

Renata Kasper-Pakosz

Ethnobiological characteristics of plants and fungi at the South-Eastern Polish with a focus on wild species

Summary

The study of plants and fungi sold in open-air markets is an important part of ethnobotanical enquiry. Several articles from South and North America, Asia, Africa and Europe have already been published, Actually the first inventories of plants and fungi sold in markets were performed by Polish researchers – Muszyński from Vilnius (medicinal plants, 1927) and Szulczewski from Poznań (medicinal plants and edible mushrooms, 1933), but there is a lack of contemporary studies recording plants and fungi sold in Eastern Europe.

The aim of this study was to record native and wild species sold in open-air markets in Poland.

Four of the largest open-air markets of south-eastern Poland (Rzeszów, Przemyśl, Jarosław, Leżajsk) were visited regularly, and the plants sold in them were recorded between 2013 and 2015. In each market, 25 sellers were interviewed. All the plants sold in the markets were photographed regularly. Voucher specimens were collected and fungi were identified using DNA barcoding. Altogether, 452 species of plants were recorded, 117 of them native to Poland or naturalized – 19 only collected from the wild and 12 both wild and cultivated. Seventeen of the species are under legal protection. Most protected plants were sold from cultivation. Ornamental plants constituted a large section of the market, and they dominated the group of native species. Food plants dominated among wild-collected plants and were sold mainly as fruits for jams, juices and alcoholic drinks, or as culinary herbs. Very few medicinal or green vegetable plants were sold. An interesting feature of the markets was the sale of *Ledum palustre* as an insect repellent. Thirty-two species of fungi were sold (including two cultivated species), all of them for culinary purposes. Two species (*Lactarius quieticolor*, *Leccinum schistophilum*) are new to the mycobiota of Poland.