## Phytochemical analysis of Borassus flabellifer Linn. immature fruits

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## ABSTRACT

*Borassus flabellifer* Linn. commonly known as Palmyra palm belongs to the family *Arecaceae*. It is widely distributed in the tropical regions of Asia and African countries. It is a robust tree capable of living more than 100 years and is referred to as the tree of life with more than 800 uses including food, beverage, medicinal and timber. Due to special contemporary significance, the palm tree is decreed as the official tree of Tamilnadu in 1978 and it is being depicted in the state emblem. The trunk can grow to a maximum height of 40 meters and 12 leaves unfurl per year. The crown is capable of possessing up to 40 leaves and the longevity of the unfurled leaves was approximately 4 years. The trees are widely used to tap toddy and its unique fruits. Normally a female palm tree produces 5-8 inflorescences with a total of 100-150 fruits. Though, the ripen fruits are more useful in terms of nutritional as well as economic value, immature or unripened fruits were used for cattle feed and immature endosperms are used for their gelatinous mass. Based on the folklore use in the treatment of various ailments, an attempt has been made to qualitatively identify the major phytochemicals present in the immature palm fruits. The data obtained revealed the presence of flavonoids, steroids, glycosides, saponins and tannins in the delipidated and ethanolic extracted immature palm fruits. Thus, the presence of biologically active phytoingredients may account for the pharmacological properties of immature palm fruits.