

Sea Buckthorn – Ladakh



Scientific Name	<i>Hippophae rhamnoides</i> L.
Common Name	Sea Buckthorn
Local Name	Tsestalulu
Family	Elaeagnaceae

Description

Hippophae rhamnoides is a hardy, thorny, deciduous shrub well adapted to the cold, dry and high-altitude environment of Ladakh. It has narrow, silvery-green leaves and numerous small orange to yellow-orange berries that grow densely along the branches. The plant has an extensive root system that enables it to survive in poor, dry soils and harsh climatic conditions.

Parts Used

Fruits/Berries, seeds, leaves and oil

Major Uses

- **Food:** Berries are used to prepare juice, squash, jams and other food products.
- **Oil production:** Seeds and fruit pulp are sources of sea buckthorn oil.
- **Nutritional use:** The berries are rich in vitamin C, carotenoids and other bioactive compounds.
- **Cosmetics:** Sea buckthorn oil is used in skincare and cosmetic formulations.
- **Traditional use:** Fruits and other plant parts have been traditionally used by Himalayan communities.
- **Soil conservation:** Its extensive root system helps stabilize soil and reduce erosion.

Ecological Value

Sea buckthorn is an important plant of the fragile high-altitude ecosystem of Ladakh. It helps stabilize soil and riverbanks, reduces erosion and contributes to ecological restoration. Its berries also provide food resources for birds and other wildlife.

Habitat

It naturally occurs in river valleys, stream banks, sandy areas and other cold, dry high-altitude habitats of Ladakh and the Himalayan region.