

# *Zingiber album* Nurainas among Zingiberaceae Family: A Review in the Traditional Uses

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## ABSTRACT

**Aims:** To determine the potential for local use of *Zingiber album* Nurainas among Zingiberaceae family through an ethnobotanical approach.

**Study Design:** Information about traditional uses of Zingiberaceae family collected through literature review. The data was analyzed quantitatively using the ethnobotanyR package in the R Studio software and visualized using a flow diagram with the ggalluvial formula

**Methodology:** Literature review.

**Results:** From the research, it was found that the local use of *Z. album* as a vegetable and traditional medicines, namely the medicine for swollen uterus after childbirth, abdominal pain, internal heat.

**Conclusion:** *Z. album* Nurainas has potential as a food and traditional medicine. Ethnoalluvial analysis of the potential utilization of *Z. album* among other species in the Zingiberaceae family in West Sumatra showed that the species categorized as low importance.

*Keywords:* Zingiberaceae; *Zingiber album*; ethnobotany; traditional use.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The Zingiberaceae family, or ginger plants, is known by the general public as a group of plants with various benefits. Ginger (*Zingiber officinale*), Turmeric (*Curcuma longa*), Galangal (*Alpinia galanga*), and Kencur (*Kaempferia galanga*) are the most commonly used as cooking spices, food ingredients, traditional medicine raw materials, and as ornamental plants. Some types of ginger plants have been cultivated and sold by the community while other types grow wild in the forest. Ginger plants are found in tropical and subtropical regions, with a distribution center in Southeast Asia, particularly in the Malesia region such as Sumatra and Borneo, with terrestrial habitats, montane, and live as epiphyte occasionally [1,2].

Sumatra, as one of the centers of distribution of Zingiberaceae, has a fairly diverse number of species, both wild and cultivated. According to [3] that at least 18 *Zingiber* species have been identified from Sumatra, including *Zingiber album* Nurainas. This species grows wild in nature in locations near agricultural land. Reported by [4] that the young flowers of this species have been used by local communities as one of the food

ingredients (vegetables). However, information on the use of this type is not well documented scientifically.

In West Sumatra, the use of *Zingiber album* is found in Nagari Simanau, Solok District. This plant, known locally as "Pangalan," is a wild type that is only distributed in the forest. *Z. album* is listed as an endangered plant (EN) by the IUCN Red List [4]. This is due to the decline in habitat quality due to agricultural activities and the arrival of visitors [4]. In addition, local communities have not carried out cultivation efforts for this plant, which can increase the threat to the plant in nature. In terms of its use, local communities in Simanau are known to use the young flowers of this plant as local vegetable and traditional medicines, particularly in the treatment of abdominal pain.

## 2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

**Forecast Area:** The utilization of *Zingiber album* in Simanau, Solok Regency, West Sumatra, Indonesia. The other Zingiberaceae species utilization in West Sumatra.

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**Forecast Objects:** *Zingiber album* and Zingiberaceae family

**Forecast Methods:** Information about traditional uses of Zingiberaceae family collected through literature review. The data was then analyzed quantitatively using the ethnobotanyR package in the R Studio software and visualized using a flow diagram with the ethnoalluvial formula [5].

### 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

*Zingiber album* belongs to the Zingiberaceae family, characterized by having species of great pharmacological and nutritional importance, such as ginger (*Zingiber officinale* Roscoe), cardamom (*Elettaria cardamomum* (L.) Maton), and many ornamental purposes.

#### 3.1 *Zingiber album* Nurainas

##### 3.1.1 Geographical and altitudinal

*Zingiber album* is typically found around terrestrial tropical forest in 500 – 1200 masl. It can grow well in sandy soil on the edge of green forests and on the banks of rivers. It is endemic to Sumatra and distributed throughout West Sumatra especially in Solok, Agam, Pasaman, Sijunjung, and Batang Gadis National Park North Sumatra [3,4].

##### 3.1.2 Taxonomy and botanical description

*Zingiber album* is under Zingiberaceae family, Zingiberales order. Herbs 3–3.5 m. tall., rhizomes near surface of ground, cream inside, fleshy, with tubers. Pseudostems erect, thick, basal sheaths green. Leaves 12–22 in one plant, petioles 0.7–1.5 mm, glabrous, ligule 0.4–1.0 cm long, apices rounded, hairy, green; laminae 50–55 × 10–12 cm, narrowly-lanceolate, base attenuate, tips long-acuminate, hairy. Inflorescences radical, many flower in clump, oblong to elongate; peduncles 25–40 cm long, scale oblong, 6.0–7.0 × 4.0–4.5 cm, greenish-white, glabrous; spikes elongated, 20–40 cm long, 4–6 cm diam., rose-like at apex; bracts imbricate, revolute, thin, numerous, sterile bract 4.0–4.0 × 2.0–3.0 cm, spatulate, apices subapical-mucronate, bright white, fertile bract 5–7 × 3–6 cm, spatulate, apices subapical-mucronate, bright white, bracteoles small, 1.0–1.5 × 0.5–0.7 cm, lanceolate, transparent-white, glabrous. Flowers 1–3 flowers open at a time, tubular, 7–8 cm long; calyx 3.0–3.5 cm, tubular, acute, white, glabrous; corolla tubular, tube 4–4.5 cm long, pale yellow, glabrous, corolla lobes subequal, central 3.0–3.5 × 1.0–1.5

cm, lanceolate, apex acute, laterals 2.5–3.0 × 0.5–0.8 cm., glabrous; labellum 3.0–3.5 × 2.5–3.0 cm, subtrilobed, pale yellow, glabrous, apex rounded-undulate; anther 1.2–1.5 cm long with a beak shape appendage, appendage 1.5–1.7 cm long, pale yellow and bright yellow tip, thecae 2, parallel, pale yellow; style filiform, stigma pale yellow with an circular apical aperture surrounded by stiff hairs; epigynous glands, 1 pair, 0.6–0.8 cm long, linear; ovary 0.5–0.7 cm diam., glabrous, bright white. Fruit ellipsoid, trilocular, 3.0–3.5 cm long, 1.5–2.0 cm diam. glabrous, cream; seed black with white aril, 0.4–0.6 × 0.3–0.4 cm [3].

##### 3.1.3 Traditional uses of *Zingiber album*

*Z. album* has traditionally been used by local communities in Simanau, West Sumatra. Likewise, in traditional medicine, young *Z. album* conus are used to treat swollen uterus after childbirth. *Z. album* root is used as a hot medicine internally. Young shoots or *Z. album* sprouts ("umbuik" in local language) are used as medicine for stomach pain (stomach ulcer and stomach acid), abdominal swollen in men (swelling in the stomach), and abdominal swollen in women (swelling in the stomach). The use of traditional medicine is applied by mixing this type with other types consisting of pangalan (*Z. album*), red kincung (*Etilingera elatior*), white kincung (*Etilingera* sp), banana (*Musa balbisiana*), tibarau (*Saccharum spontaneum*), tabu udang (*Saccharum officinarum*), sitawa (*Cheilocostus speciosus*), and sidingin (*Bryophyllum pinnatum*). Furthermore, local communities consume *Z. album* by cooking it with other ingredients such as fish and potatoes. In addition, it can also be eaten as a condiment with "samba lado uok," a steamed chili sauce. The part of *Z. album* that is consumed is the young inner cone. The taste of this condiment processing is fresh and slightly sour [6].

#### 3.2 Family Zingiberaceae

Zingiberaceae is the largest family in the order Zingiberales with 53 genera and over 1200 species and is one of the leading families of tropical plants. The first family classification was proposed in 1889 and since then, it has been refined. Currently, there are four recognized tribes (Globeae, Hedychieae, Alpinieae and Zingibereae) based on morphological characteristics, such as the number of cores and placentation in the ovary, staminodes development, changes in fertile anther, and the orientation of rhizome. Vary in morphological

characteristics indicates that Zingiberaceae has most species diversity. Recent study of Zingiberaceae study found out there are 100 species distributed in West Sumatra [7]. It suggest that West Sumatra was the center of distribution of Zingiberaceae in Sumatra island.

### 3.2.1 Traditional uses of Zingiberaceae

We found 51 species from 14 genera in the Zingiberaceae family have been utilized by the people in West Sumatra in six categories of utilization [8-22]. The flow chart shows that the most common utilization of Zingiberaceae in West Sumatra is as a medicine, followed by utilization as a spice, culture, fruit, vegetable, and natural dye (Fig. 1). The processing of a herbal medicine to treat a disease varies according to the type of disease. Herbal medicine for internal diseases is usually processed by boiling until it boils, then the boiled water is drunk by the patient, which can affect the body's metabolism. Meanwhile, herbal medicine for external diseases is pounded until smooth, burned, ground, sliced into small pieces, baked, or just moistened with water, making this herbal medicine potentially antibacterial.

The most widely utilized species by the people in West Sumatra based on the ethnoalluvial plot are *Alpinia galanga*, *Curcuma longa*, *Etlingera elatior*, and *Zingiber officinale*, especially as herbal medicine. These species have the most utilization and various sources of information from many locations. *C. longa* has the highest utilization such as cooking spice, increasing appetite, skin disease medicine, allergies, rheumatism, gout, diarrhea, toothache, fever, and postpartum pain. The high utilization of *C. longa* is supported because this species contains Curcumin, which is a phenolic compound found in the *Curcuma* spp, especially in *C. longa* rhizomes. It is known that Curcumin plays a role as a modulator of various signaling molecules such as inflammatory molecules, protein reductase, and transcription factors [21].

Regarding the use of Zingiberaceae, local people use different parts of the plant in mixtures for different types of diseases because each organ provides different effects on the human body. The plant organs from the Zingiberaceae family that are most commonly used are rhizomes [18,22]. Rhizomes are widely used

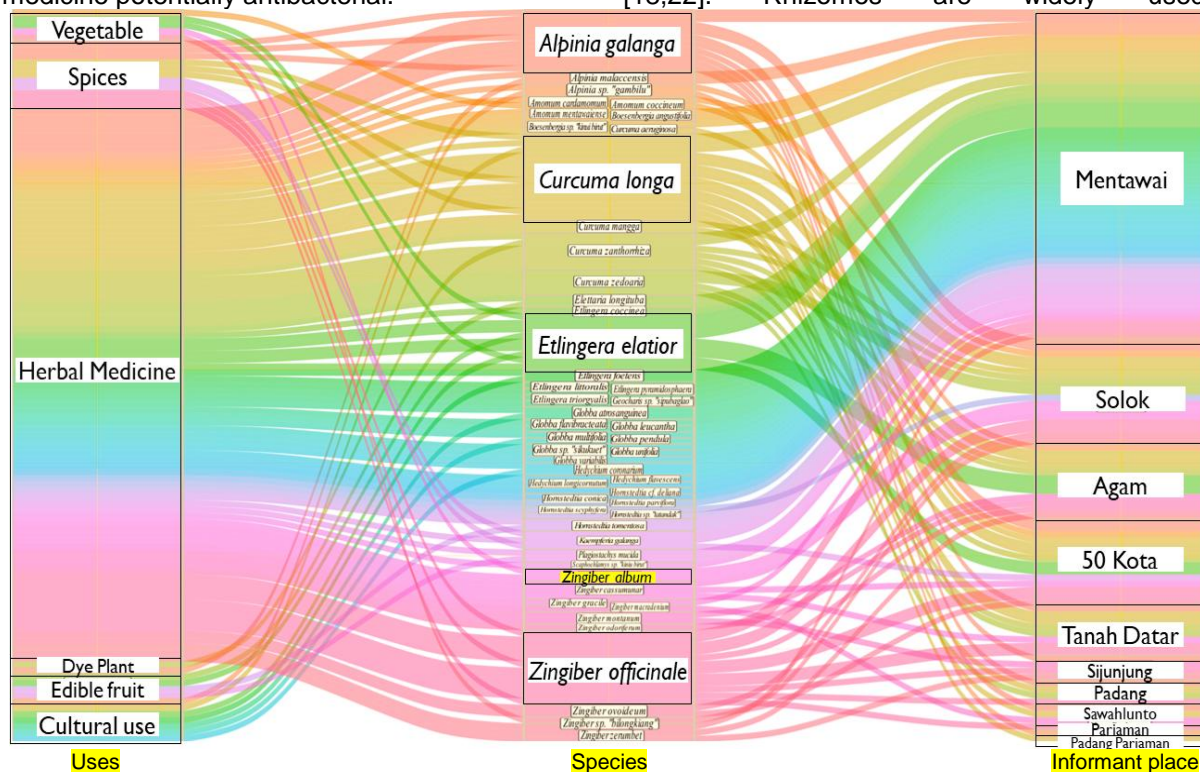


Fig. 1. Ethnoalluvial plot of the potential use of *Zingiber album* among other species in the Zingiberaceae family in West Sumatra

because this part contains high levels of flavonoids and phenolics [23]. This is supported

by [24] that rhizomes are the parts most commonly used as ingredients in herbal medicine for various diseases.

*Zingiber album* is mainly used for medicinal purposes rather than food. It is important to further study and conserve this species and other wild species in the Zingiberaceae family due to their potential medicinal value and the threat to their existence in nature from land use changes. Lack of information on these species' nutritional content and phytochemical compounds is a concern. It is important to protect these plants because they have the potential to be used for treatment and the loss of these species can negatively affect biodiversity, ecology, and humans.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

*Zingiber album* Nurainas has potential as a food and traditional medicine. Ethnoalluvial analysis of the potential utilization of *Z. album* among other species in the Zingiberaceae family in West Sumatra showed that the species categorized as low importance.

#### COMPETING INTERESTS

Author has declared that no competing interests exist.

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