Medicinal usage of some important weed species in Turkey

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The use of plants for treatment is as old as human history. According to report of the World Health Organization, there are around 20,000 plant species used for medical purposes in the world. But the estimated number is more. One of these plant groups used for medical purposes is the weeds. In this study, some important weed species used for medicinal purposes, their characteristics and usage are compiled from various literatures. Weeds are accepted as an obstacle for human activities that mainly for crop production, but it would be wrong to regard this group of plants as completely harmful. One of the main usages of the weeds is traditional medicinal therapy especially in small villages from past to today. Although, there are many weeds species which are used for treatment, some of them are very harmful for crops but at the same time have high therapeutic effects. Shepherd's purse (*Capsella bursa-pastoris* (L.) Medik.), common cichory (*Cichorium intybus* L.), field bindweed (*Convolvulus arvensis* L.), purple nutsedge (*Cyperus rotundus* L.), couch grass (*Elymus repens* (L.) Gould.), common mallow (*Malva sylvestris* L.), chamomile (*Matricaria chamomilla* L.), common poppy (*Papaver rhoeas* L.), plantains (*Plantago* spp.), red sorrel (*Rumex acetocella* L.), wild mustard (*Sinapis arvensis* L.), common dandelion (*Taraxacum officinale* (L.) Weber), puncture vine (*Tribulus terrestris* L.) and common nettle (*Urtica dioica* L.) can be given example. These weed species are mainly used as diuretic, restorative, sedative, expectorant and digestive. Empiric traditional application in humans of these weed species is supported by pharmacological investigations. But it should not be forgotten that such plants are usually poisonous. Therefore, such plants should be used for doctor's supervision.

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