

***Mandragora automnalis* Spreng.**
Solanaceae



Compiled by: Dr. Zeineb Ghrabi
Edited by: Prof. Kamal H. Batanouny

■ **Morphological description**

Mandragora automnalis is a stemless perennial, with a big, black, fleshy root, often divided into two equal parts. The leaves are all arranged in a rosette, radical, entire, glaucous and brilliant. The flowers are arranged on a long peduncle and have a bell-shaped violet corolla two or three times as big as the calyx. The fruit is a globular reddish berry. Flowering and fruit-bearing take place in autumn.

■ **Geographical distribution**

Local: The Medjerda valley, the north-east, Cap Bon, the Tunisian dorsal ridge and central Tunisia.

Regional: North Africa.

Global: The Mediterranean, except France.

■ **Ecology**

Mandragora automnalis develops in pastures and fields in clayey terrain.

■ **Status, conservation, culture**

Mandragora automnalis is picked for use.

■ **Part used**

Roots and leaves.

■ **Constituents**

Alkaloids with a tropane core like those of belladonna: atropine, hyoscyamine and scopolamine, in all 0.4% of alkaloids. Also, cuscohygrine and various physiologically active hydroxypropane esters have been identified.

***Mandragora automnalis* Spreng.,**

Mandragora automnalis Bertol

Arabic: Tiffah el ghoula, bidh el ghoula, tiffah ejnûn تفاح الجن – تفاح الغولة

French: Mandragore, mandragore femelle

English: Mandragora

■ **Traditional medicine**

The roots are considered good against haemorrhoids, the leaves against rheumatism.

■ **Use in herbal medicine**

The mandragora is used for its antispasmodic and analgesic effects.

■ **Toxicity**

Poisoning has occurred; such cases result from taking the leaves and roots for therapeutic or criminal purposes.

■ **References**

- Grisvard Paul et Chaudun V., P. Chouard et A. Guillaumin 19 . Le bon Jardinier. Encyclopédie horticole Tome second. La maison rustique. 888-1667.
- Le Floc'h E. 1983 : Contribution à une étude ethnobotanique de la flore tunisienne. Programme Flore et Végétation tunisienne. Min. de l'En. Sup. et de la Rech. Sci. 387 p.
- Pottier Alapetite G., 1981 : Flore de la Tunisie. Angiospermes- dicotylédones, Gamopétales. Programme flore et végétation tunisiennes. 655- 1190 p.
- Tessier A., 1994. Phytothérapie Analytique : Phytochimie et Pharmacologie. Ed. Marc Aurèle.

