



INDIGENOUS CROPS AND WILD PLANTS USED AS FOOD BY THE PALA'WAN TRIBE IN SOUTHERN PALAWAN, PHILIPPINES

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ABSTRACT – Indigenous knowledge system stands the test of time because of its sustainability and applicability. Based on this theoretical construct this qualitative research was conducted in order to identify the indigenous food crops, vegetables and fruits planted on the farm and collected from the wild by the tribal members in Southern Palawan which could be beneficial for dissemination and utilization. The data were collected through site immersion, indirect participant-observation, informal interviews and triangulations method of validation. The study found out that there are 22 food crops considered to be sources of carbohydrates, 13 of these are cultivated; and nine collected from the wild. These are classified as grains, tubers, corms and palm (source of *natek*, starch/flour). Moreover, there are 63 types of wild vegetables and 37 fruit-bearing plants identified. For the cultivated cereal crops, upland rice is indispensable.

The Pala'wan tribe is a rice-eating people. Corn and sorghum are also planted sparingly on the field. In addition, tuber and corm crops are considered best alternative to rice. Leafy vegetables, mushrooms and *ubod* from palms, bamboo and other plants collected from the wild are important vegetable stuffs. Durian, *mante*, *badak* and *tabo* are the common fruits they eat. The Pala'wan tribe has a reservoir of knowledge regarding food sources necessary for survival.

Keywords: *Indigenous food crops, vegetables, fruits, cultivated, collected, Pala'wan tribe*



JOURNAL OF NATURE STUDIES
(formerly Nature's Bulletin)
ISSN: 1655-3179

To cite this paper: Bernadas, Jr., C. N. and Peralta, M. D. 2017. Indigenous Crops And Wild Plants Used As Food By The Pala'wan Tribe In Southern Palawan, Philippines. *Journal of Nature Studies*. 16 (1): 11-17