called "green fig" and is served as a boiled vegetable. The root of gros michel, a variety of banana, is recommended for diarrhea.

**Musa x**

**Musaceae**

**makambou**

Take the old leaf sheath that is half rotten and tie it around a fresh cut to stop bleeding.

**Myrcia citrifolia**

**Myrtaceae**

**bwa gwiyé; goy avier (F); blackberry**

This small tree is sometime used in crafts such as rungs for chairs. The fruit of this tree is eaten or made into jelly or wine. For children with diarrhea five leaves of blackberries, three tiny leaves of guava and a bit of ginger made into a tea is recommended.

**Myrcia splendens**

**Myrtaceae**

**bwa di bas; bois de basse (F); bwa ti fey**

This small tree of secondary forests is used for posts, rungs of chairs and charcoal.

**Myristica fragrans**

**Myristicaceae**

**miskad; nutmeg**

Nutmeg is a common ingredient in tonics given for switkouch and other cold complications and for bles, rheumatism, and stroke. For cough it is suggested you grate one-half nutmeg, add sugar, and suck or dissolve it in your mouth. Caution is urged when using nutmeg as it is a hallucinogen.

(Additional note RG from Mon Repos – grated and moistened, nutmeg is put on the head as a remedy for head-ache)

**Nerium oleander**

**Apocynaceae**

**lowyé wouj; oleander**

Oleander is used only topically and only for adults as it contains poisons. The leaves are pounded and the juice is combined with lard as a skin ointment. The poisonous substances are cardioactive glycosides and oleandrin, which are present in all parts. Because this is a common ornamental shrub, it is important for people to be aware of its potentially dangerous qualities.

**Neurolaeana lobata**

**Asteraceae**

**zeb a pik; herbe a pique (F)**

zeb a pik is used for fever. Eight leaves are soaked in vermouth for 21 days. A bird pepper (*Capsicum frutescens*) is cut in half, steeped in a cup of hot

water and drunk followed by a wineglass of vermouth with zeb a pik. Then go under a blanket and sweat out the fever. zeb a pik is also used for rashes, scabies, bet wouj, stomach problems, malaria and ticks on animals.

**Nicotiana tabacum**

**Solanaceae**

**tabak; tobacco**

tabak, a spoonful of a tea of the leaves, is taken for asthma. The alkaloid, nicotine, is dangerous and can even cause death if the leaves are eaten as a pot herb.

**Ochroma pyramidale**

**Bombacaceae**

**bwa flo; bois flot (F); balsa**

This is the soft wood, balsa, which is seldom utilized here except for the kapok around the seed which is stuffed in mattresses.

**Ocimum basilicum**

**Lamiaceae**

**bazilik; oktansya**

This plant, a popular seasoning herb in St. Lucia, is often used as a refreshing tea or to ease a cold.

**Ocimum gratissimum**

**Lamiaceae**

**mal fonwazen; bwa gason**

bwa gason is used for indigestion and diarrhea.

**Ocimum micranthum**

**Lamiaceae**

**Sweet basil; fonbawazen; vanné van**

For gas or gastritis vanne van is made into a tea with lanmant fanm (*Mentha memorosa*) and a few drops of lesans lanmant. Or three leaves of patjouli (*Pogostemon cablin*), three to five leaves of mawi pouwi (*Petiveria alliacea*) and the skin (peel) of a clove of garlic boiled with a six-inch branch of the vanné van is another treatment. For jaundice a tea is drunk beginning the first day with one leaf, the second day, two leaves and continuing for nine days. This plant also had a little seed that is put into the eye to clean it. It reportedly catches any foreign body and brings it out. ``When it reaching your eye it get wet with the tears, it send out a little white thing of sticky

substance that picks up any foreign body.’’ Sweet basil is frequently used in medical preparations for colds, hernia, bles, and general complaints.

**Ocotea leucoxylon**

**Lauraceae**

**lowyé mabwe; laurier marbre (F)**

This secondary forest tree is quite common all over St. Lucia and used as saw timber and posts. Since it regenerates easily it is important in the management of the natural forest.

**Odontonema nitidum**

**Acanthaceae**

**chapantyé gwan bwa; djewi tou**

This forest shrub or small tree is used on fresh cuts by scraping away the outer bark and scraping the inner bark into rum for application.

**Parthenium hysterophorus**

**Asteraceae**

**matnitjen; whitehead**

matnitjen is used with mayhont (*Mimosa pudica*) and kafé zepyant (*senna occidentalis*) if yo fall and ‘‘your whole inside shake.’’ First manipulation is used to ‘‘put everything back in place.’’ Then the plants are crushed and soaked in rum. After soaking, the leaves are tied on the stomach and the liquid is drunk. For bellyache and displacement of the uterus in women (vant dewanje) matnitjen is boiled and drunk with a little salt.

**Passiflora foetida**

**Passifloraceae**

**kokiann**

Use a ‘‘good bit’’ of leaves of kokiann, boil them and drink the liquid for diabetes.

**Passiflora laurifolia**

**Passifloraceae**

**ponm dilyenn; pomme de liane (F)**

ponm dilyenn is used in weaving baskets. Also, for worms, make a tea with half a leaf and drink it with sugar.



**Passiflora quadrangularis**

**Passifloraceae**

**babadinn; barabadine (F)**

Leaves crushed in water make a good bath for the skin. For glo en tet in children the leaves are crushed with salt and souf molan. For fos couch (miscarriage) the person should first cover themselves with a blanket and sit over a pan of boiling water to absorb the vapor then they apply babadinn mixed with lard. babadinn is also used for a bad waist and, for internal blows, boil one leaf in a tea with salt and add a bit of white rum. Caution: Both hydrocyanic acid and passioflorine, present in the roots, leaves, and immature seeds of babadinn are psycoactive and poisonous.

**Opuntia cochenillifera**

**Opuntia dillenii**

**Cactaceae**

**watjet; prickly pear**

For inflammation, watjet is grated, put in water with farine (Manihot esculenta) and drunk. For lowni take the size of the person's foot on the watjet, cut it out, and put it to dry. For a sore throat grate watjet and tie on the throat. The fleshy part is also used on sores for cooling, and for washing the hair.

**Ormosia monosperma**

**Fabaceae**

**pwa bwa wawi; wawi; dedefouden; jumbie beads**

The seeds of this tree are used for crafts.

**Pandanus tectorius and veitchii**

**Pandanaceae**

**palanma; panama; screwpine**

palanmas used in many woven craft items

**Pectis floribunda**

**Asteraceae**

**sitonnel; citronnelle (F)**

This sitonnel should not be confused with lemon grass (Cymbopogon citratus). It makes a nice tea mixed with cocoa and is good for colds. The

whole plant is burned to keep away insects. For rheumatism, the tea is sweetened and drunk and one herbalist said she used this herb following a stroke.

**Peperomia pellucida**

**Piperaceae**

**zeb a kuwes; shining bush; zebe couresse (F)**

For cooling, zeb a kuwes first comes to mind in St. Lucia. Although many make a tea of it, Mrs. Jn. Louis says you must pour on cold water and drink as a tisane. She suggests you eat it raw like watercress as her grandmother used to do. It is also used for high inflammation and for a sore mouth. For jaundice a carrot is grated and the water from the boiled herb is poured over the carrot and magnesium added. This water is drunk until the yellow ``comes out.'`

**Peperomia rotundifolia**

**Piperaceae**

**mouwan kako; ti mawon; cocoa mint**

Mouwan kako is used in a tea for symptoms of ``cold feet and burning sensation all over.'` Men who wish to prevent an erection may drink a tea of mouwan kako. Be sure the plant has been growing on a cocoa tree.

**Persea americana**

**Lauraceae**

**zaboka; avocado pear; pear**

To treat a pulled muscle or swollen glands, grate a seed of the avocado pear, mix it with clay and vinegar to make a paste, and apply. For indigestion make a tea with a little piece of avocado pear, a branch of zeb a ve (Chenopodium ambrosioides), leaves of guava (Psidium guajava) and ponm kannel (Annona squamosa). The white pear is used with nine leaves of soursop (Annona muricata) to make a tea for high blood pressure. The leaves, bark, and seeds of this tree may be toxic to animals.

**Petiveria alliacea**

**Phytolaccaceae**

**fey douvan; mawi pouwi; mapiutite; garlic weed**

For diarrhea a tea made of the leaves of mawi pouwi, chapantyé (Justicia pectoralis), fey do blan (Chaptalia nutans), djapanna (Eupatorium

triplinerve) and guava (*Psidium guajava*) is recommended. The more common use of mawi pouwi, however, is for bathing, drinking or washing the house or boat to keep evil spirits away. Mixed with mayhont (*Mimosa pudica*) or fe do blan it causes vomiting to prevent poisoning. As a bath it helps women deliver baby if they are "tied." With go diton (*Coleus amboinicus*) it keeps someone from "telling tales about people" (depale). "If people trick you" use as a drink or bath. It is also used with other ingredients for gas. For toothaches, the inner white layer is scraped and out into the cavity. To release a bad spell, wash with seven crushed leaves then throw them over your shoulder and don't look back. For an old sore that won't heal, the leaves are boiled, squeezed dry, then lard added that has been washed seven times. This poultice is then palced on the sore. It is said, to rid the house of bed bugs, pick the plant and place it under the house or bed. It is sometimes used to repel insects from poultry. This plant may be toxic to cattle.

### **Pfaffia iresinoides**

#### **Amaranthaceae**

#### **Twenty-one shillings; ventean chlen**

Twenty-one shillings is often planted by the house to ward off evil. A tea of this plant will quiet a witch who is speaking like all the evil things they have done" (depale). For this reason it is sometimes called "hush yo' mouf." If you've "already passed obeah" you may drink a tea of this plant. Also it is drunk if you're "short of breath." A one-cent piece under the root of this plant is said to make a wish come true.

### **Phyllanthus amarus**

#### **Euphorbiaceae**

#### **gwen anbafey blan; graines-en-bas-feuille blanc (F); blan ek nwe**

gwen anbafey blan is used for the common complaints of fever, chills, epwidan, and colds due to draught. The leaf or whole tree issued by itself or boiled with chadon benni (*Eryngium foetidum*) and man-better-man root (*Achyranthes aspera*). Other additions might include *Cecropia schreberiana*, *Leonotis nepetaefolia*, *Citrus aurantifolia*, *Aristolochia trilobata*, *Ocimum* spp., *Chamaesyce hirta*, *Cucurbita pepo*, *Cocos nucifera*, *Cinnamomum verum* and *Cymbopogon citratus*. See these other plants for more details. Also a tea of gwen anbafeyblan is drunk for bellyache. It is cautioned that only *Phyllanthus amarus*, gwen anbafey blan, is used and not *Phyllanthus urinaria*, gwen anbafey wouj, which one herbalist claims is smoked as an

hallucinogen. These plants are very similar, both having the seed under the leaf along the stem.

**Picramnia pentandra**

**Simarubaceae**

**bwa moudong; moudong; bois moudongue (F)**

moundong combined with mawi pouwi (*Petiveria alliacea*) is used to wash fishing boats to protect them against the devil of the sea. Some of this combination is put in a bottle to take along on the voyage. This tree is reported to groan at night and advice is given to put a shilling there before you take a piece of root for medicine. A little piece of the root is put into your mouth to make you disappear so you can travel long distances instantly without being seen.

**Pilea inaequalis**

**Urticaceae**

**zoti blan; white nettle; ortie blanche (F)**

zoti blan as a tisan made from a branch or with nine leaves in two quarts of boiling water has been used to treat leukorrhea and anemia in women, or prepared in the same way for bladder stones. It can be eaten as salad or a pot herb and is said to clear the lungs of mucous.

**Pimenta racemosa**

**Myrtaceae**

**bwa denn; bois d'Inde (F); bay leaf**

bwa denn or its product, bay rum, is used as a treatment for coughs, colds and fever. Bay rum mixed with sulfur makes an ointment with skin rash. Used with coconut oil and a little Vicks it is taken for coughs. Forever, the bay os out into a tin cup, lit afire, then extinguished. The warmed liquid is then poured on the body.

**Pinzona coriacea**

**Dilleniaceae**

**lyenn chasen**

For gonorrhoea a tisane is made of lyenn chasen, kod-a-vyelon (*Desmodium incanum*), pistach mawon (*Desmodium barbatum*), mayok chapel (*Entada polystachya*), ti patat (*Ruellia tuberosa*) and a small, immature soursop (*Annona muricata*). If you tire easily, "can't climb the hill," a piece of the stem is boiled and a tablespoon taken in a glass of water twice a day. A little piece is cut up and put in water to soak, then the water drunk for "anything

that's wrong with you.' When this vine is cut the water flows out of the stem.) Iyenn chasen is also used for headache and high blood pressure.

**Piper dilatatum**

**Piperaceae**

**malanbé; grande malimbe; candle bush; mal lestonmak**

The leaves of malanbé are fed to small animals. To release a bad spell, bathe with seven crushed leaves of this plant then throw them over your shoulder and don't look back.

**Pithecellobium jupunba**

**Mimosaceae**

**dalmawi; dalmarie; pewich**

dalmawi seeds are used in crafts.

**Plantago major**

**Plantaginaceae**

**planten**

planten is well known as an eye bush. It is either boiled or pounded and the juice extracted. For worms a teaspoon full of seeds is put in wine and boiled. For migraine headache, nine leaves are warmed and tied on the forehead for nine days. Planten is also used with other herbs for stroke, to start menstruation, for colds, and for bles. Also for treating early stages of cancer see Eupatorium obdurate. Planten can cause allergic reactions in some people.

**Pluchea odorata**

**Asteraceae**

**tabak djab; wild tobacco**

For cough, tabak djab is boiled with jiqo fley (Lantana camera), la vewannik, fey manmé (Annona glabra), three leaves of each, and drunk as a tea. For early stages of cancer, tabak djab is combined with flew nwel (Eupatorium odoratum); ti patat (Ruellia tuberosa); chadon benni (Eryngium foetidum), the whole plant and roots; and one planten leaf (Plantago major) and these ingredients are boiled and drunk three times a day. To 'free up' the body from a 'sham' see Leonotis nepetaefolia.

**Pogostemon cablin**

**Lamiaceae**

**patjouli; patchouly (F)**

patjouli treats flatulence and colds. It is added to vanné van (*Ocimum gratisimum*), a branch six to eight inches, mawi pouwi (*Petiveria alliacea*), three to five leaves, and the skin of garlic (*Allium sativum*, boiled and drunk for gas or a cough it is combined with la fle siwo (*Sambucus simpsonii*). It is believed that women in mensus should not pick patjouli—it will kill the plant.

### **Polypodium phyllitides**

#### **Polypodiaceae**

##### **kopi lebwa**

The plant is boiled to make a tea to increase the appetite. Or for blood clots, nine leaves of kopi lebwa are put in a new kalbas (*Crescentia cujete*). Hot water is poured on it and the water drunk. This is done every day for nine days with one less leaf every day.

### **Portulaca oleracea**

#### **Portulacaceae**

##### **koupyé; pourpier (F); purslane**

koupyé as a cooling is taken for one to three weeks before purging. For worms in children, make a tea. The green leaves are ground, mixed with lard and used as a poultice for any swelling. Or, if a woman has a clot of blood, the leaves are boiled, removed from the water and vinegar added for a poultice placed under naval. She should then drink the water cold. koupyé is also eaten raw.

### **Portulaca pilosa**

#### **Portulacaceae**

##### **chouvalyé wonze**

chouvalyé wonze is pounded with white vinegar and applied as a poultice for swollen glands. For lowni, the leaves are pounded, the juice is added to a little white rum, a pinch of slat, and drunk. chouvalyé wonze is combined with venvenn kayawib (*Wedelia trilobata*) to treat women for blood clots. Also for hemorrhage in women it is combined with gwen legliz (*Abrus precatorius*) and other herbs, drawn and strained and drunk.

### **Priva lappulacea**

#### **Verbenaceae**

##### **ti dayi**

ti dayi is used to cure old sores. Boil the leaves and tie on the sore. It is used alone to treat a sore throat or nine leaves are boiled, three drops of vinegar added and the water gargled. The leaves should then be tied around the neck. To draw out a splinter, this plant is pounded, combined with soft candle and placed on the splinter.

**Protium attenuatum**

**Burseraceae**

**lansan; l'encens (F); incense**

lansan is combined with benzoin and la mienne to make a ``parfume'' which is burned to smoke the house as protection against evil. Or it is pounded and used in water as a wash for the same reason. Safetida may be added.

**Psidium guajava**

**Myrtaceae**

**gwiav; guava**

The guava has many uses besides the popular fruit eaten raw or made into jelly and juices. The bark is sometimes used in the tanning process. A tea of the new leaves with sugar is given for worms and bellyache but the most common medicinal use is to stop diarrhea. The young leaves may be chewed, swallowing the juice or boiled and drunk. A piece of burned bread can be added. Some herbalists add other leaves: the yellow leaves of *Cordia martinicensis*, three leaves of guava, and three of blackberries (*Myrcia citrifolia*) in a tea with a little sugar. Or a tea with the guava, mawi pouwi (*Petiveria alliacea*), and djapanna (*Eupatorium triplinerve*). For children with diarrhea, five leaves of blackberries, three tiny leaves of guava, and a bit of ginger as tea is recommended. Other used include: for cuts, pound the leaves, add oil or rum and cover the wound; for fits caused by worms, boil young leaves and add salt; for lota, rub leaves on the skin; for worms and bellyache, make a leaf tea with sugar; for women whose period won't stop, peel the guava, take out the seed, boil the white skin and drink the tea until the problem stops; and finally for indigestion, a tea which includes, besides guava leaves, zeb a ve (*Chenopodium ambrosioides*), leaves of ponm kannel (*Annon squamosa*) and a little piece of avocado pear.

**Punica granatum**

**Punicaceae**

**ponm gwennad; pomegranate**

For bles, a poing of tjitjima (*Curcuma longa*) is grated and the juice taken out, honey and one-half skin of ponm gwennad is added and these ingredients boiled to make a syrup.

### **Quaraibaea turbinata**

#### **Bombacaceae**

#### **lélé, bwa lélé**

The habit of this rainforest tree of producing branches in whorls has provided St. Lucians with an idea; natural resources for making swizzle sticks for mixing foods and drinks. Branches are cut about 14 inches long with a whorl of limbs near the bottom which are trimmed to about three inches and the bark peeled off. The tree, of course, also provides environmental protection and wildlife habitat.

### **Rhizophora mangle**

#### **Rhizophoraceae**

mang wouj; red mangrove

mang wouj is used for tanning leather. Since this tree grows in the mud and silt at the mouths of streams it is important as a wildlife habitat and protection for the ecosystem and ecology of these fragile areas.

### **Ricinus communis**

#### **Euphorbiaceae**

#### **pyé gwenn; gwen makwisti; huille macristie; castor bean; lwil makwisti**

To treat prolapsed uterus, leaves of gwen makwisti and zeb a chat are passed in the fire, rubbed with castor oil and inserted into the vagina. For mumps a plaster of hot ash is put under the throat and then the throat is rubbed with warm castor oil. Castor oil on cotton is used in the ear for earache. For constipation a big spoon of castor oil and two spoons of cooking oil are given or for a purge, castor oil, Barbados oil, and vegetable oil is mixed with senna pod, white of an egg, Porter and milk. Castor oil is rubbed on the hair and scalp to make the hair black and thick. After childbirth, if there is a blood clot under the navel, rub with castor oil vinegar in a white castor bean. If the seed of gwen makwisti is chewed it releases the highly toxic phytotoxin ricin which causes nausea, muscle spasms, convulsions and death.

### **Rorippa nasturtium-aquaticum**

#### **Brassicaceae**

#### **kousyon; watercress**



For a cold on the chest with lots of phlegm, watercress is boiled with a spoon of lard then put in a bottle with Porter and drunk. Watercress is boiled in milk and drunk to treat cough. For men passing blood in their urine, watercress is boiled in cooking oil or wine and drunk. It is also eaten raw and used in treatment of early stages of tuberculosis.

### **Rubus rosifolius**

#### **Rosaceae**

#### **fonbwez; framboisier (F); wild strawberry**

A tea of any part of this plant is used for childbirth problems and rashes in children. The berries are eaten.

### **Ruellia tuberosa**

#### **Acanthaceae**

#### **ti patat; miniroot**

For post-delivery problems a tisane is made of ti patat root, a piece of sour orange (*Citrus aurantium*), a branch of bonné kawé (*Cardiospermum microcarpum*), and the bark of mouben (*Spondias mombin*) and given to the person to drink for nine days. ti patat root is also used to treat high inflammation of the bladder. The root is washed, crushed, and boiling water poured over it. It is taken for nine days. To treat gonorrhoea take about four of the tubers of ti patat, crush them in water and give to drink or crush in water the tuber with kod-a-vyelon (*Desmodium incanum*), pistach mawon (*Desmodium barbatum*), mayok chapel (*Entada polystachya*), lyenn chasen (*Pinzonia coriacea*) and a small immature soursop (*Annona muricata*) and drink as a tisane. For treating early stages of cancer see flewi nwel (*Eupatorium odoratum*).

### **Sambucus simpsonii**

#### **Caprifoliaceae**

#### **la fle siwo; fleur de surea (F); elder**

la fle siwo is most commonly used in a syrup for coughs and colds. The flowers are boiled in sugar for this syrup. Leaves should be used sparingly. The flowers of chak chak (*Crotalaria retusa*), garden balsam (*Justicia pectoralis*) and djapanna (*Eupatorium triplinerve*) may be added for chest colds in children. It is also used for coughs with patjouli (*Pogostemon cablin*). For bad chest colds with phlegm, juvenile leaves are pounded with a little water and the juice extracted, a teaspoon each of olive oil and castor oil or coconut oil added, swizzled well and drunk. For rough or bad skin, the leaves are crushed with coconut oil and applied topically. If you eat

something that makes you ill, la fle siwo is boiled with djapanna and drunk as a tea. For high inflammation and colds it is combined in a tea with the full bud of a red rose. This plant contains some poisonous alkaloids and cyanogenic glycosides although the flowers are quite edible. Children should be cautioned not to sue the hollow stems for pea shooters.

**Scoparia dulcis**

**Scrophulariaceae**

**balyé dou; balai doux (F); sweet broom**

For asthma a few leaves of soursop and a branch of balyé dou are pounded, squeezed, a spoon of olive oil added and drunk without sugar. balyé dou is also used for diabetes and boiled and drunk as a tea for ``anything make you ill.'' Also for colds.

**Senna bicapsularis**

**Caesalpiniaceae**

**Syn. Cassia bicapsularis**

**kaka betjé; soumaké**

kaka betjé is used as a bath (crush in water) for itching sores and heat rashed. For carbuncles, the juice is extracted, mixed with lard and applied as an ointment to draw out the core.

**Senna occidentalis**

**Caesalpiniaceae**

**kafé zepyant; café herb puante; wild coffee**

The seeds of kafé zepyant are roasted and used as coffee or a coffee extender. It is sometimes used as a decoction of syphilis. A very strong cup of kafé zepyant with a tablespoon of olive oil will help you vomit and get rid of phlegm when you have asthma. If vomiting continues a sweetened tea of three yellow leaves of kacho (*Mikania micrantha*) will stop the vomiting.

**Sida acuta**

**Malvaceae**

**balyé savann; balyé wouj; red broom**

balyé wouj is used in a tisane for cooling. The stems also made into a broom to sweep the yard.

**Simaruba amara**

**Simarubaceae**

**bwa blan; bois blanc (F)**

An indigenous tree whose wood is prevalently used for furniture, cupboards and trim and sometimes boards for construction, it is a viable components of the secondary forests providing wildlife habitat and watershed protection.

**Sloanea caribaea**

**Tiliaceae**

**chatannyé; chataingnier (F)**

This rainforest giant is so important as a wildlife habitat it is no longer used for lumber. Protected by the St. Lucia 1980 wildlife ordinance it is now left solely as a breeding tree for the St. Lucia parrot (*Amazona versicolor*) and other birds. chatannyé has a very hard wood. As one forester described it: "If you put it on fire it fall down before you can cut it."

**Solanum capsicoides**

**Solanaceae**

**ponm pwezon**

ponm pwezon is used when "blood goes up in somebody's head and make them kind of crazy." First they are given a tea made of fle makata (*Caesalpinia pulcherrima*), bonmidjez and lard. The head is then wrapped with ponm pwezon poultice and a decoction made with olive oil, cheese, and saspawey (*Yucca quatemalensis*) is given to drink. Ingestion of this plant could be harmful.

**Solanum nodiflorim**

**Solanaceae**

**Syn. S. americanum**

**agouman**

agouman leaves are eaten as spinach. Old leaves are made into a tea for high blood pressure.

**Solanum torvum**

**Solanaceae**

**belanjenn djab; berangene diabl (F); wild eggplant**

The raw leaves of belanjenn djab are rubbed on the foot to treat athletes' foot. Boiling water is poured o the leaves and then drunk as a tisane for high blood pressure. Also the eggplant (*Solanum melongena*) is often grafted onto the rootstock of this plant to make it more hardly and productive.

**Solanum tuberosa**

**Solanaceae**

**ponm te; irish potato**

For burns, raw grated potato with a little oil added is placed on the spot.

**Spilanthes uliginosa**

**Asteraceae**

**bouton do**

To start menstruation one-third of a nutmeg (*Myristica fragrans*) is boiled with a branch of bouton do, three leaves of fon san (*Blechum brownei*), three leaves of motel (*Erythrina corallodendrum*), three leaves of planten (*Plantago major*), and a branch of jiwof glo (*Ludwigia octovalvis*). Each day fresh leaves are used but the same nutmeg. bouton do in cold water is also used for high inflammation.

**Spondias cytherea**

**Anacardiaceae**

**ponmsité; golden apple**

Golden apple is used for juices and jams. To treat diabetes the fruit is grated, put in water, and the water drunk.

**Spondias mombin**

**Anacardiaceae**

**mouben; hog plum**

The bark of mouben is combined with other herbs in a tisane for woman after childbirth. venvenn kawayib (*Wedelia trilobata*), miniroot (*Ruellia tuberosa*), bonné kawé (*Cardiospermum microcarpum*) go ponpon (*Leonotis nepetaefolia*) and sour orange (*Citrus aurantium*) are all used though not always the same ones.

**Spondias purpurea**

**Anacardiaceae**

**pwin; plum**

For thrush the leaves are crushed, the juice extracted mixed with honey, and rubbed around the child's mouth and tongue. For cough caused by cold the pwin leaf is boiled, a pinch of salt added and drunk. Leaves crushed with water are gargled for sore throat, and, for measles, a tea is made with zeb malonmen (*Chamaesyce hirta*), rice, corn seeds, and a leaf of pwin. Also used for bellyache.

**Stachytarpetta jamaicensis**

**Stachytarpheta cayennensis**

**Verbenaceae**

**venvenn latjé wat; verven**

venvenn latjé wat is used with venyenn kawayib (*Wedelia trilobata*) for cooling. A poultice is made of this plant for curing wounds and sores, and, for inflammation, five or six leaves are boiled and the water drunk as a tisan.

**Sterculia caribaea**

**Sterculiaceae**

**maho kochon; maho-cochon (F); mahaut cochon**

Because the wood of this rainforest tree is soft it is not used for lumber except for broom handles, coffins, boxes and crates. It is, however, important as habitat for wildlife and protection of water and soil resources. The hairs inside the pod of maho kochon can cause irritant dermatitis.

**Swietenia macrophylla**

**Meliaceae**

**Mahogany**

An introduced species, this tree has been planted in the forest reserves to be utilized as timber resources mostly for furniture and inside finishing. Another introduced species is *S. mahagonii* (West India mahogany) of which a few trees exist on the island.

**Symphytum officinale**

**Boraginaceae**

**konsoud; wallwort**

For a bad cold two leaves on konsoud are boiled in milk, strained, and a teaspoon of lard added before drinking. Or make a tea for cold or fever or cough.

**Tabebuia pallida**

**Bignoniaceae**

**powyé; Poirier (F); white cedar**

The wood of powyé is used for poles and furniture and sometimes sawed for rafters. Other uses of the wood include chair backs and rungs and mortars and pestles. The flowers may be dried and smoked in a pipe for asthma.

**Tabernaemontana citrifolia**

**Apocynaceae**

**bwa let; bois lait (F)**

bwa let is used to dry up mother's milk. She squeezes her breasts against the tree. This is a small, common tree of secondary, disturbed forests.

**Talauma dodecapetala**

**Magnoliaceae**

**bwapenm mawon; bois pain marron (F)**

This rainforest tree with its large showy flowers and extraordinary seed pod is much prized for the wood with its unusually attractive grain which is worked into furniture and turned for bowls and other specialty items. Because of its beauty and versatility it is held in high esteem by forest appreciators in St. Lucia.

**Tamarindus indica**

**Caesalpiniaceae**

**tanmawen; tamarind**

The seeds of tanmawen are used to make a popular tart drink and also candies and jams. Medicinally, tanmawen is used to treat measles.

**Tectona grandis**

**Verbenaceae**

**Teak**

This introduced species has been utilized by the St. Lucia Forestry Division for plantations of saw timber and as protection from erosion along river banks.

**Theobroma cacao**

**Sterculiaceae**

**koko; cocoa**

In St. Lucia the cocoa is home processed. It is washed, dried in the sun, roasted, peeled and pounded and shaped into a stick. Sometimes nutmeg or other spices are added. It is used in this form for cocoa tea. For flavoring, a more refined processes and imported cocoa or chocolate is usually used in St. Lucia. Medicinally, koko is used for heart trouble. A pod is broken open and all the seeds out to dry in the sun. One seed is roasted each day and made into a tea with no additives. This is repeated every day until all the seeds are used.

**Urena sinuate**

**Malvaceae**

**pikan kouzen; piquant cousin (F); mawon kouzen**

A three-inch piece of root is pounded, cold water poured over it and the water drunk as a cooling or for inflammation.

**Vetiveria zizanioides**

**Poaceae**

**voytivé; khus khus; vetive**

khus khus grows profusely in St. Lucia along roadside and vacant fields so there is little wonder it is the core, or ``bone,’’ of basket and mat making. Quite literally it is used in the ``bone and wrap’’ baskets of the craftperson and for plaiting the straw of mats. In other uses the roots of this grass are placed among clothing to repel insects and add a pleasant smell to the closet. Perfume is made from the root as well, and the grass is often planted along roads and steep slopes to prevent erosion. The plant is also used medicinally. For babies with colic, three inches of the root, a make pumpkin flower (*Cucurbita pepo*) and a branch of mint (*Mentha nemorosa*) is boiled and the tea given to the infant. A woman who wishes to prevent pregnancy is told to boil a piece of khus khus root in a cup of water until the water is reduced to half. When it cools, she drinks the water, put the root in a bottle, and buries it until she wishes to get pregnant, at which time she will uncover it. This is to work for animals, too.

**Wedelia triblobata**

**Asteraceae**

**venvenn kawayib; carpet daisy herb soliel (F); pis-a-bed**

After childbirth women drink a tea of venvenn kawayib to contract the uterus and stop hemorrhage. vhouvalyé wonzé (*Portulaca pilosa*) is sometimes added in making the tea. As a tisane, twef (*Aristolochia constricta*), go ponpon (*Leonotis nepetaefolia*) and hog plum bark (*Spondias purpurea*) are added. Also as a tisane, this plant is used for cooling, sometimes with venvenn lache wat (*Stachtarpheta* spp.), and for inflammation when you pass blood. When a nerve is pinched and you can't straighten your arm, a good bit of venvenn kawayib is pounded, mixed with a spoon of castor oil and applied.

**Yucca guatemalensis**

**Agavaceae**

**saspawé; sasparilla; espadillo**

Note: RG. the saspawé used in St Lucia is in fact collected from *Agave caribaeicola* and not *Yucca* as in other countries.

Veneral disease and rashes caused by it are treated with saspawé. Three inches of the root are boiled (it turns red like a Ju-C) and the water put into a quart bottle with a tablespoon of Epsom salts. This given two tablespoons at a time morning and night. saspawé and Epsom salts are also used as blood purifier to treat lota, and for menstrual problems. With fle makata (*Caesalpinia pulcherrima*), ponm pwezon (*Solanum capsicoides*), cheese, olive oil, la bonm de jese and lard added to saspawé, a decoction is given to treat a person ``when blood goes up in the head and makes them kind of crazy.'' Saspawé may also be used to alleviate menstrual cramps.

### Zea mays

#### Poaceae

#### ni; corn; maize

As a diuretic, corn hair is boiled and the water cooled and drunk. To treat measles, nine grains are boiled with zebv malonmen (*Chamaesyce hirta*, pumpkin (*Cucurbita pepo*), and a few grains of rice, a lot of water added and drunk as a tisane. For jaundice the pumpkin and corn are used with barley and the water poured over a grated carrot. This water is then mixed hand and half with a bottle of Porter, using one-third three times a day, drunk hot.

### Zingiber officinale

#### Zingiberaceae

#### jejanm; gengeam; ginger

To stop bleeding, pound ginger, add oil and tied on the wound. Ginger tea is used for colds and bellyache. It is a mild stimulant. For diarrhea a bit of ginger is combined with five leaves of blackberries (*Myrica citrifolia*) and three tiny leaves of guava (*Psidium guajava*) in a tea.