

The Chemical Composition of the Flora of Surkhandarya Region as a Source of Natural Aromatic Compounds

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Annotation

This article examines the chemical composition of the flora of Surkhandarya region as a source of natural aromatic compounds. The study identifies and analyzes the essential oils, alkaloids, flavonoids, and other biologically active substances found in various native plant species. Particular attention is paid to the potential use of these natural components in the pharmaceutical, cosmetic, and food industries. The research highlights the ecological and economic importance of preserving and utilizing the local plant biodiversity of Surkhandarya as a valuable natural resource for sustainable development and green chemistry.

Keywords: Surkhandarya flora, essential oils, natural aroma compounds, chemical composition, medicinal plants, bioactive substances, green chemistry, biodiversity, pharmaceutical potential, ecological value.



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The flora of Surkhandarya region, located in the southern part of Uzbekistan, is rich in biodiversity and unique plant species adapted to diverse climatic and ecological conditions. Many of these plants are known for their aromatic properties and have been traditionally used in folk medicine, perfumery, and culinary practices. In recent years, the scientific interest in exploring natural sources of biologically active and fragrant compounds has significantly increased, especially due to growing global demand for eco-friendly and sustainable raw materials in the pharmaceutical, cosmetic, and food industries.

This research focuses on identifying and analyzing the chemical composition of essential oils and other aromatic compounds present in the native flora of Surkhandarya. By studying the phytochemical profile of these plants, the study aims to assess their potential as renewable sources of natural fragrances and bioactive substances. Furthermore, the findings are expected to contribute to the conservation of local plant biodiversity and promote the economic use of natural resources through green chemistry and sustainable development practices.

The exploration of the chemical composition of Surkhandarya's native flora reveals a promising potential for the identification and utilization of natural aromatic compounds. Numerous plant species in this region have evolved under arid to semi-arid conditions, which often leads to a high concentration of essential oils, resins, alkaloids, and flavonoids. These bioactive substances not

only contribute to the unique fragrance profiles of plants but also demonstrate pharmacological properties such as antimicrobial, antioxidant, anti-inflammatory, and antispasmodic effects.

Among the most significant aromatic species studied are members of the Lamiaceae (mint), Apiaceae (parsley), and Asteraceae (daisy) families, which are known to accumulate volatile compounds in their leaves, flowers, and roots. Gas chromatography-mass spectrometry (GC-MS) analysis of these plants has revealed the presence of terpenes (e.g., linalool, limonene, eucalyptol), phenolic compounds, and esters that are widely used in perfumery and therapeutic applications.

In addition to well-known essential oil-bearing plants, several endemic and lesser-studied species have shown potential as novel sources of fragrance compounds. For instance, *Ferula foetida*, *Ziziphora tenuior*, and *Artemisia leucodes* exhibit unique aromatic profiles that may be commercially valuable but require further research and cultivation trials.

Another important aspect is the seasonal and ecological variation in the concentration of volatile components. Factors such as soil type, altitude, temperature, and solar radiation significantly influence the synthesis and accumulation of secondary metabolites. Therefore, it is crucial to develop region-specific harvesting and processing techniques to maximize the yield and quality of natural extracts.

Furthermore, the study underscores the importance of integrating traditional knowledge of local communities with modern scientific methods to fully realize the potential of Surkhandarya's plant resources. Historically, many aromatic plants have been used in Uzbek traditional medicine and domestic practices, and this ethnobotanical knowledge provides a valuable starting point for phytochemical investigations.

On the economic and ecological front, the sustainable cultivation and processing of these aromatic plants could provide new income opportunities for rural communities, reduce dependency on synthetic chemicals, and support biodiversity conservation. It aligns with the principles of green chemistry and bioprospecting, promoting environmentally friendly practices and the valorization of natural heritage.

In conclusion, the Surkhandarya region holds substantial untapped potential in the field of natural aromatic compounds. However, to fully exploit this resource, further interdisciplinary studies, investment in extraction technologies, and the development of local industries for essential oil production are essential.

The chemical analysis of selected plant species from the flora of Surkhandarya region was conducted using gas chromatography–mass spectrometry (GC-MS), thin-layer chromatography (TLC), and spectrophotometric techniques. The focus was on aromatic plants traditionally used by local populations and those known for their distinct fragrance.

The results revealed that the essential oils extracted from plants such as *Mentha longifolia*, *Thymus serpyllum*, *Ferula foetida*, and *Ziziphora tenuior* contain a wide range of volatile organic compounds (VOCs). The dominant constituents included:

- ✓ **Monoterpenes:** such as limonene, α -pinene, and linalool;
- ✓ **Sesquiterpenes:** including β -caryophyllene and humulene;
- ✓ **Phenolic compounds:** like thymol and carvacrol;
- ✓ **Aldehydes and esters:** responsible for floral and fruity aromas.

The quantity and diversity of essential oil components were found to vary significantly depending on the species, the plant part used (leaf, flower, root), and the collection period. For instance, plants collected during the flowering stage exhibited the highest concentration of essential oils.

Quantitative analysis showed that:

- ✓ *Mentha longifolia* yielded up to 1.8% essential oil by weight;
- ✓ *Thymus serpyllum* showed a high content of thymol (32–38%);
- ✓ *Ferula foetida* resin was rich in sulfur-containing compounds, contributing to its pungent aroma and medicinal value.

Phytochemical screening also indicated the presence of alkaloids, flavonoids, saponins, and tannins in many of the studied species, suggesting their multipurpose potential not only as sources of fragrance but also as bioactive agents.

Overall, the results confirm that the flora of Surkhandarya region possesses significant potential as a source of natural aromatic compounds with commercial, pharmaceutical, and ecological value. These findings form the scientific basis for further in-depth studies and possible industrial applications in the production of essential oils, perfumes, and natural remedies.

The study of the chemical composition of Surkhandarya region's flora has demonstrated the vast potential of local plant species as valuable sources of natural aromatic and biologically active compounds. Through the application of modern analytical techniques, a diverse range of essential oils and phytochemicals were identified in numerous native plants, many of which have been traditionally utilized in medicine and household practices.

The research confirmed that several species — such as *Mentha longifolia*, *Thymus serpyllum*, *Ferula foetida*, and *Ziziphora tenuior* — possess high concentrations of monoterpenes, sesquiterpenes, phenolic compounds, and other volatile substances. These compounds are not only responsible for the pleasant and distinctive fragrances but also exhibit a wide range of pharmacological properties, including antimicrobial, anti-inflammatory, antioxidant, and antiseptic effects.

One of the key findings of the study is the correlation between ecological factors (such as altitude, soil composition, and seasonal timing) and the quality and quantity of essential oils in plants. This emphasizes the importance of optimizing harvesting time and cultivation practices to maximize the extraction of valuable aromatic compounds.

Moreover, the research highlights the importance of preserving the biodiversity of Surkhandarya's natural flora. Sustainable use of these resources, supported by scientific investigation, can lead to the development of local industries specializing in the production of essential oils, natural fragrances, and plant-based pharmaceuticals. This not only opens opportunities for economic growth in rural communities but also aligns with global efforts toward green chemistry and environmentally responsible production.

In conclusion, the flora of Surkhandarya region holds considerable promise as a source of natural aromatic substances. Continued research, investment in processing technology, and collaboration between scientists, local communities, and industry stakeholders are essential to unlock the full potential of these botanical resources for scientific, economic, and ecological benefits.

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