

## RESEARCH ARTICLE

# Wild edible plants consumed by the Aka tribe in East Kameng district of Arunachal Pradesh, India

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## Abstract

This study documented wild edible plants (WEPs) consumed by the Aka community of the East Kameng district of Arunachal Pradesh. Using the Rapid Assessment Technique (RAA), the field survey was carried out in six randomly selected Aka inhabited villages. Total of 120 informants were randomly selected and interviewed for documentation of ethnobotanical knowledge of wild edible plants. Information was collected using semi structured questionnaires and focus group discussions. A total of 74 species of wild edible plants belonging to 59 genera and 43 families were recorded. With four species each, Rosaceae and Dioscoreaceae were reported to be the most dominant family, followed by Urticaceae, Solanaceae, Asteraceae, Arecaceae, Anacardaceae, and Amaranthaceae. To revive and recover some of the lost traditional knowledge, it is also necessary to promote general awareness among the local population about the nutritional and livelihood potential of the wild edible plants.

Keywords: Aka tribe; Wild edible plants; Livelihood; Ethnobotany; West Kameng; Arunachal Pradesh

## 1. Introduction

A large number of indigenous populations around the world use wild edible plants (WEPs), for dietary intake, food, medicine, and a variety of other uses (Beluhan and Ranogajec, 2011). They significantly add to the world's food supply chain to mitigate famine and malnutrition. More than 85% of the world's population relies on fewer than 20 plant taxa to meet their daily caloric needs, compared to the approximately 4,22,000 plant taxa that have been recorded worldwide (Rashid, 2015). About 9500 wild plants were used by 553 different tribal people on the Indian subcontinent alone for healthcare, sustenance, and other objectives (Jain and Tiwari, 2012). The custom of eating plants from the wild is quite widespread among the indigenous populations. Tribal community utilized variety of wild species to fulfill their nutritional requirements (Katewa, 2003; Maikhuri et al., 1994). Due to this, many indigenous and rural groups around the world have included the use of wild plant resources in their traditions, religions, and medical practices.

Arunachal Pradesh, with a total area of 83,743 sq km, is the largest state of the North East India. It lies between 26° 30' and 29° 30' North and 91° 30' and 97° 30' East and has a forest area of about 80.39% of its total land (Anonymous, 2013). It is home to different kinds of forests types that support an extensive variety of flora and fauna. The state has emerged as one of the top locations for ethnobotanical exploration and discoveries due to its rich tribal culture and advantageous location inside the Indo-Burma biodiversity hotspot (Myers et al., 2000). Additionally, the state's ethnic diversity, which includes 110 subtribes and 26 major tribes, each with its sociocultural contexts and indigenous knowledge, is a heritage that remains untapped and undocumented (Lyngdoh et al., 2016). Focusing on these species should continue to be a top priority because they make a substantial contribution to the diet and economics of the local

population (Ambe and Malaisse, 2001). The documentation of ethnobotanical information related to underutilized wild food resources is an emerging area of research worldwide (Bharucha and Pretty, 2010; Kar et al., 2012). Importance of wild food plants used by different tribal communities of Arunachal Pradesh has been reported by several workers in recent years (Asha et al., 2020; Eko et al., 2020; Rinyo et al., 2022; Doni and Gajurel, 2020; Lungphi et al., 2018; Tsering et al., 2017; Lyngdoh et al., 2016; Taram et al., 2018). But no such ethnobotanical reports are available to date on the Aka community of Arunachal Pradesh. Therefore, this study was conceptualized and documents the WEPs resources used by the Akas of East Kameng District, Arunachal Pradesh.

## 2. Materials and method

### 2.1. Study area

Located between 92° 36' E' longitudes and 93° 24'E and 26° 56' and 27° 59' latitudes, the East Kameng district of Arunachal Pradesh has a total land area of 4134 sq. km (Figure 1). The district shares its borders with some areas of the Lower Subansiri and Macmohan line to the North, the Sonitpur district of Assam to the South, West Kameng district of Arunachal Pradesh to the West, and Papum-Pare district of Arunachal Pradesh to the East. The district's name, Kameng, derives from the Kameng River (Anonymous, 2020). The forest cover varies from tropical semi-evergreen in the Seppa (District headquarter) to wet temperate and alpine in the Chayangtajo region (Anonymous, 2002). The foothills climate and vegetation are characterized by are hot and humid; but as the altitude increases, the temperature may keep dropping up to 5°C in the Chayangtajo region. The major tribes that reside in this region are Nyishi, Aka, Sajolang, and Puroik. Each tribe has their own dialect, customs, and religious beliefs (Anonymous, 2020).

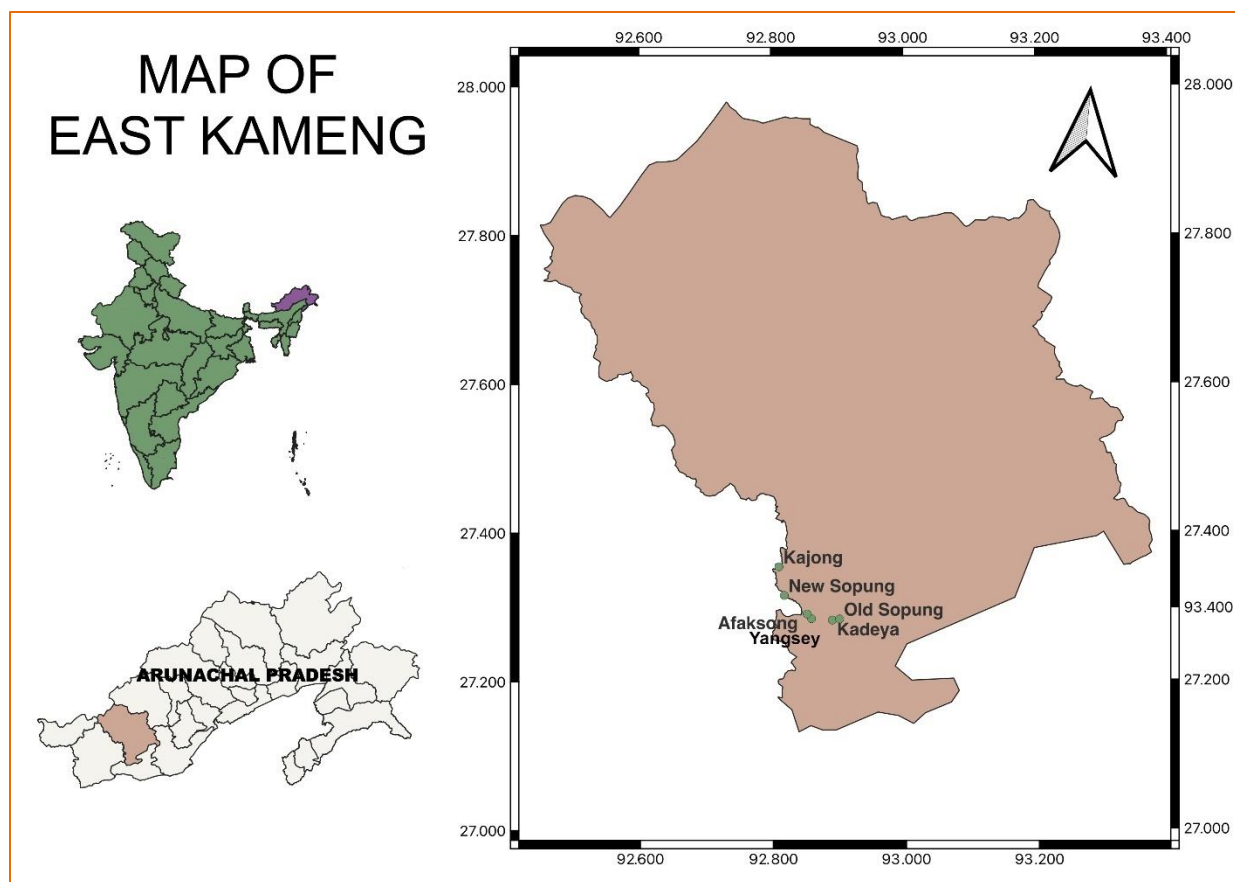


Figure 1. Map showing study sites - the Korou Aka villages in East Kameng district of Arunachal Pradesh.

The Aka tribal community constitute a small ethnic group that inhabits this sub-Himalayan district. The name Aka, which means "painted," was given by the people who lived in Assam's plains and by British officials. This may be because they had a tradition of painting their forehead, nose, and chin (Sinha, 1962). Following their territorial partition, they are divided into Hrusso and Korou subtribes. They believe in the existence of Nyezino (Nyezi is the sky and No is the soil) and Sarok is their main traditional cultural festival. The Aka belongs to Mongoloid racial stocks and they speak Tibeto-Burman language. They possess a rich traditional knowledge system, useful for preserving the forest resources (Nimasow et al., 2011). The Korou subtribe of Aka is mostly concentrated in the Bana area of the East Kameng district (Anonymous, 2020).

### 2.2. Field survey and collection of ethnobotanic information

The field survey was conducted for 01 year from February 2022 to February 2023. Six Aka inhabited villages were randomly selected and surveyed while, the information was collected using the random interview and field visit. About 120 informants were randomly screened and interviewed during field survey using semi-structured questionnaires and focus group discussions following standard methods (Martin, 1995). The significant information on wild edible plants, such as their local names, habits, parts harvest and use, and mode of consumption, etc., were recorded and evaluated. The methods suggested by Jain and Rao (1976) and Das (2021) were followed to collect the voucher specimens and preparation of the herbarium. The wild edible plants were identified by consulting relevant taxonomic

literatures such as *Flora of British India* Vol. 1-7 (Hooker, 1875-1897); *Materials for the Flora of Arunachal* Vol 1 (Hajra et al., 1996), Vol. 2 (Giri et al., 2008), Vol. 3 (Chowdhery et al., 2009) and with the help of professional taxonomists. Accepted names were verified in the website <https://powo.science.kew.org>.

## 3. Result and discussion

In the current study, a total of 74 wild edible plant species belonging to 59 genera and 43 families were reported (Table 1). Figure 2 depicted some of the wild edible plants used by the Aka tribe which are commonly found distributed in their community forest area. With four species each, the Rosaceae and Dioscoreaceae family was the most dominant of all, followed by Urticaceae, Solanaceae, Asteraceae, Arecaceae, Anacardaceae and Amaranthaceae with 3 species each, and Zingiberaceae, Polygonaceae, Musaceae, Moraceae, Malvaceae, Lauraceae, Lamiaceae, Fagaceae, Cucurbitaceae, Convolvulaceae, Begoniaceae, Apiaceae and Actinidiaceae, had 2 species each. The rest of the plant families had single species each (Figure 3). Among the total recorded wild edible plant species, herbs (39%) were reported as the most dominant habit group, followed by trees (28%), climbers (14%), shrubs (11%), subshrubs (4%) and thalloid (4%) (Figure 4). Furthermore, fruits (39%) were the most consumed part of the plant followed by leaves (36%), inflorescence (7%) and tubers (7%) (Figure 5). While, the root and bark have been reported to be the least used plant part.

The WEPs such as *Acmella paniculata*, *Allium hookeri*, *Amaranthus viridis*, *Begonia roxburghii*, *Cardamine hirsuta*,



**Figure 2.** Some of the WEPs consumed by the Korou Aka of East Kameng district, Arunachal Pradesh: a). *Acmella paniculata*, b). *Chenopodium album*, c). *Auricularia auricula*, d). *Ficus auriculata*, e). *Hydrocotyle javanica*, f). *Malva verticillata*, g). *Myrica esculenta*, h). *Paeudognaphalium affine*, i). *Potentilla indica*, j). *Rubus ellipticus*, k). *Saurauia armata*, l). *Solanum torvum*.

*Chenopodium album*, *Crassocephalum crepidioides*, *Diplazium esculentum*, *Pseudognaphalium affine*, *Houttuynia cordata*, *Ipomoea batatas*, *Litsea cubeba*, *Musa aurantiaca*, *Musa balbisiana*, *Nasturtium microphyllum*, *Solanum americanum*, *Solanum torvum*, *Solanum violaceum*, *Zanthoxylum rhetsa*, *Mangifera sylvatica*, *Nephelium lappaceum*, *Potentilla indica*, *Hodgsonia macrocarpa*, *Ficus semicordata*, and *Callicarpa tomentosa* have been earlier reported to be consumed by various other indigenous communities of Arunachal Pradesh (Doni and Gajurel, 2020; Taram et al., 2018; Rinyo et al., 2022; Yanka et al., 2021; Yanka et al., 2020; Lungphi et al., 2018). Also, fungal species reported in present studies such as *Auricularia auricularia-judae*, *Schizophyllum commune*, and *Macrolepiota albuminosa* have been reported to be edible and consumed by the Adi community (Taram et al., 2018). Moreover, some of the recorded wild edible plant species like *Allium hookeri*, *Oenanthe javanica*, *Solanum violaceum*, *Clerodendrum colebrookeanum*, *Paederia foetida*, *Solanum torvum*, *Acmella paniculata* and *Plantago asiatica* have been previously reported to possess medicinal properties (Yanka et al., 2021; Yanka et al., 2020; Lungphi et al., 2018). Many species that are cultivated or gathered from the wild are said to have medicinal and nutritional uses (Ogle, 2001; Ogle et al., 2003; Ogle et al., 2001). Likewise, the collected WEPs found to be used by Aka community are not only contribute to food availability during food short supply, but also observed to be significantly contributing towards rural nutritional and livelihood security. Thus, the local revenue is believed to be increased significantly by the sales of the excess of their collections from the wild (Lungphi et al., 2018). Additionally, they are frequently regarded as a potential resource that can be utilized to create new crop species (Chaithanya et al., 2015). Additionally, a multiethnic society of Arunachal Pradesh has the long history of using native wild edible plants for their survival (Haridasan et al., 1990 and Murtem, 2000). The use of

such plants is closely related to the social belief system of indigenous communities and is an essential component of the tactics utilized by the tribal community for survival as they have the close association and direct access to the knowledge of the natures. Generations of people have relied on plants for survival, and their only inherent skill is the ability to identify and choose particular wild plants for food and medicinal purposes. These age-old plant-based experiences along with the traditional knowledge systems of Akas were informed to be passed down orally from one generation to another. The Akas believes in the sustainable utilization and conservation of these wild food resources. For instance, the community has initiated the domestication of limited wild edible plant species such as *Phoebe cooperiana* in their community forest area.

However, massive migration of villagers to nearby cities and town might leading to rapid depletion of traditional knowledge related to natural resources management including wild edible plants (Łuczaj et al., 2013; Rao et al., 2015; Reyes-García et al., 2015).

Similar patterns of population movement from rural to urban areas were also observed among the Akas community of East Kameng district.

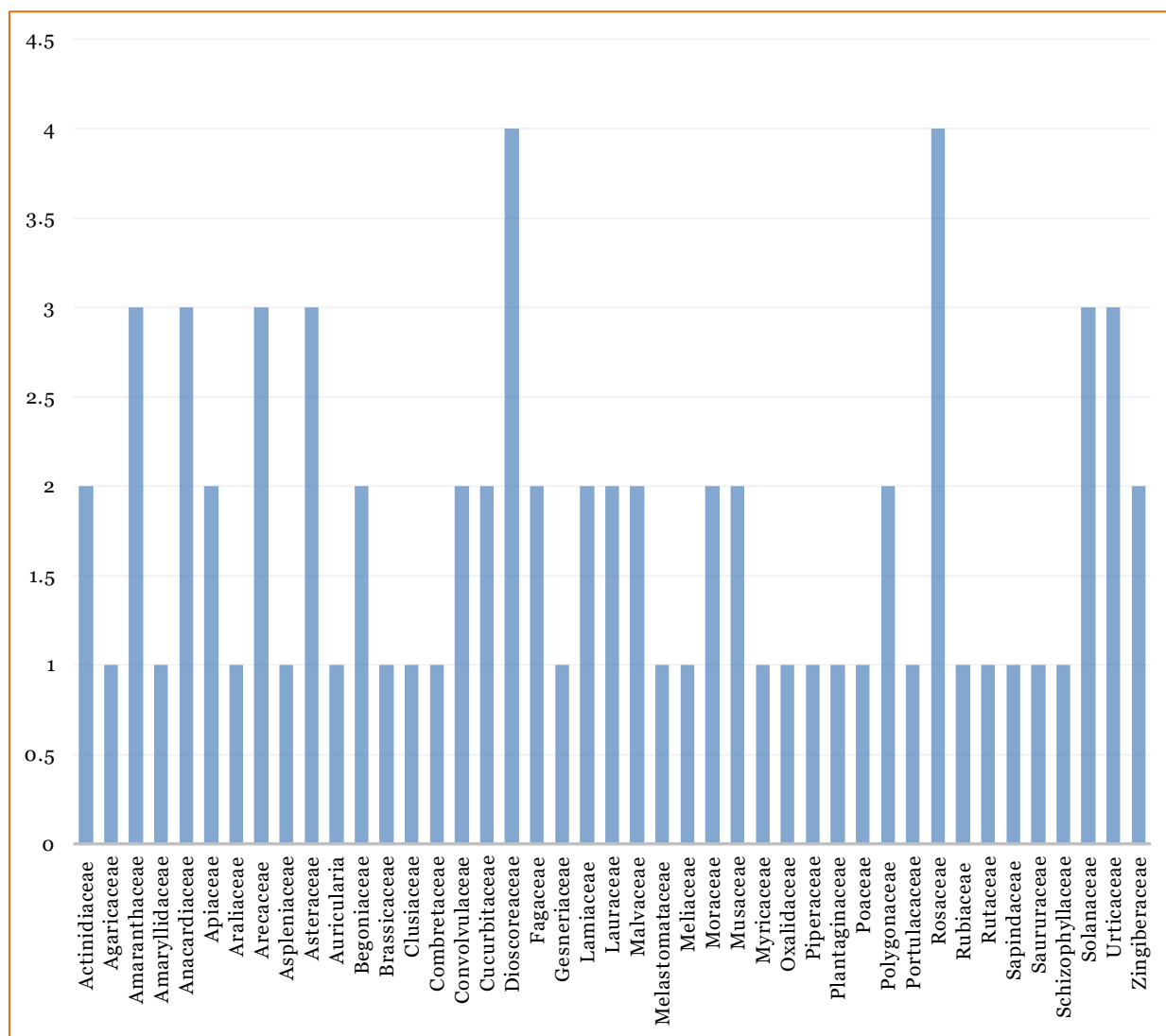


Figure 3. Family distribution of the recorded WEPs consumed by the Korou Aka of East Kameng district of Arunachal Pradesh.

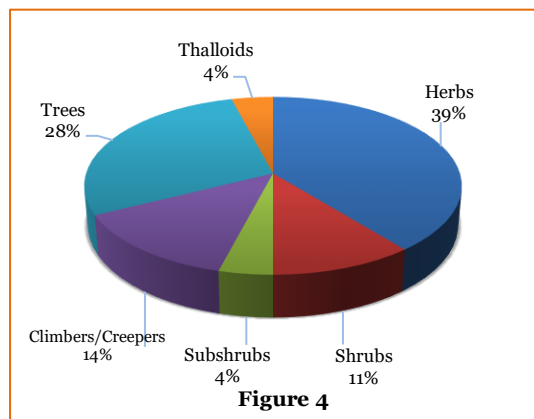


Figure 4

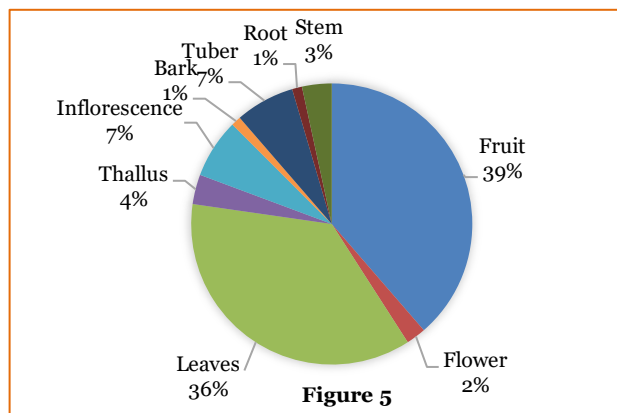


Figure 5

Figure 4. Habit distribution among the recorded wild edible plant species of the Korou Aka of East Kameng district of Arunachal Pradesh; Figure 5. Plant parts harvested from the wild edible plants consumed by the Korou Aka of the East Kameng district of Arunachal Pradesh. Leaves are the most consumed plant parts, while the root and bark are the least used plant part.

Table 1. Wild edible plants used by Aka (Korou) community of East Kameng district of Arunachal Pradesh, India.

SN	Scientific name [Family] and Voucher Number	Local Name	Habit	Parts used	Mode of Consumption
1	<i>Acmella paniculata</i> (Wall. ex DC.) R. K. Jansen [Asteraceae]; LR/EK/0115	Lo afu	Herb	Inflorescence, Leaves	Cooked and consumed as vegetable
2	<i>Aglaia spectabilis</i> (Miq.) S.S. Jain & S.Bennet [Meliaceae]; LR/EK/0057	Pachang	Tree	Fruits, Leaves	Leaves and matured fruits eaten raw
3	<i>Allium hookeri</i> Thwaites [Amaryllidaceae]; LR/EK/0051	Mope posong	Herb	Leaves	Cooked and consumed as a vegetable eaten raw as Chutney.
4	<i>Alpinia nigra</i> (Gaertn.) Burt [Zingiberaceae]; LR/EK/0063	Gongla	Shrub	Fruits	Matured fruits eaten raw
5	<i>Amaranthus spinosus</i> L. [Amaranthaceae]; LR/EK/0068	Lo pachang	Herb	Leaves	Cooked and consumed as a vegetable
6	<i>Amaranthus viridis</i> L. [Amaranthaceae]; LR/EK/0070	Lo pachang	Herb	Leaves	Cooked and consumed as a vegetable
7	<i>Amomum maximum</i> Roxb. [Zingiberaceae]; LR/EK/0065	Paapu	Shrub	Flower Buds, Fruits	Flower buds are cooked and consumed as vegetable fruits are eaten raw
8	<i>Arenga obtusifolia</i> Mart. [Arecaceae]; LR/EK/0098	Palo ayi	Tree	Inner Stem	Inner stem processed and consumed as food
9	<i>Auricularia auriculara-judae</i> [Auriculariaceae]; LR/EK/0052	Jajoh yayo	Thalloid	Fruiting Body, Thallus	Cooked and consumed as a vegetable
10	<i>Bambusa spinosa</i> Roxb. [Poaceae]; LR/ EK/0064	Budu	Herb	Young Shoot	Cooked and Consumed as a vegetable
11	<i>Begonia roxburghii</i> (Miq.) A. DC. [Begoniaceae]; LR/EK/0053	Kaya babung	Herb	Leaves, Stem	Cooked and consumed as a vegetable
12	<i>Begonia sp.</i> [Begoniaceae]; LR/ EK/0054	Sechey babung	Herb	Leaves, Stem	Cooked and Consumed as a Vegetable
13	<i>Calamus floribundus</i> Griff. [Arecaceae]; LR/ EK/0075	Chappay jang	Climber	Fruits	Matured fruits eaten raw
14	<i>Calamus tenuis</i> Roxb. [Arecaceae]; LR/EK/0133	Erimo	Climber	Fruits	Matured fruits eaten raw
15	<i>Callicarpa tomentosa</i> (L.) L. [Lamiaceae]; LR/ EK/0061	Naching	Tree	Inner Bark, Fruits	Barks are consumed as masticatory; fruits are eaten raw when ripe
16	<i>Castanopsis sp1</i> [Fagaceae]; LR/ EK/0081	Rifi	Tree	Fruits	Warmed and consumed
17	<i>Castanopsis sp2</i> [Fagaceae]; LR/ EK/0083	Fww	Tree	Fruits	Warmed and consumed
18	<i>Centella asiatica</i> (L.) Urb. [Apiaceae]; LR/ EK/0055	Nifeh aka	Herb	Leaves	Cooked and consumed as vegetable
19	<i>Chenopodium album</i> L. [Amaranthaceae]; LR/ EK/0062	Palang lo	Herb	Leaves, Inflorescence	Cooked and consumed as a vegetable.
20	<i>Choerospondias axillaris</i> (Roxb.) B.L. Burt & A.W.Hill [Anacardiaceae]; LR/ EK/0078	Deblong	Tree	Fruits	Matured fruits eaten raw
21	<i>Clerodendrum colebrookeanum</i> Walp. [Lamiaceae]; LR/ EK/0059	Dolong	Shrub	Leaves	Cooked and consumed as a vegetable
22	<i>Crassocephalum crepidioides</i> (Benth.) S.Moore [Asteraceae]; LR/ EK/0067	Gyanopra	Herb	Young Leaves	consumed as a salad and cooked as a vegetable.
23	<i>Dioscorea alata</i> L. [Dioscoreaceae]; LR/ EK/0082	Eje la	Creepers	Tubers	Roasted; Cooked
24	<i>Dioscorea bulbifera</i> L. [Dioscoreaceae]; LR/ EK/0089	Sangpe eje	Climber	Tubers	Roasted; Cooked
25	<i>Dioscorea pentaphylla</i> L. [Dioscoreaceae]; LR/ EK/0093	Pushu	Climber	Tubers	Roasted; Cooked
26	<i>Dioscorea villosa</i> L. [Dioscoreaceae]; LR/ EK/0085	Eje raala	Climber	Tubers	Roasted, Cooked
27	<i>Diplazium esculentum</i> (Retz.) Sw. [Aspleniaceae]; LR/ EK/0066	Chachung	Herb	Young Leaves	Cooked and Consumed as a vegetable
28	<i>Elatostema platyphyllum</i> Wedd. [Urticaceae]; LR/ EK/0058	Haji lo	Subshrub	Leaves	Cooked and Consumed as a vegetable
29	<i>Ficus auriculata</i> Lour. [Moraceae]; LR/ EK/0091	Lofu	Tree	Inflorescence	Matured inflorescence eaten raw
30	<i>Ficus semicordata</i> Buch.-Ham. ex Sm. [Moraceae]; LR/ EK/0056	Ebidame	Tree	Inflorescence	Matured inflorescence eaten Raw
31	<i>Garcinia pedunculata</i> Roxb. ex Buch.-Ham. [Clusiaceae]; LR/ EK/0095	Nyegla	Tree	Fruits	Matured fruits eaten raw
32	<i>Girardinia diversifolia</i> (Link) Friis [Urticaceae]; LR/ EK/0105	Sechegrim	Subshrub	Leaves	Cooked and consumed as a vegetable
33	<i>Hodgsonia macrocarpa</i> (Blume) Cogn. [Cucurbitaceae]; LR/ EK/0131	Jaro	Climber	Fruits	Matured fruits eaten raw

34	<i>Houttuynia cordata</i> Thunb. [Saururaceae]; LR/ EK/0087	Tosso	Herb	Leaves, Roots	Cooked and consumed as a vegetable
35	<i>Hydrocotyle javanica</i> Thunb. [Araliaceae]; LR/ EK/0103	Tengri	Herb	Leaves	Cooked and consumed as a vegetable
36	<i>Ipomoea</i> sp. [Convolvulaceae]; LR/ EK/0125.	Aalu la	Creepers	Tubers	Roasted; cooked
37	<i>Ipomoea batatas</i> (L.) Lam. [Convolvulaceae]; LR/ EK/0107	Aalu laplong	Creepers	Tubers	Roasted; cooked
38	<i>Litsea cubeba</i> (Lour.) Pers. [Lauraceae]; LR/ EK/0071	Rellang	Tree	Fruits	Fruits eaten raw and used as flavouring agent
39	<i>Macrolepiota albuminosa</i> (Berk.) Pegler [Agaricaceae]; LR/ EK/0086	Ekke bula	Thalloid	Fruiting Body, Thallus	Cooked and consumed as a vegetable
40	<i>Malva verticillata</i> L. [Malvaceae]; LR/ EK/0058	Lapa	Herb	Leaves	Cooked and consumed as a vegetable
41	<i>Mangifera sylvatica</i> Roxb. [Anacardiaceae]; LR/ EK/0100	Plangcho	Tree	Fruits	Matured fruits eaten raw
42	<i>Melastoma malabathricum</i> L. [Melastomataceae]; LR/ EK/0060	Jangjo yayo	Shrub	Fruits	Matured fruits eaten raw
43	<i>Musa aurantiaca</i> G. Mann ex Baker [Musaceae]; LR/ EK/0079	Borlong	Herb	Inflorescence, Fruits	Matured fruits eaten raw
44	<i>Musa balbisiana</i> Colla [Musaceae]; LR/ EK/0072	Rangje	Herb	Inflorescence, Fruits	Inflorescence cooked and consumed as vegetable
45	<i>Mussaenda roxburghii</i> Hook.f. [Rubiaceae]; LR/ EK/0088	Lido pimi	Shrub	Young Leaves	Cooked and consumed as a vegetable
46	<i>Myrica esculenta</i> Buch.-Ham. ex D.Don [Myricaceae]; LR/ EK/0102	Chefi	Tree	Fruits	Matured fruits eaten raw
47	<i>Nasturtium microphyllum</i> (Boenn.) Rchb. [Brassicaceae]; LR/ EK/0092	Sichalopadong	Herb	Leaves	Cooked and consumed as a vegetable
48	<i>Nephelium lappaceum</i> L. [Sapindaceae]; LR/ EK/0109	Dardo	Tree	Fruits	Matured fruits eaten raw
49	<i>Oenanthe javanica</i> (Blume) DC. [Apiaceae]; LR/ EK/0073	Lo babung	Herb	Leaves	Cooked and consumed as a vegetable
50	<i>Oxalis corniculata</i> L. [Oxalidaceae]; LR/ EK/0069	Assey puku	Herb	Flowers, Leaves	Raw
51	<i>Persicaria chinensis</i> (L.) H. Gross [Polygonaceae]; LR/ EK/0099	Kaya eley	Herb	Leaves	Cooked and consumed as a vegetable
52	<i>Persicaria perfoliata</i> (L.) H. Gross [Polygonaceae]; LR/ EK/0084	Angsa taley	Herb	Leaves	Cooked and consumed as a vegetable
53	<i>Phoebe cooperiana</i> P.C. Kanjilal & Das [Lauraceae]; LR/ EK/0101	Taplong	Tree	Fruits	Matured fruits eaten raw
54	<i>Piper pedicellatum</i> C. DC. [Piperaceae]; LR/ EK/0074	Raru	Shrub	Leaves	Cooked and consumed as a vegetable
55	<i>Plantago asiatica</i> L. [Plantaginaceae]; LR/ EK/0076	Sicha-lopado	Herb	Leaves	Cooked and consumed as a vegetable
56	<i>Portulaca oleracea</i> L. [Portulacaceae]; LR/ EK/0106	Lo pachung	Herb	Leaves	Cooked and consumed as a vegetable
57	<i>Potentilla indica</i> (Andrews) Th. Wolf [Rosaceae]; LR/ EK/0120	Koche logu	Herb	Fruits	Matured fruits eaten raw
58	<i>Gonostegia triandra</i> (Blume) Miq. [Urticaceae]; LR/ EK/0077	Lopsii eley	Herb	Leaves	Cooked and consumed vegetable
59	<i>Prunus persica</i> (L.) Batsch [Rosaceae]; LR/ EK/0117	Sibur	Tree	Fruits	Matured fruits eaten raw
60	<i>Pseudognaphalium affine</i> (D. Don) Anderb. [Asteraceae]; LR/ EK/0080	Padefuh	Herb	Leaves	Cooked and consumed as a vegetable
61	<i>Rhus chinensis</i> Mill. [Anacardiaceae]; LR/ EK/0104	Saba	Tree	Fruits	Matured fruits eaten raw
62	<i>Rhynchochotum parviflorum</i> Blume [Gesneriaceae]; LR/ EK/0090	Lo ratti	Shrub	Leaves	Cooked and consumed vegetable
63	<i>Rubus ellipticus</i> Sm. [Rosaceae]; LR/ EK/0111	Kochey lubu	Shrub	Fruits	Matured fruits eaten raw
64	<i>Rubus niveus</i> Thunb. [Rosaceae]; LR/ EK/0116	Mima lubu	Shrub	Fruits	Matured fruits eaten raw
65	<i>Saurauia armata</i> Kurz [Actinidiaceae]; LR/ EK/0108	Barcha oro	Tree	Fruits	Matured fruits eaten raw
66	<i>Saurauia punduana</i> Wall. [Actinidiaceae]; LR/ EK/0119	Barcha eley	Tree	Fruits	Matured fruits eaten raw
67	<i>Schizophyllum commune</i> Fr. [Schizophyllaceae]; LR/ EK/0097	Ekke shishe	Thalloid	Fruiting Body, Thallus	Cooked and consumed as vegetable

68	<i>Solanum americanum</i> Mill. [Solanaceae]; LR/ EK/0094	Lo aka	Herb	Leaves	Cooked and consumed as a vegetable
69	<i>Solanum torvum</i> Sw. [Solanaceae]; LR/ EK/0096	Hati pangka	Shrub	Fruits	Fruits are eaten raw; boiled and made into chutney
70	<i>Solanum violaceum</i> Ortega [Solanaceae]; LR/ EK/00121	Pangka	Shrub	Fruits	Fruits are eaten raw; boiled and made into chutney
71	<i>Solena umbellata</i> (J.G. Klein ex Willd.) W.J.de Wilde & Duyfjes [Cucurbitaceae]; LR/ EK/0114	Amo jejoro	Climber	Fruits	Matured fruits eaten raw
72	<i>Stercularia</i> sp. [Malvaceae]; LR/ EK/0122	Lwla	Tree	Fruits (Seeds)	Matured fruit's seed warmed and eaten
73	<i>Terminalia chebula</i> Retz. [Combretaceae]; LR/ EK/0118	Sui pacha	Tree	Fruits	Matured fruits eaten raw
74	<i>Zanthoxylum rhetsa</i> (Roxb.) DC. [Rutaceae]; LR/ EK/0110	Paatu	Tree	Leaves	Cooked and consumed as vegetable used as flavoring agent.

## 4. Conclusion

The present study revealed the abundance of indigenous knowledge systems related to utilization of wild edible plant resources by Aka (Korou) tribal community of East Kameng (Bichom) district of Arunachal Pradesh. However, due to modernization, there is a sharp reduction in the practice of traditional wild food plant knowledge among the young generation. Therefore, it is crucial to record and preserve the rich traditional knowledge before it is lost. Furthermore, to revive and recover some of the lost traditional ethnobotanical knowledge, it is also necessary to promote awareness among the young population about the nutritional potential and sustainable use of WEPs. Furthermore, research focusing on the nutraceutical and phytochemical properties of the recorded species could provide insights on medicinally useful compounds.

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### Authors contributions

TW and ST– concept, research design and manuscript finalization; LR and PK– Field work, data generation and draft manuscript.

### Declaration of conflict of interest

Authors have no conflict of interest.

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