

**A CLASSICAL REVIEW ON SARPAGANDHA (RAUVOLFIA  
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**ABSTRACT**

Since the pre-Vedic era, Ayurveda has made extensive use of the well-known medicinal plant *sarpagandha* (*Rauvolfia serpentina* (L.) Benth. ex Kurz), which is a member of the Apocynaceae family. Its application for ailments like snakebite, fever, mental illnesses, sleeplessness, hypertension, and poisoning is described in classical Ayurvedic scriptures. The main ingredient in several formulations, such as Sarpagandha Ghana Vati and Sarpagandha Churna, is the root. With regard to Sarpagandha's nirukti, synonyms, gana classification, rasa-panchaka, karma, rogagnata, formulations, botanical description, pharmacological activity, and therapeutic indications, the current work attempts to gather and critically evaluate the traditional Ayurvedic literature. In order to provide a thorough Dravyaguna profile, the review also incorporates taxonomical information, botanical traits, cultivation methods, distribution, conservation status, and trade data. In order to support the old knowledge base's logical clinical and pharmacological uses in modern healthcare, such documentation is crucial.

**INTRODUCTION**

Ayurveda emphasizes the holistic use of medicinal plants based on their rasa, guna, veerya, vipaka, prabhava, and karma. Sarpagandha is one such important drug that has been extensively documented in classical texts and nighantus. The very nirukti of Sarpagandha—"sarpān gandhayati ardayati iti"—indicates its potent action against venomous creatures, especially snakes.

References from Charaka Samhita, Sushruta Samhita, Ashtanga Hridaya, and various nighantus reveal its wide therapeutic spectrum, particularly in visha chikitsa, manasa roga, jwara, nidranasha, unmada, apasmara, and rakta-chapadhikya. Sarpagandha is included in important groups such as Aparajita Gana and Ekasaraga Gana, emphasizing its relevance in psychiatric and toxicological conditions.

With the advent of modern pharmacology, *Rauvolfia serpentina* gained global attention due to its sedative, antihypertensive, and CNS-modulating properties. However, classical Ayurvedic attributes and applications often remain scattered across texts. Hence, a systematic literary compilation is necessary to present a

consolidated Dravyaguna profile of *Sarpagandha* for academic, clinical, and research purposes.

**MATERIALS AND METHODS****Study Design**

The present study is a systematic literary review based on classical Ayurvedic texts and modern botanical references.

**Source of Data**

The information was collected from the following sources:

- **Classical Samhitas:** Charaka Samhita, Sushruta Samhita, Ashtanga Hridaya, Ashtanga Sangraha
- **Nighantus:** Bhavaprakasha Nighantu, Dhanvantari Nighantu, Raja Nighantu, Kaiyadeva Nighantu, Priya Nighantu, Madanapala Nighantu, Shodhala Nighantu, Shaligrama Nighantu, Abhidhan Ratnamala
- **Modern Ayurvedic texts:** Dravyaguna Vigyana (P.V. Sharma)
- Botanical and pharmacognosy references for taxonomical classification, botanical description,

cultivation, distribution, conservation, and trade data.

### METHODOLOGY

- Nirukti, synonyms, gana, rasa-panchaka, karma, and roghanata were extracted and tabulated from classical texts.
- Therapeutic indications and formulations were compiled based on textual references.
- Botanical description, taxonomical status, and family characteristics were described using standard botanical literature.
- Cultivation techniques, distribution, conservation status, and trade data were reviewed from authoritative sources such as NMPB reports.
- Data were analyzed descriptively and presented in tabular and narrative forms.

### SARPAGANDHA

*Sarpagandha* is a medicinal plant of family apocynaceae.<sup>[1]</sup> For centuries since pre Vedic period it has been used for different medicinal purpose in India like snake bite, fever, and insanity etc. From the reference in our *samhitas* it is clear that root of *Sarpagandha* is used in many preparations from ancient times eg: *Sarpagandha Ghana vati*, *Sarpagandha churna*.

Here are some reference about *Sarpagandha* as per *samhitas* and other Ayurvedic texts.

#### Nirukti

1. सर्पगन्धाः - सर्पान्धयति अर्दयति इति ।

Drug which expels the snake due to its smell is called as *Sarpagandha*.

#### Synonyms of *Sarpagandha*

**Table 1: Synonyms of *Sarpagandha*.**

S.N	Synonyms	C.S	S.S	A.S	D.N	R.N	M.N	B.N	Mah.N	So.N	K.N	Sh.N	A.R
1	<i>Nakuli</i>	+	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	-
2	<i>Surasa</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	+	+	-	+	-
3	<i>Nagasugandha</i>	-	-	-	-	-	+	+	-	-	-	+	-
4	<i>Gandhanakuli</i>	-	-	-	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
5	<i>Nakuleshtha</i>	-	-	-	-	-	+	+	+	-	+	+	-
6	<i>Bhujangakshi</i>	-	-	-	-	-	+	+	+	-	-	+	-
7	<i>Sarpangi</i>	-	-	-	-	-	+	+	-	-	-	+	-
8	<i>Vishagni</i>	-	-	-	-	-	+	+	+	-	+	+	+
9	<i>Nakulikanda</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	-	-	-
10	<i>Sarpagandha</i>	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	+	+	-	-
11	<i>Sugandha</i>	-	+	+	+	+	+	-	-	+	+	+	-
12	<i>Bhogigandhika</i>	-	-	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
13	<i>Sarpasugandha</i>	-	-	-	+	-	+	-	-	-	+	-	-
14	<i>Chiritpatrika</i>	-	-	-	+	-	+	-	-	-	+	-	-
15	<i>Raktapatrika</i>	-	-	-	-	+	+	-	-	-	-	-	-
16	<i>Ishwari</i>	-	-	-	-	+	+	-	-	-	-	-	-
17	<i>Naggandha</i>	-	-	-	-	+	+	-	-	-	-	-	-
18	<i>Ahibhuka</i>	-	-	-	-	+	+	-	-	-	-	-	-
19	<i>Swarasa</i>	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
20	<i>Sarpani</i>	-	-	-	-	+	+	-	-	-	-	-	-
21	<i>Vyalgandha</i>	-	-	-	-	+	+	-	-	-	-	-	-

नाकुलीसुरसानागसुगन्धागन्धानाकुली ।  
नकुलेष्टाभुजङ्गाक्षीसर्पाङ्गीविषनाशिनी ॥ भावप्रकाशनिघण्टु,  
हरितक्यादिवर्ग, १३६<sup>[2]</sup>

नाकुलीसर्पगन्धाचसुगन्धारक्तपत्रिका ।  
ईश्वरीनागगन्धाचप्याहिभुक्स्वरसातथा ।  
सर्पादनीव्यालगन्धाज्ञेयाचेतिदशाद्वया ॥९३॥  
अन्यामहासुगन्धाचसुवहागन्धानाकुली ।  
सर्पाक्षीफणिहन्त्रीचनकुलाढ्याऽहिभुक्चसा ॥१४॥  
विषमर्दनिकाचाहिमर्दिनीविषमर्दिनी ।  
महाहिगन्धाऽहिलताज्ञेयासाद्वादशाढ्या ॥१५॥रा. नि. -  
मूलकादिवर्ग<sup>[3]</sup>

'विषघ्नीसुवहासर्पगन्धाचीरितपत्रिका ।  
सुगन्धानाकुलीसर्पलोचनागन्धानाकुली ॥ कैयदेवनिघण्टु -  
औषधिवर्ग / ७७५-७७६<sup>[4]</sup>

नाकुलीसर्पगन्धाचसुगन्धाभोगिगन्धिका ।  
सैवसर्पगन्धाचतथाचीरितपत्रिका ॥९१॥  
नाकुलीकटुरुष्णास्यात्तिक्ताऽपिपरिकीर्तिता ।  
मूषिकस्यविषमहन्तिकृमिदोषविनाशिनी ॥१२॥ -ध. नि. -  
करवीरादिवर्ग<sup>[5]</sup>

नाकुलीसमहासर्पगन्धिनीगन्धानाकुली ।  
नकुलेष्टामहासर्पनेत्रारोचकपत्रिका ॥ २६३॥ - प्रियनिघण्टु -  
शतपुष्पादिवर्ग<sup>[6]</sup>

22	Samaha	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	-
23	Sarpagandhini	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	-
24	Mahasarpametra	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	-
25	Rochakpatrika	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	-
26	Gandhamula	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	-
27	Surami	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	-
28	Gandhakhya	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	-
29	Gandhacharini	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	-
30	Chirnapatrika	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	-
31	Rasna	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	-
32	Bhujanga Damanishyate	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	-
33	Suvaha	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	-	+	+	+	-
34	Mahasugandha	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	+	-
35	Sarpakshi	-	-	-	-	+	+	-	-	-	-	+	-
36	Phanihantri	-	-	-	-	+	+	-	-	-	-	+	-
37	Nakuladhya	-	-	-	-	+	+	-	-	-	-	+	-
38	Bhukhchasa	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	-
39	Vishsmardhinika	-	-	-	-	+	+	-	-	-	-	+	-
40	Mardhini	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	-
41	Vishamardhini	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	+	-
42	Mahahigandha	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	+	-
43	Ahilata	-	-	-	-	+	+	-	-	-	-	+	-
44	Dhavalbarua	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	-
45	Mahavirya	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	-	+	-	-
46	Sarpalochana	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	-	+	-	-
47	Ishwaki	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	-
48	Yogagandhika	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	-
49	Ahimardhini	-	-	-	-	+	+	-	-	-	-	-	-
50	Ahigandha	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	-
51	Bhukaswarasa	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	-
52	Sarpabhuk	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
53	Sumahi	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+
54	Nakulpriya	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+
55	Chitrakshi	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+
56	Charanakshi	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+
57	Sadhaki	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+
58	Sarpakankalika	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	-
59	Sunandana	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	-
60	Vishadantrika	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	-

+ Indicates the presence of the synonym in *Samhita* or *Nighantu*.

### Meaning of synonyms

1. धवलवितपः-धावतिशोधयतिमनोदेहश्चइतिधवलः।  
The medicinal plant which detoxify the mind and body

2. चन्द्रमारचन्द्रमाल्हादम्मारयति।  
Drug which calm down the intensity of mind

### Vernacular name

Different regional names (Indian) are given below –

Table 2: Vernacular names.<sup>[7]</sup>

Sr.	Language	Names
1	Sanskrit	Sarpagandha
2	Marathi	Harkya, Harki, Sapsanda
3	Hindi	Chottachand, Chandrabhaga, Chandamarava, Haraichanda
4	English	Rauwolfia root, Serpentine root, Snake root
5	Bengali	Chandra, Chottachand
6	Gujarati	Sarpagandha, Amelpodi
7	Kannada	Sutranavi, Sarpagandha, Shivanabhalli, Sutranabi, Patalgaruda,
8	Malayalam	Amalpori, Chivan Avelpori, Tuluni, Vantuvala

9	Tamil	Chivanamelpodi, Sivamelpodi, Covannamilpori, Arpaganti
10	Telugu	Patalgaruda, Patalgandhi, Patalgni, Dumparasna
11	Assam	Arachontita
12	Kon	Patalgarud
13	Oriya	Patalgarur, Sanochado
14	Urdu	Asrel

### Gana of Sarpagandha<sup>[8]/[9]</sup>

अपराजितागणे - सुश्रुतसंहिता, उत्तर, ६०-४७

एकसरगणे - सुश्रुतसंहिता, कल्प ५-८४

**Table 3: Gana of Sarpagandha.**

Sr.	Name of Samhitas/ Nighantus	Gana/ Varga
1	Charak Samhita	-
2	Sushrut Samhita <sup>[29]</sup>	Aparajita Gana
3	AshtangSamgraha	-
4	Bhavprakash Nighantu <sup>[10]</sup>	Haritakyadivarga
5	Nighantu Adarsha <sup>[11]</sup>	Kutajadi (Apocynaceae)
6	Raj Nighantu <sup>[12]</sup>	Mulakadivarga
7	Dhanvantari Nighantu <sup>[13]</sup>	Karaviradivarga
8	Priya Nighantu <sup>[14]</sup>	Shatapushpadivarga
9	Kayyadeva Nighantu <sup>[15]</sup>	Aushadhidivarga
10	Abhidhan Ratnamala <sup>[16]</sup>	Katuskandha
11	Shodhal Nighantu <sup>[17]</sup>	Guduchyadi, Karveeradivarga
12	Madanpal Nighantu <sup>[18]</sup>	Abhayadivarga
13	Shaligram Nighantu <sup>[19]</sup>	Ashta Varga
14	Dravyagunavigyan(PV Sharma) <sup>[20]</sup>	Nidrajanan, Aparajita Gana

### Pharmacological Consideration

This section deals with the *rasapanchak vivechan* as described by various authors and tabulates the various therapeutic uses of *Sarpagandha*.

**Table 4: Rasapanchak of Sarpagandha.**

Rasapanchak		C.S.	S.S	A.S./A.H	D. N.	R. N	Mad. N	B.N	N.A	K. N	N. R	D. V	P. N	Mah. N
Rasa	Katu	-	-	-	+	+	+	+	-	+	-	+	-	+
	Tikta	-	-	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	+	+	+
	Kashaya	-	-	-	-	-	+	+	+	-	-	-	-	+
Guna	Ruksha	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	-	-	+	-	-
	Sara	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	+	-
Veerya	Ushna	-	-	-	+	+	+	+	-	+	-	+	+	+
Vipaka	Katu	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	-	-	+	-	-
Dosha Karma	Kapha-Vata shamaka	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	-	-	+	-	-
	Pittavridhikar	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	-
	Tridoshaghna	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Prabhav	Nidrajanan	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	+	+	-

+ indicates presence of respective *rasapanchak*

### Karma of Sarpagandha

Karma, in the context of Pharmacology, relates to action on organs, *doshas*, *dhatu*s and *malas* which is required

for homeostasis of the person. In other words, karma is the response of living tissue to *dravya*.

**Table 5: Karma of Sarpagandha.**

Samanya Karma	C.S	S.S	A.S/AH	DN	R.N	M..N	B.N	N.A	P.N	D.V
Nidrajanan	-	-	-	-	-	+	+	+	+	+
Raktabharshamak	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	+	-	-
Mastishknadishamak	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	-	-
Garbhashayauttejak	-	-	-	-	-	+	+	-	-	-

Vedanashak	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	+	-	+
Grahi	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	-	-
Mutral	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+
Madanashak	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+
Pachan	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+
Deepan	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+
Ruchya	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+
Hridavasadak	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	+
Kamaysadak	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+
Uttejananashak	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	-
Garbhashay	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	-
Sankochak	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Tiktapoushtik	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	-	-
Vishaghna	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	-	-
Jwaraghna	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	-	-
Shwashar	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	-	-
Bhramahar	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	-	-
Manasikudveghar	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	-	-

+indicates karma

### Rogagnata of Sarpagandha

नाकुलीतुवरातिक्ताकटुकोष्णाविनाशयेत्।  
भोगिलुताविश्रिकाखुविषज्वरहरकृमिघ्नान्। भावप्रकाशनिघण्टु-  
हरितक्यादिवर्ग, १३६<sup>[21]</sup>

नकुलेष्टाकटुस्तिक्ताकषायोष्णानिगच्छति।  
व्रणकृमीन्सर्पलुतात्रिश्रिकाखुविषं गरम्॥ -  
कैयदेवनिघण्टु औषधिवर्ग, ७७७-७७८<sup>[22]</sup>

नाकुलीकटुरुष्णास्यात्तिक्तापिपरिकीर्तिता।  
मूषिकस्यविषमन्तिकृमिदोषविनाशिनी ॥९२॥ - ध.नि.  
करवीरादिवर्ग

नाकुलीयुगलतिक्तंकटुष्णाम्त्रिदोषजित।  
अनेकविषध्वंसिकिञ्चिच्छेषमिद्वितीयकम् ॥९६॥- रा. नि.  
मूलकादिवर्ग

सर्पगन्धाऽतितिक्तोष्णासरानिद्राप्रदायिनी।  
हन्तिशूलज्वरोन्मादक्रिमीरक्तसमीरणान्॥१६४॥ -  
प्रियनिघण्टुशतपुष्पादिवर्ग  
नाकुलीतुवरातिक्ताकटुकोष्णाविनाशयेत्।  
विषलूतावृश्रिकाखुसर्पाणांमृकृमिघ्नानाम् ॥२६४॥ -  
मदनपालनिघण्टु - अभयादिवर्ग

नाकुलीकटुकातिक्ताकषायोष्णाविनाशयेत्।  
भोगिवृश्रिकलूताखु. विषज्वरकृमिघ्नान्॥  
रक्तचापस्यचाधिक्यमर्दयेदविकल्पतः ॥१८॥ - महौषधनिघण्टु,  
महौषधादिवर्ग

सर्पगन्धाऽतितिक्तोष्णारुक्षाकटुविपाकिनी  
पित्तवृद्धिकरीरुच्याशूलप्रशमनीसरा  
कफवातहरानिद्राप्रदाहदवसादिनी  
कामावसादिनीचैवहन्तिशूलज्वरक्रिमीन्।  
अनिद्रांभूतमुन्मादमपस्मारंभ्रमंतथा। अग्निमान्दविषंरक्त-  
वाताधिक्यं व्यपोहति ॥

प्रि.श.-द्रव्यगुणविज्ञान (२-३भाग) पा. ३३

### Rakshoghna Dravya

पुराणसर्पिलशुनम्हिङ्गुसिद्धार्थकंवचा  
(गोलीमीचजलोमीचभूतकेशीजटातथा॥  
कुक्कुटासर्पगन्धाचतथाकणविकाणिके  
|ऋष्यप्रोक्तावयःस्थाचशृङ्गीमोहनवल्लिका॥  
अर्कमूलत्रिकटुकम्लतास्तोतोजमञ्जनम्।  
नेपालीहरितालं चरक्षोघ्नायेचकीर्तिताः॥-सु. उ. ६०/४६-४८

### Properties and action of Sarpagandha

The roots are bitter, acrid, laxative, thermo-genic, anthelmintic, diuretic, febrifuge, and has sedative properties and are useful in hypertension.<sup>[23]</sup> It is also used in stangury, wounds, colic, cholera, fever, dysentery, hypochondria, worm infestation and irritative conditions of CNS, insanity, anxiety, schizophrenia, maniacal behavior associated with psychosis, epilepsy, giddiness, insomnia<sup>[24]</sup> and dyspepsia. The decoction of the root is used to increase uterine contractions. The juice of the leaves is useful in removal of opacities of the cornea.

### Therapeutic uses of the Sarpagandha

3. *Visuchika* -Sarpagandha should be given with warm water
4. *Atisara* - In the treatment of diarrheal illnesses, powdered *sarpagandha* and *ishwari* roots are used.
5. *Sarpa visha*- root powder of *Sarpagandha* (10-20g) is grind with water and used internally. The same is applied locally as well.<sup>[25]</sup>
6. Mental disorders- *Aparajita Gana*, which is suggested for mental illnesses, contains *sarpagandha*.
7. *MushakVisha*-It is particularly mentioned in rat poisoning.<sup>[26]</sup>

**Part Used:** Root and leaf

**Dose**

Root powder- 3-6gm (sedative, insanity)  
1-2 gm (antihypertensive dose)  
3-6gm (Schizophrenia)<sup>[27]</sup>

**References of formulations/ preparations of Sarpagandha in Samhitas and Nighantus**

विसुचिकायाम् अशक्तस्तुपिबेतकोष्णसलिलैः सर्पगन्धिकम् । -  
वैद्यमनोरमा, ६-२६  
मानसरोगे- अपराजितागणे - सुश्रुतसंहिता, उत्तर, ६०-४७  
मूषिकविषे - सुश्रुतसंहिता, कल्प७-२९  
एकसरगणे - सुश्रुतसंहिता, कल्प५-८४  
अगुर्वादितैलज्वर - चरकचिकित्सा ३/२६७

**महासुगन्धिअगद- सर्पविष**

धवाश्वकर्णपार्थानांपुष्पाणिनिशस्यच ।  
गुग्गुलुंकुंकुम्बिम्बसर्पक्षगन्धनाकुलीम् ॥२२॥ -सु. क. ६/२२  
**त्रिमण्डलादष्टविषचिकित्सा**  
तत्रार्कमूलंरजनीनाकुलीपुष्पिपर्णिका ।  
पानकर्मणिशस्यन्तेनस्यालेपाञ्जनेषुच ॥१०२॥सु.क. ८/१०२

**सर्वविधग्रहबाधाहरयोग- भूतप्रतिषेध**

कुक्कुटासर्पगन्धाचतथाकाणविकाणिके ।  
वज्रप्रोक्तावयःस्थाचश्रुडीमोहनवल्लिका ॥ सु.उ.६०/४८

**एकसरयोग-सर्पविष**

सोमराजीफलंपुष्पंकटभीसिन्धुवारकः ।  
चोरकोवरुणःकुष्ठसर्पगन्धासप्तला ॥ सु.क. ५/८४

**परमअगद-वचादियोग**

वचांशत्वचपाठानंतसुरसमंजरीम् ।  
वेबलेनाकुलींकुष्ठंशिरिषंरजनीद्वयम् ॥ च.चि. २३/२१२

**पलङ्कषादितैल**

पलङ्कषावचापथ्यावृश्चिकाल्यर्कसर्पपेः ।  
जटिलापूतनाकेशीनाकुलीहिङ्गुचोरकैः ॥३४॥ च. चि१०/३४

निष्काथ्यचैषांकाथस्यचतुर्थोऽंशः पुनर्भवेत् ।

त्रिवुदगोज्यमृतावक्रसर्पगन्धाःसमृत्तिकाः ॥ सु. क. ७/२९

**महापैशाचिकघृत<sup>[49]</sup>**

जटिलांपूतनांकेशींचारटीममर्कटीम्वचाम् ।  
त्रयमाणाम्जयांवीरांचोरकंकटुरोहिणीम् ॥४५१॥  
वयःस्थांशूकरींचत्रामतिच्छत्राम्पलङ्कषाम् ।  
महापुरुषदन्ताम्वकायस्थांनकुलीद्वयम् ॥४६॥ च. चि. ९/४६

मिशिमाषकुलथाग्निप्रकीर्यानाकुलीद्वयैः ।

अन्यैश्चतद्विधैर्द्रव्यैःशीतेतैलज्वरेपचेत् ॥ अ.ह. चि. १/१४०

कुक्कुटीसर्पगन्धाख्यातिलाःकाणविषाणिके ।

वज्रप्रोक्तावयस्थाचश्रुङ्गीमोहनवत्यापि ॥३॥अ.ह. उ. ५/३

**ज्वरचिकित्सा**

विर्योष्णैरुष्णसंस्पर्शैस्तगरागुरुकुम्कुमैः ॥१३५॥

तमालपत्रभूतीकशल्लकौधान्यदीप्यकैः ।

मिशिमाषकुलथाग्निप्रकीर्यानाकुलीद्वयैः ॥१३८॥ - अ. ह. चि. १/१३५-१४०

एकाङ्गशोफेवर्षाभूकरवीरककिन्शुकैः ।

विशालात्रिफलारोधनालिकादेवदारुभिः ॥२५॥

हिम्स्त्राकोशातकीमाद्रीतालपर्णीजयान्तिभिः ।

स्थूलकाकादनीशालनाकुलीवृषपर्णिभिः ॥२६॥

वृद्ध्यद्भिर्हस्तिकर्णैश्चसुखोष्णैर्लेपनंहितम् । - अ. ह. चि. १७/२५-२७

**महापैशाचिकघृत**

महापुरुषदन्ताचवयस्थानाकुलीद्वयम् ।

कटम्भरावृश्चिकालीशलिपर्णीचतैर्युतम् ॥३६॥

सिद्धंचातुर्थिकोन्मादग्रहापस्मानाशनम् ।

महापैशाचिकनामघृतमेतद्यथामृतम् ॥३७॥

बुद्धिमेधास्मृतिकरंबालानांचाङ्गवर्धनम् । अ. ह. उ. ६/३६-३७

ग्रन्थीनपक्वानालिम्पेन्नाकुलीपटुनागरैः ।

स्विन्नान्त्वणपोटल्याकठिनानुमर्दयेत् ॥१५॥ अ. ह. ३.३०/१५

कृष्णसर्पेणदष्टस्यलिम्पेदंशहतेऽसृजि ॥१८॥

चारटीनाकुलीभ्यांवातीक्षणमूलविषेणवा । अ. ह. उ. ३६/५९

समाःसुगन्धामृद्धिकाश्वेताख्यागजदन्तिका ॥६१॥

पानंचक्षौद्रमञ्जिष्ठागृहधुमयुतघृतम् ॥५९॥

अर्धांशंसौरसंपत्रकपित्थंबिल्वदाडिमम् ।

सक्षौद्रौमण्डलिविषेविशेषाद्गदीहितः ॥६२॥ अ. इ. उ. ३६/६२

**लूतादिव**

हिदेरवैकङ्कतगोपकन्या- मुस्ताशमीचन्दनटिण्टुकानि ।

शैवालनीलोत्पलवक्रयष्टीत्वग्नाकुलीपद्मकराठमध्यम् ॥१२॥

रजनीधनसर्पलोचनाकणशुण्ठीकणमूलचित्रकाः । अ. ह. ३.३७

**Taxonomic status of Rauvolfia serpentina (L.) Benth. Ex Kurz****Table 6: Taxonomical Classification.**<sup>[28]</sup>

Kingdom	Plantae
Unranked	Angiosperms
Unranked	Eudicots
Unranked	Asterids
Order	Gentianales
Family	Apocynaceae <sup>[29]</sup>
Genus	<i>Rauvolfia</i>
Species	<i>R. serpentina</i>

**Characteristic of Apocynaceae Family**<sup>[30]</sup>**Apocynaceae**

This is a large family with around 130 genera, most of which are tropical. Many common weeds as well as imported plants including Nerium, the oleander, and Plumeria are widely represented in this family. They include herbs as well as erect or climbing trees or shrubs.

The leaves lack stipules, are whole, opposite or whorled, hardly ever alternate. Perimedullary phloem and latex

cells are always present. Corolla usually with contort activation, that is with all the petals overlapped in the same direction of twist. The inflorescence is primarily a panicle, but it may eventually display dichasial or maonochasial cymose branching. The seeds may include hairs to aid in wind dissemination, and the fruit frequently has two follicles. The flowers of *Nerium oleander* are an interesting example of floral mechanism in relation to pollination.

The anthers of the five stamens are in contact laterally and clustered in the centre of the flower to form a "pollen chamber" immediately above the top of the style. The stamens have long, upwardly projecting connectives, loosely spirally twisted together at first, but later uncoiling and bearing long silky hairs which are effective in keeping out intruders. Shorter, downward, tail like processes from the anthers curve outwards towards the point of fusion of the filament with the corolla tube. Down the inside of the latter, continuing from the bases of the five filaments are longitudinal lines of downwardly directed hairs which alternate with smooth lines. Nectar is secreted from the surface of the corolla tube at its base. Just below the anthers, the filaments are fused to a circular disc near the head of the style, and the stigmatic surface lies on the underside of this disc. Pollination is effected by long-tongued insects such as Lepidoptera, and bees.

These may enter the upper portion of the corolla tube, which is funnel shaped, though partially blocked by the coiled silky process. They cannot proceed further, but push their proboscis between the stamen filaments and "tails", and between the lines of hairs, to reach the nectar. The proboscis on withdrawal first deposits adhering pollen chamber above the disc to carry it to another flower where the process is repeated. Anthers and stigma ripen simultaneously in the same flower (homogamy).

#### Botanical Description of *Sarpagandha*

*Rauwolfia serpentina* (L.) Benth. Ex Kurzis a small erect shrub rarely reaching 3ft. high, bark pale, rarely lenticellate.

**Leaves**– They are arranged in whorls of three and are thin, 3-7 by 1-2 12 inches, lanceolate, acute or acuminate, glabrous, bright green above, pale beneath, and tapering at the base. There are 8–10 pairs of major nerves on the slender, 1/3-inch-long petioles, which are relatively inconspicuous since the blade extends into the petiole.

**Flowers**– *Sarpagandha* flowers are irregular corymbose cymes that are white with occasional violet tinges. Peduncles are 2 to 5 inches long and pedicels are thick and 1/8 to 1/4 inches long. Bracts are triangular and acute and situated beneath the pedicels. Calyx segments are 1/10 in long lanceolate, glabrous, and red in color. Corolla lobes are 1/8 in long, elliptic-oblong, and rounded at the apex.

**Fruits**- They are drupes, purple black, spherical and jointed at the top with 2 elliptic seeds.

**Roots** – The roots are cylindrical of about 1.5 cm diameter and 30 cm length. Outer surface is rough, yellowish brown colored and longitudinally fissured. Root may possess root scars.

#### Cultivation Techniques for propagation

*Sarpagandha* propagates by vegetative means like root cutting, root stumps, and also by seeds. The percentage of germination of seeds are very low.<sup>[31]</sup> Germination generally starts after 15 – 20 days. The nursery should be kept wet during the germination period.<sup>[32]</sup> *Sarpagandha* is an endangered species in many staes of India.<sup>[54]</sup> In 2019 National Medicinal Plant Board has prioritized 32 medicinal plants for conservation and *Sarpagandha* is one among them.<sup>[33]</sup>

**Distribution:** This species is distributed in indo Malaysian region. In India it is distributed in the sub-Himalayan tracts, eastern and peninsular India, Andaman Iceland, Iin moist deciduous to evergreen forest, from 400 -1600 meter altitude. North and south Konkan, jungles near Goa, moist forest of north Kanara, sub Himalayan tract from Sirhind eastwards, Birma, Andamanas, Andaans, W.peninsula, Ceylon-Java.<sup>[34]</sup>

**Trade:** Domestic use by the herbal manufacturing units has been assessed as 290 metric tons. During 2005 – 2006 India exported 28 metric tons of *R.serpentina* roots for a value of 8.7 lakh rupee.<sup>[35]</sup>

**Floral Formula:** \*, K5,C5,A5,G2

#### CONCLUSION

*Sarpagandha* (*Rauwolfia serpentina*) is a potent and multidimensional Ayurvedic drug with extensive classical documentation and proven therapeutic relevance. The drug exhibits Tikta – Katu rasa, Ushna veerya, Katu vipaka, and predominantly Kapha-Vata shamaka properties, with a unique Nidrajanana prabhava. Classical texts highlight its effectiveness in mental disorders, insomnia, hypertension, poisoning, fever, worm infestation, and gynecological conditions.

The root is the principal medicinal part, though leaves are also used therapeutically. Inclusion of *Sarpagandha* in *Aparajita Gana* and *Rakshoghna dravyas* underscores its importance in *manasa roga* and *visha chikitsa*. Despite its immense medicinal value, *Sarpagandha* is now categorized as an endangered species, necessitating urgent conservation and sustainable cultivation strategies.

This comprehensive literary review reaffirms the classical significance of *Sarpagandha* and provides a strong foundation for clinical application, pharmacological research, conservation planning, and

integrative medicine, bridging traditional wisdom with modern scientific relevance.

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