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Perrier ex A. Rich.: extent of knowledge and
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REVIEW

Cochlospermum planchonii Hook.f. ex Planch. and *Cochlospermum tinctorium* Perrier ex A. Rich.: extent of knowledge and prospects for sustainable use in West Africa

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Abstract *Cochlospermum planchonii* Hook.f. ex Planch. and *Cochlospermum tinctorium* Perrier ex A. Rich. are two wild edible plant species (WEPS), widely used in the West African Sudanian zone. Their parts are used as food additive, fodder, medical-magic and ethnoveterinary purposes, dye and arts. Unfortunately, the overexploitation of their rootstocks constitutes a great threat. While, an increasing number of studies reported on their uses, socio-economic importance, biological properties, and the anthropogenic pressure, knowledge on their reproductive biology, threats, domestication, and conservation status are still lacking. It therefore becomes crucial to systematically review literature on the current knowledge to identify research gaps and future research. Hence, this review

aimed to critically synthesize knowledge, and gaps therein, to highlight future research for sustainable use and conservation of both species. To this end, publications were searched online in Web of Science, PubMed, Google Scholar, Science Direct, Springer Online and Research Gate, using following keywords: “taxonomy”, “distribution”, “ecology”, “botanical description”, “structural characteristics”, “vernacular names”, “uses”, “plant parts used”, “phytochemical” and “pharmacological properties”, “economy”, “propagation”, “pollination”, “reproduction”, “threats”, “conservation” and “domestication” in combination with “*C. planchonii*” or “*C. tinctorium*”, “False-cotton”. Out of 423 publications initially recorded, 165 were retained, of which 153 conducted in West Africa; the remaining 12 tackled botanical and taxonomical issues. Most of the publications addressed ethnobotany, chemical and pharmacological properties. Information obtained was compiled, critically analyzed, and discussed; knowledge gaps were keyed out and potential future research was highlighted. The review confirmed the over-exploitation of both species mainly for human livelihoods. Both species were valuable sources of compounds and showed various pharmacological activities. A risk of genetic erosion was reported due overharvesting of their rootstocks whose powder was highly marketable. Future studies on their reproductive biology could enable their cultivation in order to reduce anthropogenic pressure and promote their sustainable use and conservation.

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Introduction

In Western Africa *et alibi* in the tropics, Wild Edible Plants (WEPs) play a central role in the livelihoods of rural communities. Millions of people, mostly in developing countries, owe their daily needs and income to products derived from WEPs (Uprety et al. 2012). Importance of WEPs for rural communities in West Africa has been thoroughly documented in the last two decades (Lykke et al. 2002; Shackleton and Geach 2004; Assogbadjo 2006; Heubach et al. 2011; Sieglstetter et al. 2011). Services associated to WEPs include food, fodder, medicines, timber, and fuelwood, to mention just a few (Kristensen and Lykke 2003; Kahane et al. 2013). With contemporary problems facing crop production (variation in climate, land degradation and pest attacks), WEPs are of critical importance in local coping strategies (Neuenschwander et al. 2011). Unfortunately, in most cases, no formal strategy is put into place to ensure sustainable use of major WEPs. WEPs including *Caesalpinia bonduc* (L.) Roxb. and *Garcinia kola* Heckel (Assogbadjo et al. 2012) disappeared in the wild while populations of other WEPs such as *Lippia multiflora* (Adomou 2005); *Vitex doniana* Sweet (N'Danikou et al. 2011); *Bombax costatum* (Assogba et al. 2018) and West African *Cochlospermum* species (Oyen 2010; Inácio et al. 2011) are declining.

Cochlospermum spp., subshrub species, are among the major food additives in semi-arid lands of West Africa (Johnson-Fulton 2014). All their organs, but mainly the rootstocks, are involved in a wide range of uses such as food additives (Adjanohoun et al. 1989), fodder for cattle (Ouachinou et al. 2018), medical-magic purposes (Olotu et al. 2011; Johnson-Fulton 2014), ethnoveterinary uses (Belem et al. 2007; Dassou et al. 2015), and art (Nikiema 2005; Belem et al. 2007). These wide range of utilisations are the main factors associated to the decline of the *Cochlospermum* spp. (Oyen 2010; Nergard et al. 2005) and expose them to genetic erosion risks (Inácio et al. 2011).

In addition to the threats related to the degradation of their habitats and their exploitation as medicines and food resources, there is a local trade around the rootstocks in many countries such as Benin and Burkina Faso (Achigan-Dako et al. 2010; Johnson-Fulton and Watson 2018). The rootstocks collection would negatively impact natural regeneration and the demographic structure of natural populations. This cannot guarantee a sustainable use of this noble species.

Although no official assessment is available, there is on-the-ground evidence that these species are highly threatened because their rootstocks are the main plant part exploited; which often results in killing individual subshrubs. Extirpation of key WEP species from traditional production systems would probably worsen vulnerability of local dwellers to contemporary environmental shocks such as climate change, land degradation and drought. Indeed, in some countries such as Benin, *Cochlospermum* spp. rootstocks exploitation constitutes a major income source for rural women (Achigan-Dako et al. 2010; Vodouhè and Dansi 2012). Conservation of WEPs however, requires substantial and consistent investments in policy and research efforts into their in situ conservation, their sustainable management, and domestication. Besides, with the current attention given to climate-smart-agriculture in the tropics, potentials of WEPs will only be realized if candidate species are well documented so as to backup policies and decision making (Assogba et al. 2018). The present review attempts to synthesize the state of knowledge, gaps and research prospects for ensuring the sustainable use and conservation of *Cochlospermum* species in West Africa. It focuses on taxonomy, botanical description, pollination, reproduction biology, ecology and distribution, uses and socio-economic importance, phytochemical and pharmacological properties, threats and conservation of *Cochlospermum* species (*C. tinctorium* and *C. planchonii*) in West Africa.

Methods

Data collection

Literature searches were conducted on *C. planchonii* and *C. tinctorium* using journals, thesis and books and presence occurrences available online. The following

electronic search engines: Web of Science, PubMed, Google Scholar, Science Direct, Springer Online and Research Gate were used for literature while geographical records were sourced from GBIF (GBIF 2018) and RAINBIO (Dauby et al. 2016). Publications were considered regardless the year, while the selection of presence occurrences covered the period of 1980–2016. Specimens at the National Herbarium of Benin were reviewed and Atlas of West Africa was sourced from Terrestrial Ecoregions of the World maps' (TEOW) (Olson et al. 2001). The search terms used were: “taxonomy”, “distribution”, “ecology”, “botanical description”, “structural characteristics”, “vernacular names”, “uses”, “plant parts used”, “phytochemical” and “pharmacological properties”, “economy”, “propagation”, “pollination”, “reproduction”, “threats”, “conservation” and “domestication” in combination with “*C. planchonii*” or “*C. tinctorium*”, “False-cotton”.

Data selection and compilation

All publications that mentioned both species were considered. Search results were screened through the titles, abstracts and keywords and those relating to taxonomy and botanical description were considered regardless the location of the study. However, regarding the traditional knowledge (uses and socio-economic importance), and various properties (mineral, chemical and pharmacological aspects) of both species, only those studies that were conducted in West Africa were selected. Thus, relevant publications were downloaded and arranged by species. Afterwards, publications were rigorously read and the information contained were compiled according to the field(s) and aspect(s) addressed. Search data compiled for this review were structured following these aspects: (1) taxonomy and botanical description, (2) distribution and ecology, (3) pollination and reproductive biology, (4) ethnobotany, (5) socio-economic importance, (6) phytochemical and pharmacological evidence and (7) threats and conservation status. Researches conducted in West Africa were sorted out by country of the study and field of study. A graphic expressing spatial distribution of publications according to aspects addressed were constructed using Excel 2013.

The species botanical descriptions were provided based on the differential reproductive and vegetative

characters according to Hutchinson and Dalziel (1958), Akoègninou et al. (2006).

Considering the traditional uses, the percentage of countries reported to treat a given ailment was estimated and referred to as the therapeutic convergence. Two classes were retained for each ailment (High therapeutic convergence $\geq 50\%$ and low therapeutic convergence $< 50\%$). Then, ailments were grouped into the major categories corresponding to various body systems (Heinrich et al. 1998; Faruque et al. 2018); ailment non-specific to a given system being considered as general healthcare. In order to determine for each species the plant parts or organs mainly used, the frequency of use was calculated for each organ based on the number of diseases reported for a given organ. Graphics were constructed to express and synthetise the results of the above analyses.

Occurrences data were sourced online through GBIF (<http://www.gbif.org>) and RANBIO (<http://rainbio.cesab.org/>). Presence records found were checked through to withdraw duplicates using excel (Warren et al. 2011; Stigall 2012). The spatial distribution maps of both species were established with occurrences selected overlaid with Atlas of Africa, using ArcGIS 10.2 (ESRI, Redlands, California, USA). The ecology of both species was documented using information on vegetation types combined with their spatial distribution.

Pharmacological activities investigated and other potential properties were synthetized in a table based on the groups of chemical compounds identified in each plant organ.

The threats and conservation status of both species was discussed using the available data in the literature including data of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (Cota 2018).

Results

Selected publications and spatial distribution

A total of 423 publications records were initially identified through electronic search engines. During the screening and refining steps, 258 non-eligible publications (studies with unrelated topic, outside the West Africa, and duplicates) were excluded. Hence, 165 publications published from 1847 to 2019, of

which 158 articles, 4 thesis, and 3 books were finally considered in this review. Out of those, 153 (109 mentioning *C. tinctorium* and 86 mentioning *C. planchonii*) were conducted in West Africa and addressed the ethnobotany (e.g. traditional uses, local name, socio-economic importance), chemistry, pharmacology, ecology, and distribution range. Very few publications focused on the botanical description (anatomy), pollination ecology, reproduction biology, and conservation status (Fig. 1). The Fig. 2 shows the spatial distribution across the twelve West African countries where studies have been carried out on *C. planchonii* (Fig. 2a) and *C. tinctorium* (Fig. 2b). Indeed, concerning *C. planchonii* (Fig. 2a), ethnobotanical (ETH) studies were reported in almost all countries (with Benin, Nigeria and Ivory Coast showing the highest number of publications) and were followed by chemical and pharmacological researches (MCP) mostly conducted in Nigeria and Burkina-Faso. Only two countries (Benin and Burkina Faso) showed the top five aspects addressed. The trends was almost the same for *C. tinctorium* (Fig. 2b) with Benin, Burkina-Faso, Senegal and Nigeria showing the highest number of studies on ETH while Nigeria, Mali and Burkina-Faso revealed the greatest number of studies on MCP. It was noted that other aspects such as reproductive biology, propagation trials, and species

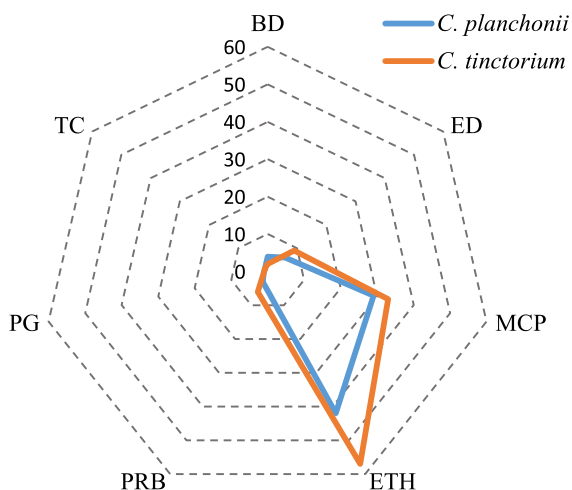


Fig. 1 Aspects addressed in studies on *C. planchonii* and *C. tinctorium*. *BD* botanical description, *ED* ecology and spatial distribution, *MCP* mineral, chemical and pharmacological studies, *ETH* ethnobotany, *PRB* pollination and reproduction biology, *PG* propagation and growth, *TC* threats and conservation status

abundance on both species were very poorly addressed. A total of 1004 records (959 from GBIF and 45 from RAINBIO) for *C. tinctorium* and 1070 records (996 from GBIF and 74 from RAINBIO) for *C. planchonii* were downloaded. After the refinement of the data set, 449 records (420 from GBIF and 29 from RAINBIO) for *C. tinctorium* and 521 records (463 from GBIF and 58 from RAINBIO) for *C. planchonii* and covering the period 1980–2016, were considered for mapping the geographical distribution.

Taxonomy and botanical description

Cochlospermum Kunth, established by Planchon (1847), is the sole genus of Bixaceae (previously Cochlospermaceae, order Malvales) in West Africa, and was named from the Greek words “kochlos”, meaning snail or snail shell and “sperma”, corresponding to seed (Quattrocchi 1999). The genus is represented in West Africa by two species among the twelve worldwide, *Cochlospermum tinctorium* Perrier ex A.Rich. and *Cochlospermum planchonii* Hook.f. ex Planch. (Hutchinson and Dalziel 1958; Hepper 1977). Suffrutescent shrubs, xeromorphic (Ogundipe and Olatunji 1991; Johnson-Fulton and Watson 2017), they are characterized essentially by woody subterranean stems (rootstocks), palmately-veined and lobed to dissected leaves and capsular fruits (Poppendieck 1980). Annual leafy shoots are produced from woody subterranean rootstocks in the rainy season, reaching 80 cm tall in *C. tinctorium* (Jansen 2005) and 1.5–2.5 m tall in *C. planchonii* (Akoègninou et al. 2006). *C. planchonii* flowers towards the end of the rainy seasons and fruits appear 1–2 months after flowering (Jansen 2005). Flowering of *C. tinctorium* is in the dry season after the savanna burns, and the fruits are ripe about 1 month after flowering (Jansen 2005; Akoègninou et al. 2006). Both species are diploid with $2n = 12$ chromosomes (Morawetz 1986; Molero et al. 2006) and show some key morphological characters (Table 1 and Fig. 3). The genus *Cochlospermum* was originally arranged in Cochlospermaceae (Takhtajan 1980; Cronquist 1981; APG 1998). This family was afterwards considered as synonym family of Bixaceae by Angiosperm Phylogeny Group II (APG 2003) and finally was included in Bixaceae family (APG 2009, 2016).

Moreover, presence of the intermediate form, *C. intermedium* Mildbr. was reported in the Sudanian

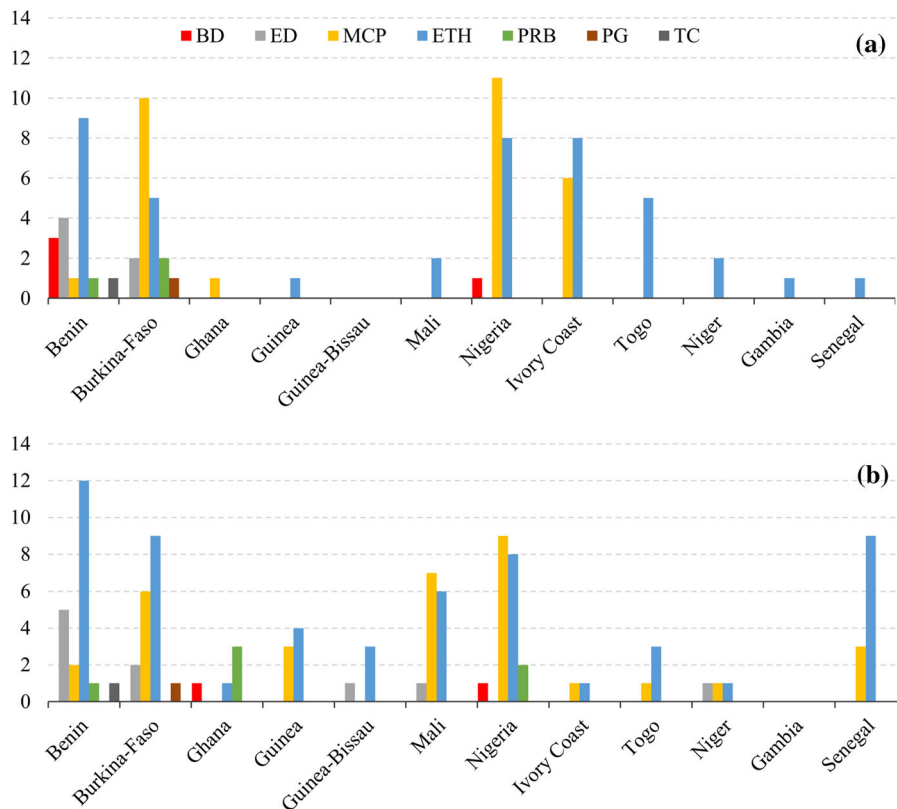


Fig. 2 Graphics showing spatial distribution of aspects studied on **a** *C. planchonii* and **b** *C. tinctorium* across West Africa

zone of Benin, but still neither collected nor formally identified (Akoègninou et al. 2006). *C. intermedium*, certainly a hybrid, combines the terminal

inflorescence of *C. planchonii* and the acute and deeply lobed leaves of *C. tinctorium*. It is confined to Central Africa (Johnson-Fulton and Watson 2017) and

Table 1 Diagnostic morphological characters differentiating *C. planchonii* from *C. tinctorium*. Source: Hutchinson and Dalziel (1958), Poppendieck (1980), Akoègninou et al. (2006)

Characters	<i>C. planchonii</i>	<i>C. tinctorium</i>
Leaf shape	Palmately lobed; seldom deeply lobed, lobes rounded, usually broadly oblong, seldom markedly serrate; lower surface of mature leaves more or less densely woolly (Fig. 3a)	Palmately lobed; usually deeply lobed with acute lobes, sometimes with lobes narrowly lanceolate, lobes usually serrate; lower surface of mature leaves glabrescent or pubescent (Fig. 3d)
Inflorescence	Terminal, with 3–7 fascicled branches, rarely lax; bracts triangular	Few-flowered panicle or raceme, usually produced at ground level from the rootstocks, sometimes appearing on top of leafy shoots; bracts triangular
Flower	Radial, actinomorphic (5–7 cm in diameter) (Fig. 3b)	Radial, actinomorphic (6–9 cm in diameter) (Fig. 3e)
Fruit	Capsules (5–7 cm long), ovoid/obovoid/pyriform, thick-walled developing before the fire season to protect the seeds during fires	Capsules (4–5 cm long), fusiform/obovoid, slightly ridged, brown, grey or black, thin-walled developing at ground level just after the fire
Seed shape	Reniform, loosely attached to long cottony hairs (Fig. 3c)	Cochleate (spiral), reniform, closely adhering by long cottony hairs

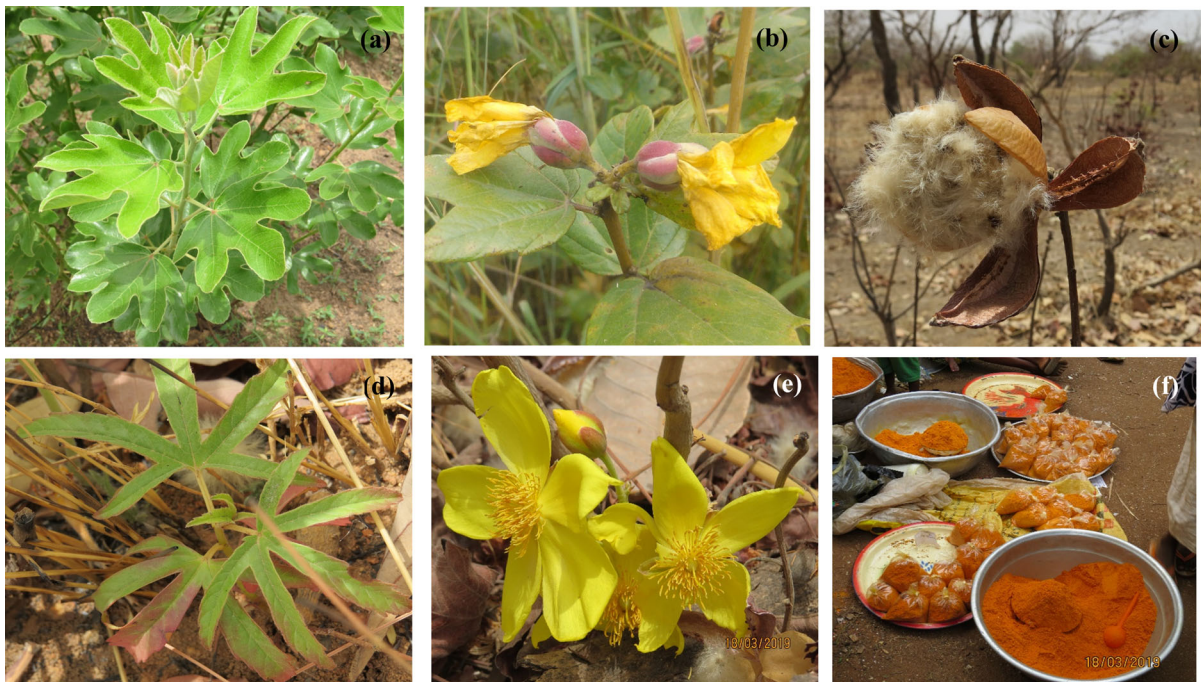


Fig. 3 West African *Cochlospermum* species **a** *C. planchonii* leafy stem, **b** *C. planchonii* flowers, **c** dry fruit (dehiscent capsule) of *C. planchonii* showing seeds covered in cotton-like

fibres, **d** *C. tinctorium* leafy stem, **e** *C. tinctorium* flowers near the soil surface, **f** *C. tinctorium* rootstock powder in bowls and packets for sale *Source*: Favi G. Abraham, 2018

reportedly occurs in places where *C. planchonii* and *C. tinctorium* co-occur (Hutchinson and Dalziel 1958).

Distribution and ecology of habitats

Cochlospermum has a classical pantropical distribution, with species present in Africa, America (e.g. *Cochlospermum vitifolium* (Willd.) Spreng. and *Cochlospermum regium* (Schrank) Pilg.), India, Southeast Asia (e.g. *C. regium*), and northern Australia (e.g. *C. fraseri*) (Johnson-Fulton 2014; Johnson-Fulton and Watson 2017). *C. planchonii* and *C. tinctorium* mostly occur in semi-arid and arid regions of West Africa (Fig. 4a) (Ogundipe and Olatunji 1991). *C. planchonii* occurs from Senegal eastwards to Chad, from sea level up to 1700 m altitude in savanna and forest-savanna mosaic and fallows, sometimes in hedges, while *C. tinctorium*, is widespread from Senegal to southern Sudan and Uganda, at 300–1500 m altitude through the dry savanna, and preferring devastated, rocky and annually burnt regions (Burkill 1985; Jansen 2005; Johnson-Fulton 2014). The distribution of both species overlaps as far east as southwestern Sudan and north-western

Uganda. In Benin, although *C. planchonii* occurs almost countrywide, it is sparser in the north while *C. tinctorium* is spread from the transition zone to the sudanian zone. Based on the map generated from occurrence data sourced from GBIF (GBIF 2018) and RainBIO (Dauby et al. 2016), *C. tinctorium* is mainly confined to the sudanian zone of Benin, while *C. planchonii* exhibits a wider distribution (Fig. 4b).

Pollination and reproduction

Information on pollination and reproduction biology of *Cochlospermum* plants is very scant, showing research gaps as already reported by many authors such as Bosch and Borus (2006). Very few pollinator observations have been documented outside the Americas (Johnson-Fulton 2014). Within West African countries, Ahouandjinou et al. (2016) in Benin, Cencettia et al. (2019) in Burkina-Faso and Omoloye and Akinsola (2006) in southwest Nigeria reported respectively *C. planchonii* and *C. tinctorium* to be visited and pollinated by bees. This is confirmed through a buzz pollination by large tropical bees foraging on Neotropical plant species (Erancheri et al.

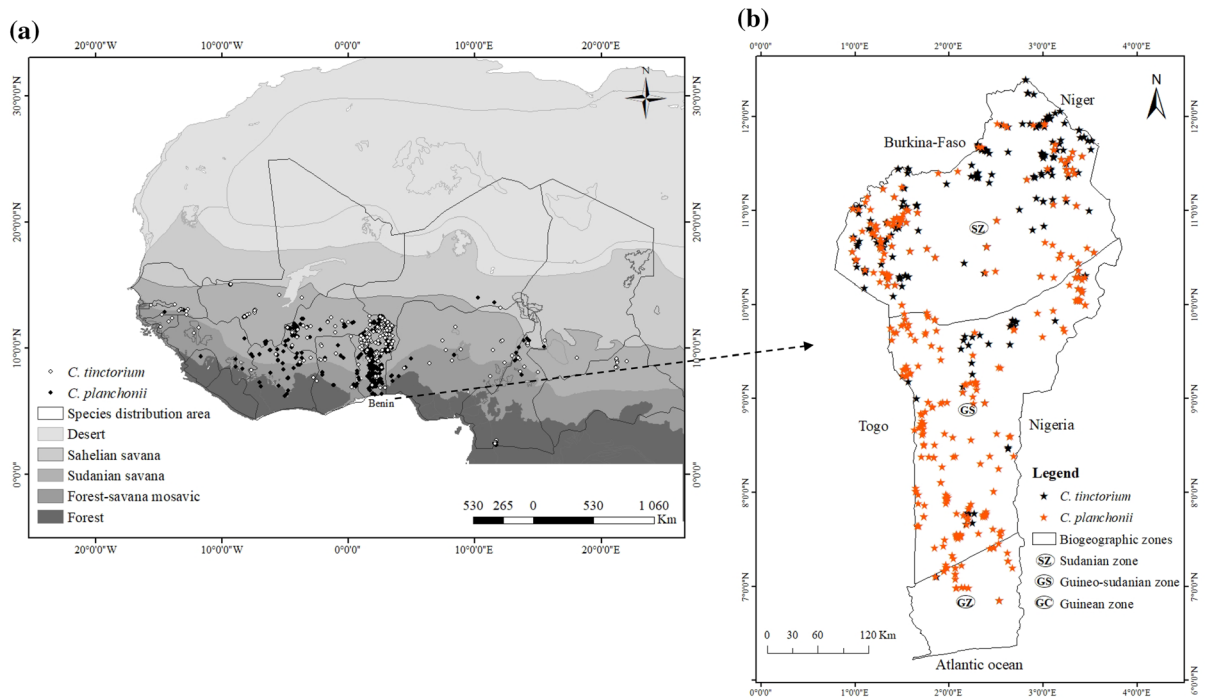


Fig. 4 **a** Distribution ranges of *C. planchonii* and *C. tinctorium* in Africa mosaic in legend of map. **b** Geographic distribution of *C. planchonii* and *C. tinctorium* in Benin.

2013). Furthermore, owl moths (Noctuidae) were mentioned as pollinators of *C. intermedium* flowers in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (Mildbraed 1923).

According to reproduction biology, *C. planchonii* and *C. tinctorium* species as well as all other *Cochlospermum* grow as common weeds of cultivation, reproducing naturally from seeds (Oyen 2010). They usually vegetatively regenerate by rootstocks that are fire-tolerant (Achigan-Dako et al. 2010). Therefore, further research is needed for the West African *Cochlospermum* species (Johnson-Fulton 2014) and would be of great interest to better understand the best reproduction ways and the roles of pollinators in their propagation and likely their domestication and conservation.

Common names, traditional uses, nutritional and socioeconomic importance

Common names

Literature provides extensive information on local names of *C. tinctorium* and *C. planchonii* for all West African ethnic groups. Both species are commonly named “False cotton” and “Faux cotonnier” respectively in English and French. Likewise, some ethnic groups named both species identically, e.g. in Benin (Achigan-Dako et al. 2010) and Burkina-Faso (Belem et al. 2007), Wama and Moré people name respectively both species “Busoron’bu” and “Sonsè” (Table 2). However, both species also have distinct names elsewhere (Table 2). Diversity of local names expresses their local importance.

Food uses and nutritional value

C. tinctorium and *C. planchonii* are important and valuable food resources in the Sudanian and Sahelian zones (Pousset et al. 1987) where the market value of food increases during the dry season due to the decline

Table 2 Common names of *C. tinctorium* and *C. planchonii* in some West African countries

Countries	<i>C. tinctorium</i>	<i>C. planchonii</i>	References
Benin	Busoron`bu (Waama), N`buburumin (Anii), Kota (Dendi, Zerman), Kubologun (Gourmantché), Pararou, Kpararou (Bariba), Wunsonlihoun, Ousonliwoun (Berba)	Adjinakouvocanfoun (Fon), Busoron`bu (Waama), Lisayani (Gourmantché), Lomboukou (Kotokoli), Gbétu (Tchabè), Omronlugboko (Ifè), Tcholi (Idatcha)	Adjanohoun et al. (1989), Akoègninou et al. (2006) and Achigan-Dako et al. (2010)
Burkina-Faso	N`dribala (Dioula), Sôasga (Moore), Gotoro (san), Sosga (Mooré), Diapolo (Lyele), Yansinguinin (Tingso), Yaansegere (Dono soo), Yaansenjere (Tenju-kan), Yensenrin (Tomoso), Yansenjinrin (Tenju soo) and Solu anji (Duguloso, Dogolonso, Dongoso, Tommo soo, Donno soo, Toro soo), sonsè (Moré)	Sonsè (Moré), Biripin (San)	Nergard et al. (2005), Pare et al. (2016) and Sawadogo et al. (2017)
Ghana	Gbelonbile (Wale)		Asase et al. (2005)
Guinea	Tourouban kèman (Maninka), Diarounde (Pular), Tiriba (Malinké), Filimaguese (Sousou), Turubaw (Manika), Rèmè (Pular)	Tourouban musoman (Maninka)	Somopogui (1998), Kéita et al. (1999) and Magassouba et al. (2017)
Guinea-Bissau	Djándéré/diarounde (Fulani), filira gaese (Susu), tiriban/turuban (Malinke)		Diniz et al. (1996), Neuwinger (1996)
Mali	Tribara (Bambara), Solo andji (Dogon), N`dilibara (Bambara)		Nergard et al. (2005), Sangare et al. (2012) and Diarra et al. (2015)
Togo	Soulefadine, Frado (Ewe)	Zogbedeti (Ewe)	Kpodar et al. (2016)

of agricultural product availability (de Merode et al. 2014). The rootstocks of both species are collected from the wild, dried, and crushed to a reddish-yellowish powder to be sold on local market for various purposes, mostly as food additive (Achigan-Dako et al. 2010; Segnon and Achigan-Dako 2014). In African arid and semi-arid areas, the rootstock powder is used as tea (Aliyu et al. 1995) or colouring or flavouring item for sauces, when palm oil is not available (Vodouhè and Dansi 2012; Ohwoavworhwa and Adelakun 2005). Anii communities consume the tender leaves of *C. tinctorium* in Benin as nutrient source (Segnon and Achigan-Dako 2014) and seeds are eaten raw in West Africa to quench thirst (Johnson-Fulton 2014). People in Nigeria and Ivory Coast chew the rootstocks as tonic to help promote general health (Ouattara et al. 2016). Leaves and flowers of *C. tinctorium* are respectively used as fodder for livestock and as food additives in Burkina Faso (Butare 2003; Nikiema 2005). According to Ouachinou et al. (2018), leaves and fruits of *C. planchonii* and leaves of *C. tinctorium* are among fodders consumed by cattle in Benin.

C. planchonii rootstocks exhibited some mineral constituents such as Na, K, Ca, Mg, Mn, Pb, Cd, Fe, Cu, Se (Nafiu et al. 2011) of which the first four are some of vital macronutrients to human health and nutrition (Yamashita et al. 2005), Zn, Ni and Cr (Aliyu et al. 1995) with zinc salt as hepatoprotective components by inhibition of cytochrome P450 enzyme in the liver (Anaga and Oparah 2009). Likewise, monosaccharides (glucose, galactose, fructose, arabinose, glucuronic acid, galacturonic acid, xylose, mannose and rhamnose) are found in *C. tinctorium* rootstocks (Inngjerdingen et al. 2013), playing a critical role in the human well-being (e.g. glucose ensures an antidiabetic role). Protein in both species (Olotu et al. 2011; Inngjerdingen et al. 2013) promotes health.

Uses in traditional medicine and veterinary practices

Medicinal uses turned to be the most important use category with several ailments treated. A total of 91 ailments are treated by both species. The therapeutic value of *C. tinctorium* turns out to be higher than that

Table 3 Some ailments treated by *C. tinctorium* and *C. planchonii*

Plant parts	<i>C. tinctorium</i>	<i>C. planchonii</i>	References
<i>Common ailments</i>			
Rootstock	Conjunctivitis, diabetes, diarrhoea, enteric fever, epilepsy, gonorrhoea, helminthiasis, viral hepatitis B and C, indigestion, infertility, jaundice, liver ailments, malaria, pneumonia, premenstrual pain, stomach disorders, typhoid fever, urinary tract infections		Togola et al. (2005, 2008), Dassou et al. (2015) and Ouattara et al. (2016)
Leaf	Malaria, fevers, jaundice, diabetes, diarrhoea, stomach disorders, typhoid fever, urinary tract infections		Nafiu et al. (2011) and Isah et al. (2013)
<i>Specific ailments</i>			
Rootstock	Snackbites, beriberi, blennorrhoea, bronchial affections, colique, constipation, dysuria, eye instillations, fevers, flatulence, haemorrhoids, intercostal pains, oedema, orchitis, painful menstruation (dysmenorrhea), rectal prolapse, rickets, schistosomiasis, ulcer, yellow fever	Leprosy, blood stimulant, burns, dysentery, oedema, febrile attack, headaches, heart palpitations, lung infections, menstrual cramps, skin infections, tonic, urethral discharge	Mann et al. (2003) and Adamu et al. (2005)
Leaf	Abcesses, boils	Diabetes, dysentery, helminthiasis, oedema, headaches	Achigan-Dako et al. (2010)
Flower	Constipation		Nergard et al. (2005)
Seed	Leprosy		Jansen and Cardon (2005)

of *C. planchonii*. Thus, *C. tinctorium* cures 79 ailments (with 58 exclusive) and exceed the 54 ailments reported by (Johnson-Fulton and Watson 2018), while *C. planchonii* treats 36 ailments (including 12 exclusive) (partly in Table 3). Among these ailments, Table 4 highlights seventeen diseases (reported at least in tree countries) with their therapeutic convergence. Thus, jaundice (100%), malaria (92.31%), yellow fever (76.92%) and liver ailments (76.92%) are treated with *C. tinctorium*, revealed high therapeutic convergence versus enteric fever and hepatitis (15.38%) were less reported and accordingly showed a low convergence (Table 4). For *C. planchonii*, only malaria (53.85%) revealed a high therapeutic convergence while bronchitis, epilepsy, and haemorrhoids were not reported to be cured by *C. planchonii*. The high frequency of citation of malaria medication for both species is consistent because *C. planchonii* and *C. tinctorium* have already been reported amongst the top five antimalarial medicinal plants (Lamien-Meda et al. 2015). Of the above, *C. tinctorium* was more frequently used than *C. planchonii*. However, the variation in therapeutic

convergence could be scientifically justified. An ailment could have a high therapeutic convergence if the traditional medicine is held by an ethnic group common to some neighbouring countries, e.g. Hausa people using *C. tinctorium* against jaundice in Nigeria (Mann et al. 2003) but also in Niger, Benin, Ghana, etc. (Sabiou et al. 2018). It could be due to human migration such as by the Fulani who are present in almost West African countries (Nissen 2014), using both species in medical-magic and veterinary uses (Olotu et al. 2011). This could also be justified by species availability hypothesis because most West African countries have arid or semi-arid regions (preferred habitats of *Cochlospermum* spp.). On the other hand, a plant species used to treat an ailment in geographically distant countries could mean an efficiency despite the low therapeutic convergence of the ailment treated, e.g. of hepatitis treatment by *C. planchonii* (Aliyu et al. 1995) in Benin, Burkina-Faso and Senegal and by *C. tinctorium* (Akinloye et al. 2012) in Benin and Mali (Table 4).

All ailments recorded were grouped into sixteen (16) categories, the most important of which are as

Table 4 Therapeutic convergence in terms of percentage of countries where *C. tinctorium* and *C. planchonii* treat a given ailment

Ailments	Nigeria	Niger	Benin	Togo	Burkina-Faso	Ghana	Ivory Coast	Mali	Guinea	Guinea-Bissau	Gambia	Senegal	TC (%)
	ct, cp	ct, cp	ct	ct	ct, cp	ct	ct, cp	ct, cp	ct	ct	ct	ct, cp	ct
Jaundice	ct, cp	ct, cp	ct	ct	ct, cp	ct	ct, cp	ct, cp	ct	ct	ct	ct, cp	100
Malaria	ct, cp	cp	ct, cp	ct, cp	ct, cp	ct	ct, cp	ct, cp	ct	ct	ct	ct	92.31
Yellow fever	ct	ct		ct	ct	ct	ct	ct	ct		ct	ct, cp	76.92
Liver ailments	ct			ct, cp	cp	ct	ct	ct	ct	ct	ct	ct	76.92
Snackbites	ct		ct, cp			ct	ct	ct				ct, cp	38.46
Schistosomiasis	ct					ct	ct, cp	ct				ct, cp	30.77
Fevers	cp	cp				ct	ct, cp	cp				ct	23.08
Stomach disorders						ct	ct, cp	ct, cp				ct	23.08
Helminthiasis		ct	cp					ct				ct	23.08
Bronchitis						ct	ct					ct	23.08
Epilepsy						ct	ct					ct	23.08
Haemorrhoids				ct		ct		ct				ct	23.08
Indigestion				ct		ct	ct					ct	23.08
Rickets	ct	ct										ct	23.08
Enteric fever	ct, cp		ct, cp					cp				ct	15.38
Hepatitis		ct, cp	ct, cp		cp			ct				cp	15.38

TC: therapeutic convergence, ct: *Cochlospermum tinctorium*, cp: *Cochlospermum planchonii*

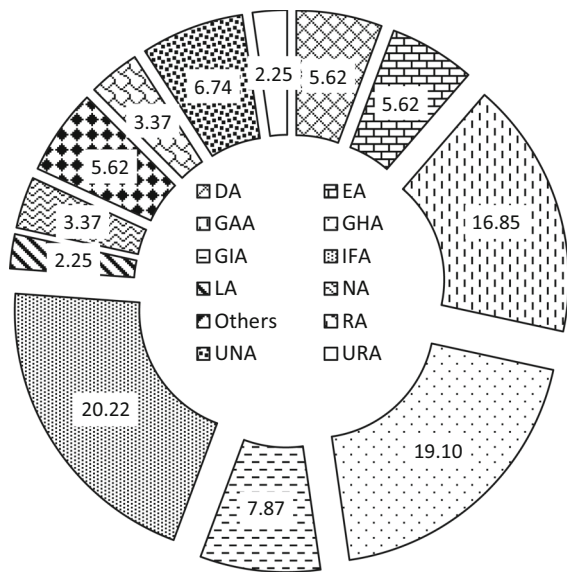
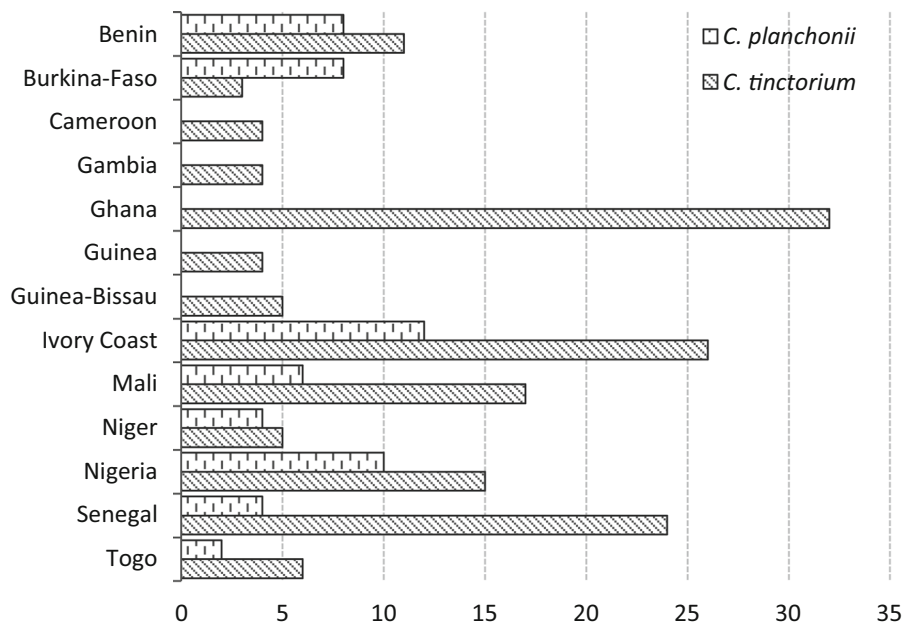


Fig. 5 Spectrum of body system-based ailment categories. *IFA* infectious/fever ailments, *GHA* general health ailments, *GAA* gynecological/andrological ailments, *GIA* gastro-intestinal ailments, *UNA* unspecified ailments, *DA* dermatological ailments, *EA* eye ailments, *NA* neurological ailments, *RA* respiratory ailments, *LA* liver ailments, *URA* urological ailments

follows: infectious/fever ailments (20.22% of the total), general health ailments (19.10%), and gastro-intestinal ailments (16.85%) (Fig. 5). The frequent uses of *C. tinctorium* and *C. planchonii* as antimicrobials in traditional medicine was emphasised by

Fig. 6 Number of ailments treated by each species per country

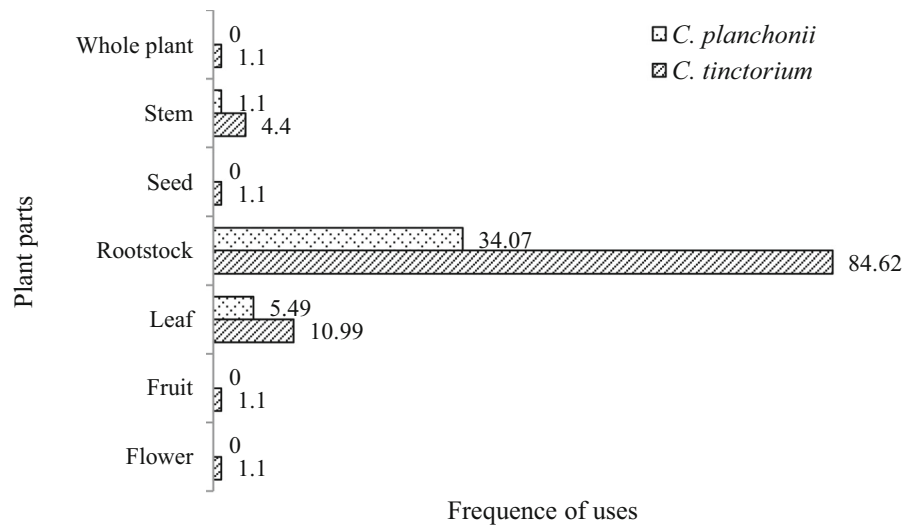


Magassouba et al. (2017). Taking into account the number of ailments treated per country, Ghana (32 ailments), Ivory-Coast (26), Senegal (25), Mali (18), and Nigeria (15) made the top five of countries treating the most of ailments using *C. tinctorium* (Fig. 6). Lowest values (8–12 ailments) were obtained in *C. planchonii*. Nevertheless, the market value of *C. planchonii* is high in Burkina-Faso since it is widely used and sold in pharmacies as improved traditional medicine against malaria (Benoit-Vical et al. 2003; Willcox 2011).

Based on the number of ailments treated using the rootstocks, they appeared to be the most frequently used plant parts of *C. tinctorium* and *C. planchonii* in traditional medicine in West African (Fig. 7). Thus, 84.62% and 34.07% of ailments recorded are treated respectively with *C. tinctorium* and *C. planchonii* rootstocks (Fig. 7). Leaves and stem were used to a considerably lower extent.

The strong role of rootstocks in medicine and veterinary uses is frequently mentioned in literature (Togola et al. 2005; Yerbanga et al. 2012; Ouachinou et al. 2017; Sawadogo et al. 2017) and by this, exposes the species to threat because rootstock harvesting involves killing the plant. According to Nergard et al. (2005), the harvesting of *C. tinctorium* rootstocks from the wild, as main raw material, causes a growing

Fig. 7 Percentages of uses of each species plant parts



concern on diminishing plant populations that might lead to local extinction.

Other uses

C. tinctorium and *C. planchonii* are well known for multipurpose issues such as magical protection ascribed to leaf infusions used by Fulani people of Northern Nigeria (Olotu et al. 2011). They are also used as dye or sources of fiber (Poppendieck 1980; Abbiw 1990; Sala 1994; Hodgson 2001) and popular in art and crafts. The dried or mature fruits contain cotton-like fibers that are twisted into necklace cords in Togo (Jansen and Cardon 2005), or used for stuffing cushions, pillows, mattresses, and for padding upholstery work in Ghana (Butare 2003; Nikiema 2005) or making beads in Nigeria with the seeds (Johnson-Fulton 2014). In Ghana, the dye from *C. tinctorium* rootstocks is widely produced and exported (Jansen 2005). Rootstock extract as a yellow dye is used by Nupe-Fulani people of Nigeria and some tribes in Sudan to make tattoo colorants, inks, mordants and stains. Elsewhere, it is reported to paint fabric, leather mats, baskets, shea butter (Abbiw 1990) and masks in Benin (Fagbohoun 2014). Ropes are made from stem bark for fixing mats. Edible oil is obtained from seeds of *C. tinctorium* (Cheesbrough 2000). The Hausa tribe of Nigeria and some tribes in Northern Sierra Leone make strings and ropes from bark fibres while Chambas people in Sokoto (Nigeria) use the threaded seeds as beads (Olotu et al. 2011). The leaf infusion is

believed to bestow magical protection on the Fulani people of Northern Nigeria (Olotu et al. 2011). Bosch and Borus (2006) considered *Cochlospermum* species among the good candidates for commercial production and ornamental uses that are not yet well explored.

Socio-economic importance

C. tinctorium and *C. planchonii* appear very useful for rural households' cash income (Tabuti et al. 2003; Djègo et al. 2011) according to "N'dribala" (*C. planchonii* rootstocks) and "Saye" (a mixture of *C. planchonii*, *Phyllanthus amarus* and *Cassia alata*) approved in Burkina-Faso as improved traditional medicine and sold in pharmacies against malaria (Lamien-Meda et al. 2015) to treat over 85,000 patients each year (Willcox 2011). In northern Benin, rootstocks of *C. tinctorium* and *C. planchonii* (Fig. 3f), available year-round, are often powdered and sold on local markets (Achigan-Dako et al. 2010). In this region, *C. tinctorium* contributed to household income generation from 20 and 144\$ according to Vodouhè and Dansi (2012). Furthermore, Ahouandjinou et al. (2016) in Coby district (Northern Benin), Omoloye and Akinsola (2006) in Southwest Nigeria identified respectively *C. planchonii* and *C. tinctorium* as melliferous plants. Commercial issues may be explored for ornamental use with regard to the beautiful yellow flowers of *C. tinctorium* and its multipurpose uses (Bosch and Borus 2006). Many post stamps from Chad, Angola, India, Nicaragua and Cuba

spotlight *Cochlospermum* species such as *C. planchonii* and *C. tinctorium*, an indication of the importance and conspicuous beauty of this plant genus (Johnson-Fulton 2014).

Phytochemical and pharmacological evidence

Chemical constituents of *C. planchonii* and *C. tinctorium* plant parts have been extensively reported through various studies supporting their great therapeutic values (Diallo et al. 1987, 1991, 1992; Ouattara et al. 2007; Bossou et al. 2013). More than hundred compounds have been identified in various organs of both species ranging into three bioactive groups (Table 5) such as phenols/polyphenols, terpenoids and alkaloids. Some of these compounds are somewhat similar in both species. Thus, Benoit-Vical et al. (1999) showed that essential oils obtained from both species rootstocks revealed that major components are qualitatively close, but differ in their relative ratios. Likewise, wild and cultivated plants of *C. tinctorium* showed similar bioactive monosaccharide and polysaccharide components (Inngjerdingen et al. 2013) that revealed a significant mitogenic activity (Nergard et al. 2005).

All of the components identified in both species parts revealed a wide range of important biological activities of which fifteen (15) have already been investigated (Table 5) with antimicrobial (Inngjerdingen et al. 2014; Oumar et al. 2014), antimalarial (Vonthron-Senecheau et al. 2003; Traoré et al. 2008) and antioxidant (Da et al. 2014) activities are documented. Some of these compounds are specific to *Cochlospermum* as Cochloxanthine and Dihydrocochloxanthine (two major carotenoids) (Lamien-Meda et al. 2015) and Cochlospermine A, B, C, D (Triacylbenzenes) (Achenbach, 1986) that showed antibacterial activity (Malcolm and Sofowora 1969). Accordingly, Abondo et al. (1990) placed *C. tinctorium* in the third position among African hepatoprotective remedies based on the number of countries in which its use is cited. Beyond the biological properties mentioned so far, some other potential properties have not yet been investigated (Table 5) such as anti-allergic, anti-cancer, anti-tumour, antituberculosis, anti-hypertensive activities and should therefore be further studied. To test antimalarial effects of *C. planchonii*, Benoit-Vical et al. (2003) conducted in

Burkina-Faso, a clinical trial for uncomplicated *Plasmodium falciparum* malaria. Among the 46 patients treated with *C. planchonii* root powder (N'Dribala) versus 21 patients treated with chloroquine, 57% and 52% respectively of chloroquine-treated and of N'Dribala-treated patients were cured at day 5, with more than 90% of whole patients asymptomatic and showing no detectable parasitemia.

Among the plant parts involved in pharmacological studies on both species, the rootstocks were the plant part showing the highest number of pharmacological activities (60% for *C. tinctorium* versus 46.6% for *C. planchonii*), followed by the leaves (26.6% for *C. tinctorium* and 20% for *C. planchonii*) (Fig. 8). Although the rootstocks of both species seem to have the strongest biological properties, there is a need to test extracts from other parts of the plants as they may still have pharmacological properties unknown so far.

Threats and conservation

This review highlights how each part of West African *Cochlospermum* species is much involved usefully in household livelihoods as food additive, folk medicine, craft, etc. Unfortunately, the anthropic pressure linked to the over-harvesting of rootstocks is proving to be harmful to species sustainability (Vermeulen 2006), due to the method of harvesting and the number of ailments treated (Dassou 2016). Indeed, harvest the rootstocks implies the systematic digging out of the plants and by this, causing the decline of *C. planchonii* populations as reported in Benin by Dassou (2016). This practice exposes the plant species to genetic erosion as reported for *C. regium* (Mart. ex. Schrank) in Brazil's savanna (Cerrado) (Inácio et al. 2011). Even worse, *Cochlospermum tetraporum* Hallier f., confined to South America (Prado 1998), was identified as an internationally endangered plant species (Prado 1998). Hence, vulnerability of *C. planchonii* has been expressed due to the destructive harvesting of its rootstocks for medicine, food condiment, dye (Oyen 2010), and ethnoveterinary uses (Dassou 2016). Furthermore, in West African countries such as Mali, some surveys revealed that the harvesting of *C. tinctorium* from the wild, as main raw material, causes a growing concern on decline, which might lead to local extinction (Nergard et al. 2005). A decrease of its local abundance was mentioned in

Table 5 Pharmacological activities currently discovered for *C. tinctorium* and *C. planchonii* and further potential properties to investigate

Secondary metabolites		Plant organs	Biological activities	
Groups	Subgroups		Activities investigated	Potential properties
Phenols/ polyphenols	Shikimates (phenols and phenolic acids, lignin, tannins, flavonoids)	R ^{ab} , Rb ^{ab} , L ^{ab} , Stb ^b , Stl ^b (Doughari et al. 2008; Isah et al. 2013)	Analgesic, anti-inflammatory, CNS depressant, antibacterial, anti-oxidant, antihepatotoxic, antiplasmodial, antimalarial, antimicrobial, anti-fungal, anti-ulcer, anti-hepatic, anti-diabetic, antihyperglycemic (Abdulsalaam et al. 2013; Inngjerdingen et al. 2014; Dluya et al. 2017)	Anti-allergic, anti-carcinogenic, anti-mutagenic, anti-septic, anti-viral, cardiovascular protective, diuretics, haemostatic (Falcone Ferreyra et al. 2012; Chikezie et al. 2015; Anulika et al. 2016)
Terpenoids and steroids	Monoterpenes, diterpenes, triterpenes (saponosides), steroids, carotenoids and sesquiterpenes	R ^{ab} , Rb ^a , L ^{ab} , Stb ^b , Stl ^b (Anaga and Oparah 2009; Ahmed et al. 2011)	Analgesic, anti-inflammatory, CNS depressant, analgesic, anti-inflammatory, antiplasmodial, antibacterial, antihepatotoxic, antimalarial, antimicrobial, anti-fungal, anti-diabetic, anti-trypanocidal, antihyperglycemic (Diallo et al. 1987; Atawodi 2005; Abdulsalaam et al. 2013)	Anti-viral, anti-helminthic, anti-cancer, anti-tumour, immunostimulant, anti-coagulant, neuroprotective, antituberculosis (Kanokmedhakul et al. 2005; Capasso et al. 2003; Shakya 2016; Man et al. 2010)
Alkaloids	Cochloxanthin, dihydrocochloxanthin	R ^a , Rb ^a , L ^{ab} , Stb ^b (Abraham et al. 2017; Ahmed et al. 2011)	Analgesic, Anti-inflammatory, CNS depressant, analgesic, anti-inflammatory, antiplasmodial, anti-oxidant, antimicrobial, anti-fungal, antihyperglycemic, anti-diabetic (Ballin et al. 2002; Doughari et al. 2008; Dluya et al. 2017)	Anti-asthmatic, anti-hypertensive, anti-spasmodic, bactericidal, diuretic, local anesthetic (Woolley 2001; Chikezie et al. 2015; Shakya 2016)

R rootstock, Rb rootstock bark, L leaves, St stem, Stl stem leaf, Stb stem bark

^a*C. tinctorium*

^b*C. planchonii*

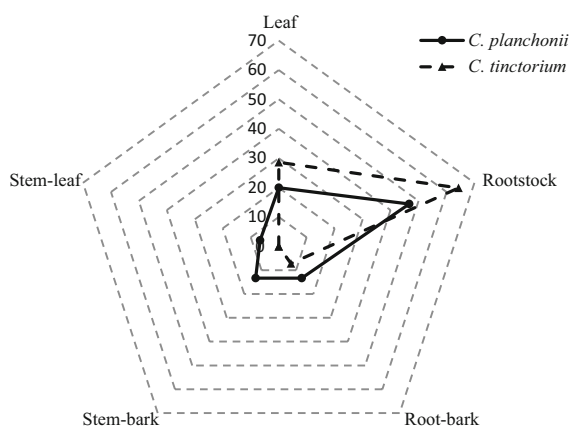


Fig. 8 Percentage of pharmacological activity per plant part of *C. tinctorium* and *C. planchonii*

Ghana, due to the effective use against malaria (Asase et al. 2005). Also, great pressure on *C. tinctorium* was also reported in northeast Benin (Sinsin and Oumorou 2000; Lesse et al. 2017). So far, the literature on the current geographical distribution of *Cochlospermum* species, particularly those occurring in West Africa is sparse and the threat status remains not yet completely evaluated in Benin (Achigan-Dako et al. 2010). Nevertheless, the “Department of Traditional Medicine” in Mali initiated the cultivation of *C. tinctorium* (Nergard et al. 2005) and Chamba people of the Shebshi Mountains of eastern Nigeria also occasionally cultivate *C. planchonii* (Oyen 2010). So far, there is no focus on conservation efforts for these multipurpose plant species. It is imperative to work out

strategies of *C. tinctorium* and *C. planchonii* conservation in order to prevent their genetic erosion.

Knowledge gaps and prospects

This literature survey provides evidence that West African *Cochlospermum* species are important multipurpose plants with socioeconomic value for socio-cultural groups from the Sudanian and Sahelian Zones according to their wide spectrum of uses, chemical constituents and pharmacological activities. Unfortunately, the overexploitation of *Cochlospermum* species rootstocks combine with the wide range of uses (e.g. food additive, medicine, dye, and veterinary uses) could induce their genetic erosion and accordingly a loss of biodiversity. Extensive data are available in literature related to taxonomic, traditional uses, mineral and chemical compounds, pharmacological activities and spatial distribution. Aspects such as reproductive biology, pollination, ecology, seed dissemination and natural regeneration remain poorly documented (Inngjerdingen et al. 2013) while those related to conservation strategies, domestication, and genetic diversity are not addressed at all. Beside human pressure through the overuse of rootstocks, environmental hazards in tropical regions where *C. planchonii* and *C. tinctorium* mostly occur, agriculture, bushfires and climate variability become impediment against these plant resources conservation. The growing demand and the market value of the rootstocks that are harvested from the wild, decreases the natural populations of these species. So, there is an urgent need to start monitoring and conservation programs so as to reverse or alleviate the ongoing pressure (Bosch and Borus 2006). It appears vital to assess the spatial and temporal dynamics of the natural populations of these plant genetic resources. Also since these plants are reported melliferous, it is timely to investigate the flowering and fruiting phenology along with the climate variability. This will allow mastering their reproduction, the pollination, seed dissemination etc.

Further studies could also address the nutritional value of whole plant as vegetable or fodder and their potential in honey production. In addition, morphological and molecular analysis, especially in Benin, would remove the ambiguity on the actual number of *Cochlospermum* species, and the existence or not of

Cochlospermum intermedium Mildbr. Analysis of ecological and geographical distribution of genetic diversity using molecular tools would help to increase knowledge on patterns and drivers of genetic diversity in West African *Cochlospermum* spp. Finally, the information gathered and reported in this paper supports the socio-economic values of these two *Cochlospermum* species and provides the basis for further investigations in line with sustainable use and management.

Conclusion

C. tinctorium and *C. planchonii* are multipurpose plants with many benefits for local populations. The present review provides information available on botany, reproduction and pollination, traditional uses, phytochemistry and pharmacological relevance of *C. tinctorium* and *C. planchonii*. They are among the major food additives in semi-arid West Africa that could help alleviate poverty and have a great potential for food, fodder, art and mostly for medicine issues. Indeed, both *Cochlospermum* plants have a long history of usage in treatments of a wide range of ailments throughout West African countries. By this, information gathered have shown diverse traditional uses of *C. tinctorium* and *C. planchonii* that sometimes are common to some countries such as malaria, jaundice, liver ailments and yellow fever or specific to one country as flatulence, measles, oedema and orchites. Reports on the various biological activities of *C. tinctorium* and *C. planchonii* of which antimicrobial, antimalarial, anti-inflammatory, and hepatoprotective activities reveal several chemical compounds that clearly show their strong therapeutic potential. However, knowledge on their reproductive biology, the current conservation status, the genetic and environmental factors affecting locally preferred traits as well as intra-specific variations remain incompletely known. Further studies are required to investigate traditional uses, pollinators and best propagation mode, nature of bioactive compounds and pharmacological properties of others plant parts in order to reduce pressure on rootstocks.

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Compliance with ethical standards

Conflict of interest The authors declare that they have no competing interests in this manuscript. The funders had no role in the design of the study; in the collection, analyses, or interpretation of data; in the writing of the manuscript, or in the decision to publish the results.

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