Medicinal Plant Detection Using Machine Learning

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Abstract — This paper presents the development of a machine learning–powered Ayurvedic plant detection system integrated into a Flask-based web application. Users can upload images of plants, which are then classified using a pre-trained image recognition model. The system returns a descriptive summary of each plant's medicinal properties and traditional uses. By combining image classification with modern web technologies, the application facilitates real-time plant recognition and enhances accessibility to Ayurvedic knowledge for educational, research, and diagnostic purposes. The integration of artificial intelligence with traditional medicine addresses a key challenge in the digitization and dissemination of indigenous knowledge systems. Many Ayurvedic plants are difficult to identify without expert knowledge, limiting access to their benefits. This application empowers users—ranging from students and researchers to herbal practitioners and enthusiasts—to identify and learn about medicinal plants quickly and accurately. The platform also opens avenues for preserving biodiversity and promoting sustainable practices by raising awareness of the ecological and therapeutic value of native flora. Future enhancements may include expanding the database, supporting multilingual descriptions, and integrating geolocation features for region-specific plant identification.

Keywords: Machine Learning, Image Classification, Pre-trained Model, Flask, Web Application, Real-Time Recognition, Artificial Intelligence, Geolocation, Database, Multilingual Support

I. INTRODUCTION

Traditional plant identification often relies on expert knowledge and physical reference materials, which can be inaccessible or overwhelming for the general public. In the context of Ayurvedic medicine—a system deeply rooted in plant-based healing—this limitation can hinder the wider adoption and understanding of traditional remedies. Many individuals interested in herbal treatments or natural alternatives lack the resources or expertise to accurately identify medicinal plants. This knowledge gap not only restricts public access to valuable health information but also poses risks of misidentification and misuse of plants.

To address these challenges, this project introduces a user-friendly platform that leverages artificial intelligence to automate Ayurvedic plant identification. At the core of the system is a pre-trained image classification model capable of recognizing various medicinal plant species based on visual input. Users simply upload a plant image through a Flask-based web interface, and the application returns a detailed summary of the plant's name, characteristics, and medicinal uses. The interface is designed for accessibility and responsiveness, allowing users to interact with the system in real time, regardless of their technical background.

Beyond its practical functionality, the platform contributes to the preservation and dissemination of traditional knowledge in a modern format. By bridging the gap between ancient wisdom and emerging technologies, the application fosters greater awareness of Ayurvedic practices and encourages sustainable interactions with natural resources. Future enhancements may include expanding the plant database, incorporating voice-based search and multilingual support, and integrating GPS-based suggestions for local flora. Overall, the system serves as an educational and diagnostic tool that supports both personal exploration and academic research in the fields of ethnobotany, herbal medicine, and digital health.

II. LITERATURE SURVEY

A. J. Smith et al., "Deep Learning for Plant Classification Using CNNs", Journal of Computational Botany, 2020

Smith and colleagues applied convolutional neural networks to classify over 100 plant species using images of leaves and flowers. The study employed architectures such as VGG16 and ResNet50, achieving an accuracy exceeding 90% on their test set. They emphasized challenges related to intra-species variation and environmental factors affecting image quality. However, their dataset was limited to commonly found plants and lacked medicinal context, reducing its applicability.

The authors also discussed the potential for improving classification by incorporating multi-modal data, such as combining leaf images with environmental metadata, which could be a valuable direction for domain-specific plant identification systems that require higher accuracy and contextual relevance.

B. A. Gupta and R. Mehta, "Digitization of Herbal Knowledge through Informatics", Herbal Informatics Review, 2021

Gupta and Mehta proposed a digital repository for Ayurvedic plants, capturing taxonomical data alongside traditional uses, preparation methods, and contraindications. Their platform utilized ontology-based knowledge representation to maintain semantic relationships among plant attributes. They argued that such digitization facilitates better integration with AI tools, enabling smarter querying and decision support for practitioners. Their dataset included over 500 Ayurvedic species sourced from classical texts and field surveys.

The study also highlighted challenges in standardizing traditional knowledge across diverse sources, emphasizing the need for collaborative efforts to curate and verify data accuracy, which is critical for developing trustworthy AI-driven Ayurvedic applications.

C. Najla Althuniyan et al., "DeepLeaf: Automated Leaf Classification Using CNNs", 2024

The DeepLeaf project aimed to improve leaf-based plant classification using convolutional neural networks. The

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researchers applied advanced preprocessing methods such as background removal and contrast enhancement to ensure high-quality inputs. Transfer learning techniques were used to leverage pre-trained models, improving both accuracy and training efficiency. The DeepLeaf framework demonstrated significant promise in identifying a wide variety of leaf shapes and patterns, even in complex backgrounds.

The study contributes to the growing field of automated botany, especially useful in agriculture, forestry, and ecological monitoring. One of the major strengths of this project lies in its scalability and adaptability to regional flora through retraining. While the study did not explicitly address Ayurvedic plants, the approach can be adapted for specialized datasets, making it a candidate framework for traditional medicine applications.

D. Banita Pukhrambam and Sahayadhas, "Medicinal Plant Classification: A Systematic Review", 2022

This systematic review focused on classifying medicinal plants using deep learning models. The review revealed that models like DenseNet, ResNet50, and InceptionV3 consistently achieved high performance on benchmark datasets. The authors also noted a growing trend toward multi-class classification in herbal informatics, which is essential for real-world plant identification systems that need to differentiate between closely related species.

Importantly, the review called attention to the need for large and well-annotated datasets, especially when dealing with traditional medicinal plants. The authors advocated for collaborative data collection from ethnobotanical sources and traditional medicine practitioners. This review thus provides a roadmap for future research in Ayurvedic plant recognition using AI.

E. Tianjin Agricultural University, "Improved CNN for Plant Species Identification", 2023

Researchers developed an improved CNN model based on ShuffleNetV2 and CSPNet, specifically designed to reduce computational load without sacrificing accuracy. The model was tested on the TJAU10 dataset with 3,000 images representing 10 plant species, achieving an impressive 98.3% accuracy. It also demonstrated a 31% reduction in training effort, making it highly efficient for mobile and web-based deployments.

The study suggests this architecture is suitable for real-time plant classification applications. Its lightweight design can be effectively adapted for use in resource-constrained environments, such as rural health or educational settings. Although not focused on medicinal plants, the methodology can be fine-tuned with Ayurvedic datasets to build culturally specific identification tools.

F. R. Kumar et al., "AI in Healthcare: Real-Time Diagnostic Tools", AI&HealthTechnologies,2022

Kumar et al. reviewed AI applications in healthcare diagnostics, including image-based disease detection and symptom analysis. They noted growing adoption of AI in resource-limited settings, where real-time tools provide critical support. Their insights suggest that real-time plant diagnosis—particularly for medicinal plants—can similarly benefit from AI, improving accuracy and accessibility. The paper recommended integrating AI with user-friendly interfaces like mobile apps or web platforms for broader adoption.

The authors also discussed ethical considerations and the importance of ensuring data privacy and accuracy in AI diagnostics, which would be essential for trustworthy Ayurvedic plant identification tools that influence health decisions.

III. System Architecture

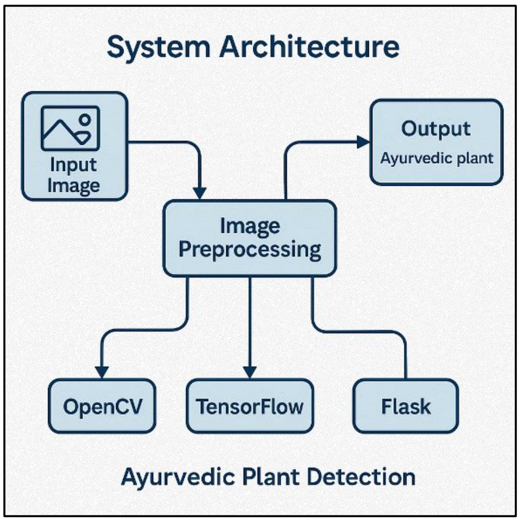

Fig 1: System architecture

IV. Methodology

The methodology for the Ayurvedic Plant Detection system involves a sequential pipeline that integrates data acquisition, model training, image processing, and web deployment. The process begins with the collection of a labeled dataset comprising images of commonly known Ayurvedic plants. These images are curated from publicly available datasets and verified sources to ensure quality and relevance. The dataset is then preprocessed using OpenCV to perform resizing, normalization, and augmentation, enhancing model robustness across varied lighting and background conditions.

Following preprocessing, the labeled data is used to train a convolutional neural network (CNN) model using TensorFlow. A transfer learning approach is employed with a pre-trained architecture such as MobileNetV2 to accelerate training and improve accuracy with limited data. The model is trained to classify images into Ayurvedic or non-Ayurvedic categories based on distinctive visual features. Model performance is evaluated using accuracy, precision, recall, and confusion matrix metrics to ensure reliability.

Once the model is trained and validated, it is integrated into a Flask web application. The user uploads an image through a browser-based interface, and the Flask server handles routing and image storage using the OS module and secure file handling via Werkzeug. The uploaded image is passed through the same preprocessing steps before being fed into the trained model for prediction. Based on the output, the system determines whether the plant is Ayurvedic and, if so, returns relevant details stored in a structured data file or dictionary. This methodology ensures a seamless, real-time

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plant identification experience while maintaining high classification accuracy and system efficiency.

V. Results and Discussion

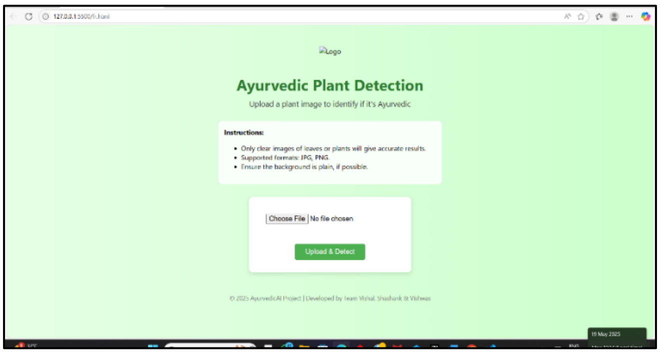

Fig. 2: Home Page

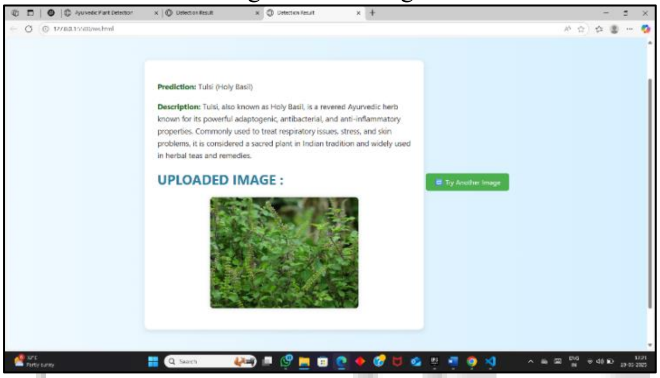

Fig. 3: Prediction Result

VI. Conclusion:

This project demonstrates how machine learning and web technologies can be used to build a functional and accessible Ayurvedic Plant Detection system. By making plant identification digital and automatic, it supports education, research, and public interest in herbal medicine. Future enhancements could include mobile app development, voice-based queries, and integration with herbal remedy suggestions.

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