

Ethnobotany

Ethnobotany is the Study of Plant-People relationship. Ethnobotany relatively a new science deals with the various principles, which govern such relationship between man and vegetation. In other words Ethnobotany means all the sources of the plants towards humankind and the other species growing on the earth.

The first person to define ethnobotany, John Harshberger in 1895; defined it as "the study of plants used by primitive & aboriginal (indigenous) people".

What is Ethnobotany?

Ethnoecology studies the interactions of local people with the natural environment and Ethnobotany is the part that studies the interactions of local people with plants (Martin 1995). Ethnobotany tries to get a holistic understanding of local knowledge on plants – This is one way of looking at it

Ethnobotany is considered a branch of ethnobiology, the study of past and present interrelationships between human cultures and the plants, animals, and other organisms in their environment. Like its parent field, ethnobotany makes apparent the connection between human cultural practices and the sub-disciplines of biology.

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Ethnobotany is From "ethnology" - study of culture and "botany" - study of plants. It is the scientific study of the relationships that exist between people and plants.

ETHNOBOTANY

• The study of the relationship between people and plants. • An interdisciplinary field that includes studying plants as • wild foods and as agricultural crops; • Providers of materials for constructing houses and means of transportation; baskets and art; clothing and types of weaving; medicines and alternative methods for healing; and in the context of cultural myths and religious ceremonies.

SCOPE of Ethnobotany –

Ethnobotany is an interdisciplinary science, which includes aspects of both the sciences and humanities|

-Ethnobotany can serve as a gateway to many disciplines

-Ethnobotany can be entered to from many disciplines

Disciplines important in the study of ethnobotany

Traditional Knowledge of Ethnobotany

Ethnobotany is the study of interrelations between humans and plants; however, current use of the term implies the study of indigenous or traditional knowledge of plants. It involves the indigenous knowledge of plant classification, cultivation, and use as food, medicine and shelter. Although most of the early ethnobotanists studied plant used in cultures other than their own, the term ethnobotany does not necessarily mean the study of how 'other' people use plants. It is also not restricted to the study of medicinal plants by indigenous cultures. The use of ethnobotany in plant selection entails a careful recording of the relationship between indigenous communities and plants. It is a very complex undertaking that often requires collaboration of experts drawn from various disciplines such as anthropology, botany, ecology, pharmacy, linguistics, medicine and ethnography. Ethnobotany has now emerged as a discipline by itself that studies all types of interrelations between people and plants. The central theme is the recognition of the reciprocal and dynamic nature of the relationship between humans and plants.¹⁶ There are excellent publications available on the general introduction to the protocols and ethical issues concerning ethnobotanical work.

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Introduction:

Ethnobotany is a multidisciplinary science involving the traditional use of plants by human