

A review of the ethnobotanical value, phytochemistry, and pharmacology of *Physalis pubescens* L.

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Abstract

Physalis pubescens L. (*P. pubescens*) was widely used for the treatment of inflammation-related diseases, such as sore throat, aphonia, phlegm, heat, and cough in folk medicine. The fruits of *P. pubescens* are commonly consumed as fruit in many areas of the world. In the past few decades, the phytochemistry and pharmacology of *P. pubescens* were extensively investigated. About 170 chemical constituents were purified from *P. pubescens*. The extract and chemical constituents of *P. pubescens* demonstrate diverse pharmacological effects, including anti-oxidation, anti-inflammation, anticancer, antimicrobial activity, immunomodulation, diuretic effect, hypoglycemic, and hypolipidemic in vitro and in vivo. Herein, we systematically summarized the ethnomedicinal uses, botanical characterization, distribution, phytochemistry, and pharmacology of *P. pubescens*, and establish the correlation between chemical constituents and pharmacological effects.

Keywords *Physalis pubescens* L.; Phytochemistry; Withanolides; Pharmacology; Anti-Inflammation

Highlights

This paper reviewed botanical characterization, distribution, ethnomedicinal uses, phytochemistry, pharmacology and nutrition of *Physalis pubescens* L. and establish the correlation between chemical constituents, pharmacological effects, and ethnomedicinal uses of *P. pubescens*, which will provide the proofs for the new drug discovery.

Background

The calyxes and fruits of the plants from the genus *Physalis*, commonly known as ‘Suan-Jiang’ (酸浆) in Chinese, were recorded in ‘Shennong’s Classic of Materia Medica’ (Shen Nong Ben Cao Jing, 神农本草经), and have been adopted for the treatment of respiratory diseases in China for a long history [1]. The well-accepted species for ‘Suan-Jiang’ is *Physalis alkekengi* var. *franchetii*, which has been recorded in Chinese Pharmacopoeia. However, in some areas of China, *Physalis pubescens* L. (*P. pubescens*) has been used as a substitute for *P. alkekengi* var. *franchetii*, since their similar therapeutic effects against respiratory diseases. *P. pubescens* is an annual herb of the genus *Physalis* (Solanaceae) [2], and has been adopted to treat sore throat, aphonia, phlegm, heat, coughing, and urogenital system diseases in traditional Chinese medicines (TCM) and folk medicine [3]. In addition to its medicinal value, the fruits of *P. pubescens* are also consumed as edible fruit in many areas of the world since their sweet and sour taste, bright color, and high nutrition.

In recent years, the phytochemistry and pharmacology of *P. pubescens* were investigated extensively. About 170 chemical components including flavonoids, steroids, phenylpropanoids, terpenoids, alkaloids, and organic acids, were identified from the stems, leaves, calyxes, and fruits of *P. pubescens*. Its extract and ingredients exerted diverse bioactivities such as anti-oxidation, anti-inflammation, anticancer, antimicrobial, immunomodulation, diuretic, hypoglycemic, and hypolipidemic [4-9]. A review written in Chinese has summarized 125 ingredients extracted and purified from *P. pubescens* before 2017 and briefly described their biological activities [10]. However, in the last five years, great progress has been made in the phytochemistry and pharmacology of *P. pubescens*. Thus, compared with the published review, our review updated chemical constituents recently discovered in *P. pubescens* and totally summarized 170 chemical constituents. Moreover, our review analyzed the relationship between the chemical composition and pharmacological effects in more detail, to correlate its ethnomedicinal uses with its modern phytochemistry and pharmacology. Since the fruits have been consumed in large quantities, the

nutritional content of *P. pubescens* has also been mentioned in our review.

Botanical characterization and distribution

P. pubescens is an annual herb with a pubescence-covered stem and usually has many densely hairy branches. The leaves are blade broadly ovate, 3 – 8 cm long, 2 – 6 cm broad, glabrescent or sparsely pubescent, base cordate, often oblique, margin usually unequal dentate, apex acute. Pedicel is 5 – 10 mm in length with densely pubescent. The calyxes are campanulate, densely pilose, lobes lanceolate, acutely pointed. The corollas are light yellow, with purple markings on throat, 6 – 10 mm in diameter. The seeds are nearly disc-shaped and about 2 mm in diameter. The fruits are globose, about 1.2 cm in diameter, yellow or purplish which is edible as fruit. The flowering period lasts from May to November. A picture of *P. pubescens* is shown in Figure 1. In China, *P. pubescens* was mainly distributed in Heilongjiang, Jilin, and Liaoning provinces.

Ethnomedicinal uses

There are more than 120 species of the genus *Physalis* (Solanaceae) in the world, and 5 species and 2 varieties in China, including *Physalis alkekengi* L., *Physalis alkekengi* L. var. *francheti* (Mast.) Makino, *Physalis pubescens* L., *Physalis minima* L., *Physalis angulata* L., *Physalis angulata* L. var. *villosa* Bonati, and *Physalis peruviana* L. (<http://www.iplant.cn/info/Physalis?t=z>). In ancient China, dry calyxes and fruits of *Physalis*, including *P. pubescens*, were usually used as TCM herb ‘Suan-Jiang’ (酸浆) [1, 3]. Presently, *P. pubescens* has been distinguished from other plants, and named as ‘Mao-Suan-Jiang’ (毛酸浆). Suan-Jiang was first recorded as a medium-grade herb with the effects of removing heat and clearing the throat in ‘Shennong’s Classic of Materia Medica’ (神农本草经) arisen in the period of the warring states, the Qin and Han Dynasties (B. C. 475–A. D. 220). Compendium of Materia Medica (本草纲目, A. D. 1578) clearly recorded that



Figure 1 Pictures of *P. pubescens* (fruits and calyxes)

Suan-Jiang had the effects of removing dampness heat and dampness, reducing phlegm, clearing lungs, and treating cough and gangrene. Many well-known classics of TCM, exemplified by Xin Xiu Ben Cao (新修本草, A. D. 659), Zheng Lei Ben Cao (证类本草, A. D. 1097), A Supplement to Compendium of Materia Medica (本草纲目拾遗, A. D. 1765), have also recorded its medicinal uses. It has the functions of clearing away heat, detoxifying, reducing phlegm, and diuresis, thus was used for symptoms such as sore throat, aphonia, phlegm, heat, coughing, and urine negative embolism. In Chinese folks, *P. pubescens* is often used internally to treat phlegm, cough, sore throat, hoarse voice or loss of voice, and unpleasant urination, and externally to treat skin diseases such as scars and eczema. In Dan Xi Cuan Yao (丹溪纂要, A. D. 1484), Yi Xue Zheng Zhuan (医学正传, A. D. 1515), Gui Yang Min Jian Yao Cao (贵阳民间药草, A. D. 1959), it has been recorded as Chinese folk medicines for the treatment of phlegm-heat cough, sore throat, dumb tone, and urination. Moreover, Suan-Jiang was also used as antipyretic and cardiotoxic medicine in Japan.

Phytochemistry

The research on chemical composition of *P. pubescens* could be traced back to the 1980s. Until now, 170 chemical components have been isolated from *P. pubescens*, including steroids, flavonoids, phenylpropanoids, terpenoids, *N*-containing compounds, organic acids, and miscellaneous constituents. Withanolides and flavonoids were reported to be characteristic and active chemical constituents.

Steroids

About 52 steroids were isolated and identified from the calyxes, fruits, and aerial of *P. pubescens*. The steroids isolated from this plant could be mainly divided into two types, withanolides and sterols. Compared to sterols, withanolides are the characteristic and predominant bioactive components in *P. pubescens*.

(1) Withanolides Withanolides are a group of naturally occurring C28 steroids based on an ergostane skeleton, in which C-26 and C-22, or C-26 and C-23, are oxidized to form a δ - or γ -lactone [11]. The first withanolide, withaferin A (2), was found in the *Withania somnifera* by Lavie in 1965 [12]. Based on the difference in the substituted groups of C-17 side chain, most withanolides can be divided into two types, those containing δ -lactone or δ -lactol (Type A), and those containing γ -lactone or γ -lactol (Type B) side chain (Figure 2). The number of natural Type B withanolides is far fewer than that of Type A. Most of withanolides isolated from *P. pubescens* belong to the Type-A group (1–39), except for compounds (40–41) belonging to the Types-B group (Table 1). Many withanolides isolated from *P. pubescens* existed in the

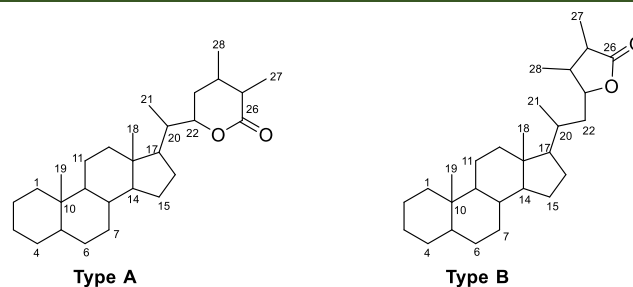
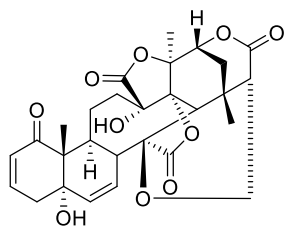


Figure 2 Structures of two important groups of withanolides (Types A and B)

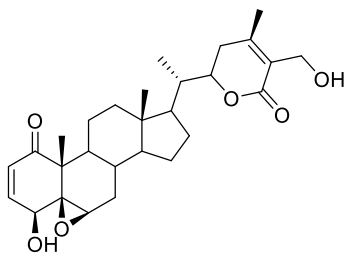
form of glycosides, e.g. physapubside A (13) as monoglycoside, and physapubside B (14) as diglycoside. Furthermore, the structures of withanolides from *P. pubescens* also contain some heteroatoms. For instance, (20*S*,22*R*,24*S*,25*S*,26*R*)-15 α -acetoxy-6 α -chloro-22,26:24,25-diepoxy-4 β ,5 β ,26-trihydroxyergost-2-en-1-one (20) has a molecule of chlorine (Cl), and (20*S*,22*R*,24*R*,25*S*)-15 α -acetoxy-22,26-epoxy-4 β ,6 α -[oxy(2 β -hydroxy-2,1-ethanediyl) thio]-5 β ,24,25,26-tetrahydroxyergost-2-en-1-one (37) contains sulfhydryl group. Most remarkably, pairs of interconvertible C-26 epimeric isomers were found from *P. pubescens*, such as 26*S*-physapubescin F (15a) and 26*R*-physapubescin F (15b), 26*S*-physapubside C (16a) and 26*R*-physapubside C (16b), and so on.

Among these withanolides, physapubescins, which count up to 0.033% of the hairy groundcherry, are considered as representative ingredients of *P. pubescens* [13]. Physapubescins are a group of withanolides which usually contain 24,25-epoxy or ring opening at 24,25-epoxy to form two hydroxyl groups. Since the complexity of their structures, the absolute configuration of physapubescins, such as physapubescin A (8) and physapubescin B (9), were identified using single-crystal X-ray diffraction analysis or ECD data analysis.

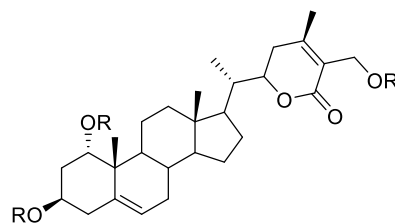
(2) Sterols At present, some sterols have been separated from the *P. pubescens*, exemplified by withapubside C (42), withapubside D (43), alkesterol A (44), alkesterol B (45), β -sitosterol (50), daucosterol (51), and stigmasterol (52) [14–16]. In addition, (22*E*,24*S*)-5 α ,8 α -epidioxy-24-methyl-cholesta-6,22-dien-3 β -ol (46) and (22*E*,24*S*)-5 α ,8 α -epidioxy-24-methyl-cholesta-6,9(11),22-trien-3 β -ol (47) containing peroxidic bond, as well as two glycosides 2 α ,3 β -dihydroxy-5 α -pregn-16-en-20-one 3-*O*- β -D-glucopyranosyl-(1 \rightarrow 4)- β -D-galactopyranoside (48) and (25*R*)-2 α -hydroxy-5 α -spirostan-3 β -yl *O*- β -D-glucopyranosyl-(1 \rightarrow 2)-*O*- β -D-glucopyranosyl-(1 \rightarrow 4)- β -D-galactopyranoside (49) have been isolated from this plant. All structures of steroids from *P. pubescens* were summarized in Figure 3.



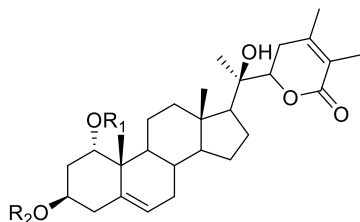
1



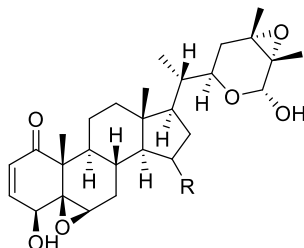
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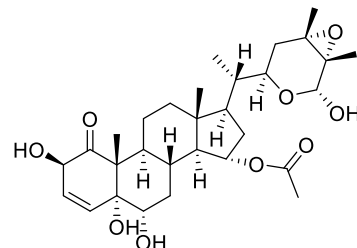
3 R=H
4 R=Ac



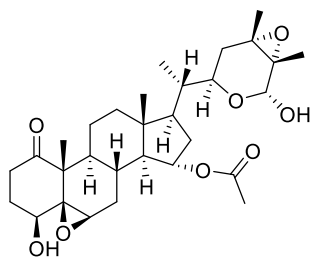
5 R₁=Ac, R₂=H
6 R₁=R₂=H
7 R₁=R₂=Ac



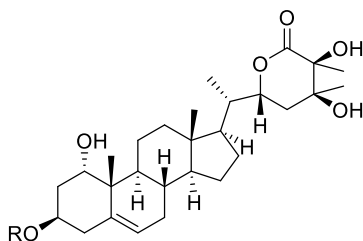
8 R=α-OAc
9 R=β-OAc



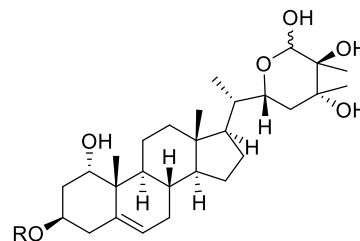
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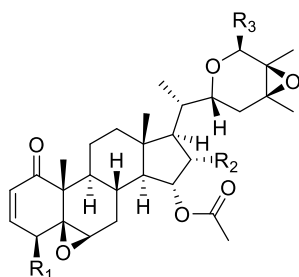
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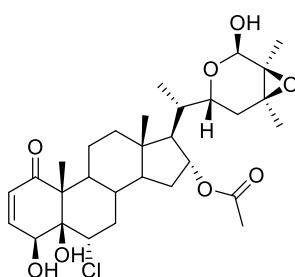
12 R=H
13 R=β-D-Glc
14 R=β-D-Glc-(1-6)-β-D-Glc



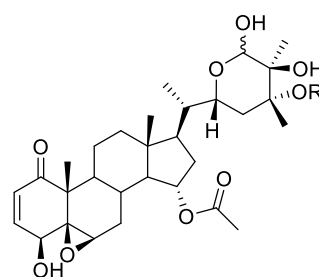
15a R=H (26α-OH)
15b R=H (26β-OH)
16a R=β-D-Glc-(1-6)-β-D-Glc (26α-OH)
16b R=β-D-Glc-(1-6)-β-D-Glc (26β-OH)



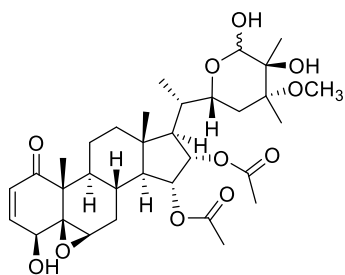
17 R₁=H, R₂=H, R₃=OH
18 R₁=OH, R₂=OAc, R₃=OH
19 R₁=OH, R₂=H, R₃=OCH₃



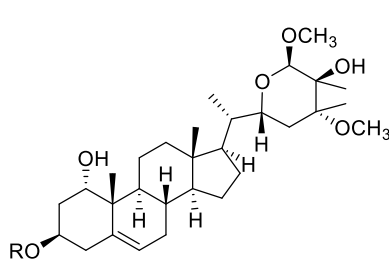
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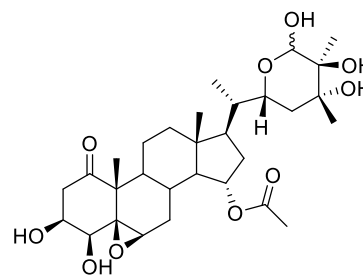
21a R=CH₃ (26α-OH)
21b R=CH₃ (26β-OH)
22a R=H (26α-OH)
22b R=H (26β-OH)



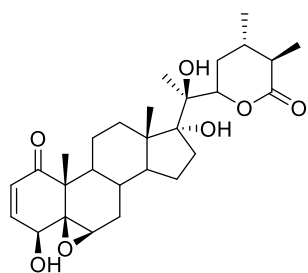
23a 26α-OH
23b 26β-OH



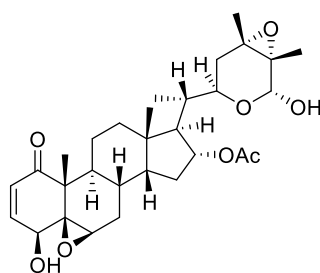
24 R=β-D-Glc-(1-6)-β-D-Glc
25 R=H



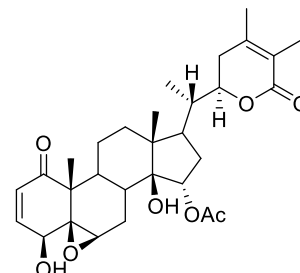
26a 26α-OH
26b 26β-OH



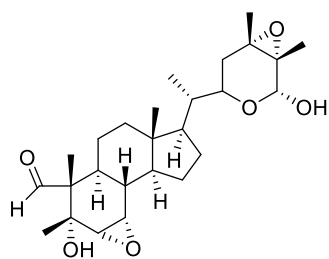
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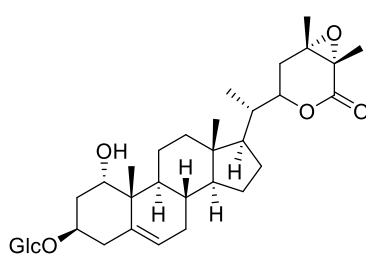
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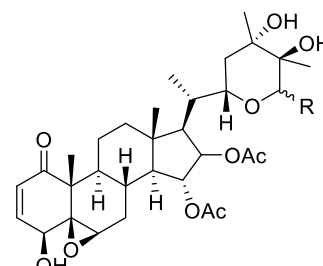
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30

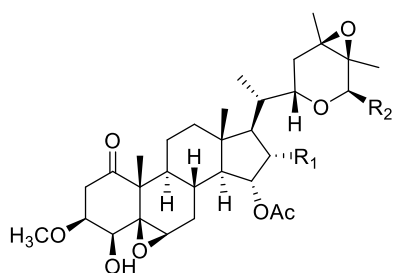


31



32a R= α -OH

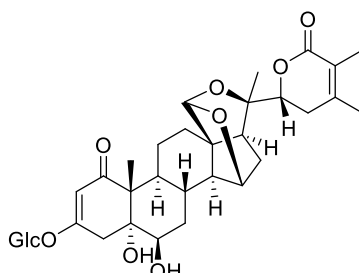
32b R= β -OH



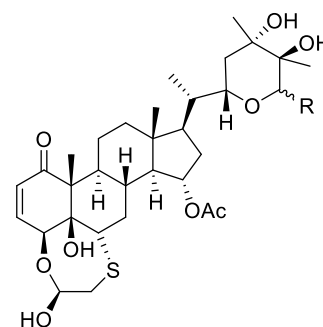
33 R₁=OAc, R₂=OH

34 R₁=OAc, R₂=OCH₃

35 R₁=H, R₂=OH

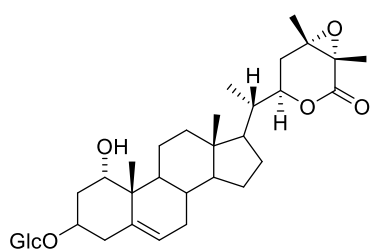


36

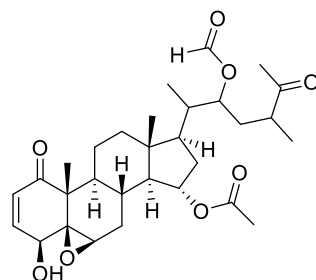


37a R= α -OH

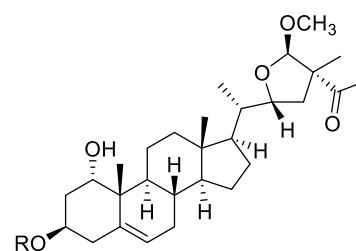
37b R= β -OH



38

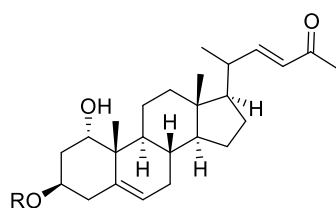


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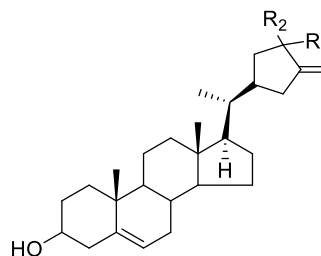
40 R=Gen

41 R=H



42 R=Glc

43 R=Gen



44 R₁= α -CH₃, R₂= β -OH

45 R₁= β -CH₃, R₂= α -OH

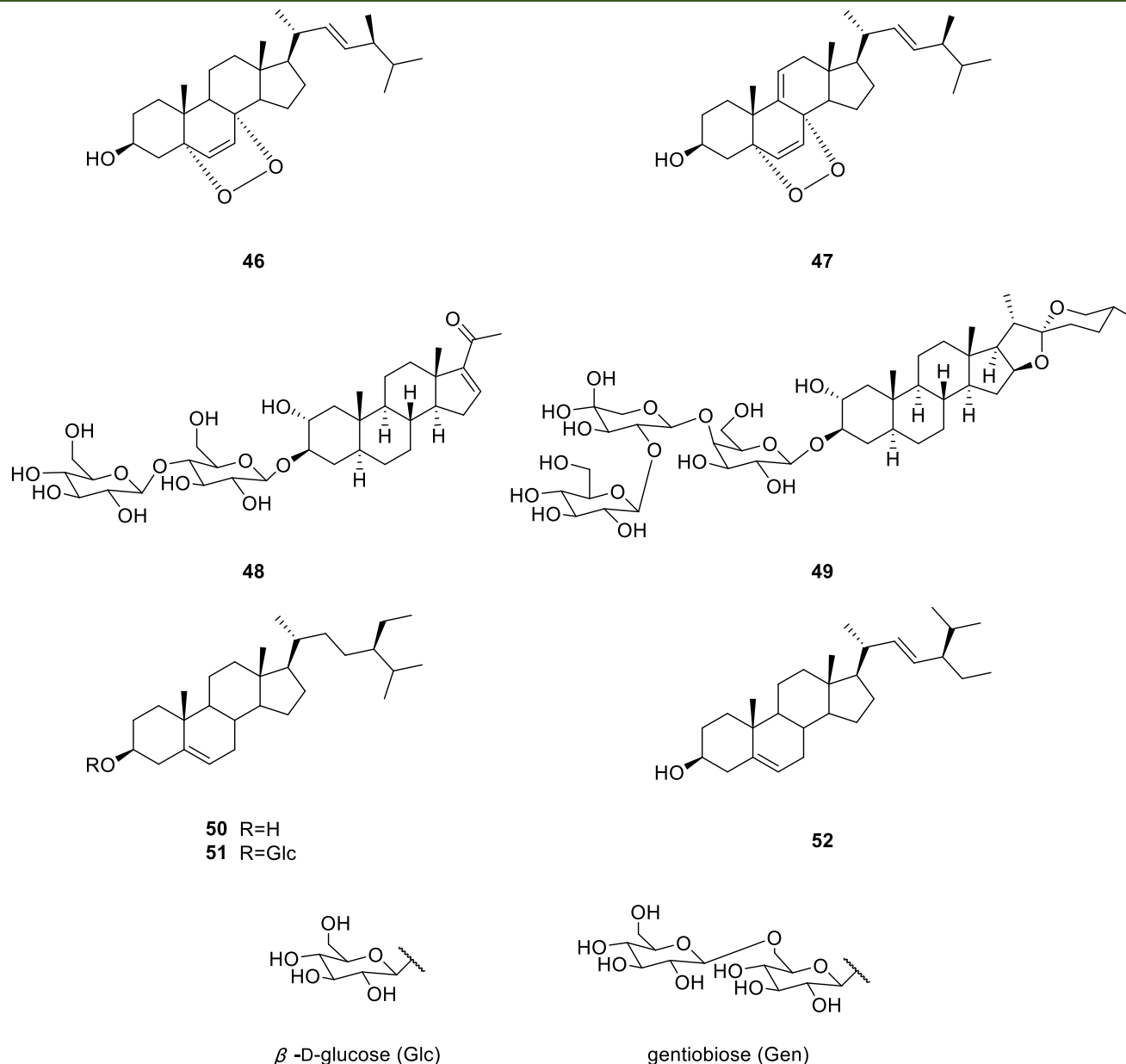


Figure 3 Steroids isolated from *P. pubescens*

Flavonoids

About 36 flavonoids have been separated from the calyxes and fruit of *P. pubescens* (Figure 4). These isolated flavonoids are quercetin (55) and its derivatives (56, 59-64, 85), luteolin (53) and its glycoside rutin (54), kaempferol glycosides (67-80) [1, 14, 17-21]. Moreover, one chalcone [4,4'-dihydroxy-2'-methoxychalcone (87)] and one isoflavone [genistein-7-O- β -D-glucoside-4'-O- α -L-rhamnose-(1 \rightarrow 2)- β -D-glucoside (88)] were obtained from the fruits and calyxes of this plant [14, 21]. In addition, three flavonol analogues, ombuine (57), 3'-methoxy ombuine (58), and oxyyanin A (83), were obtained from calyxes of *P. pubescens* [19, 22].

Phenylpropanoids

At present, about 31 phenylpropanoids, including simple phenylpropanoids, coumarins, and lignans, have been separated from *P. pubescens* (Figure 5). Among these phenylpropanoids, lignans have the activities of scavenging free radicals and anti-oxidation such as neoolivil (98), nortrachelogenin (99), medioresinol (100), and pinoresinol (101) [1, 17]. Meanwhile, coumarins are also important members of phenylpropanoids from *P. pubescens*, such as imperatorin (102), xanthotoxin (103), bergapten (104), isopimpinellin (105), osthol (106), (-)-meranzin hydrate (107), and auraptanol (108) [20]. Furthermore, some phenylpropanoids are substituted by benzoethanol glycoside moiety, for instance, 1'-O- β -D-(3,4-dihydroxyphenyl)-4'-O-caffeoyl glucoside (118) and calceolarioside A (119).

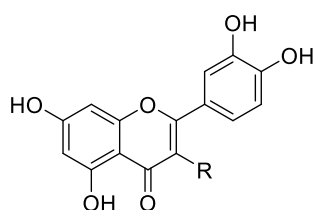
Terpenoids

About 16 terpenoids have been discovered, covering sesquiterpenes, triterpenes (Figure 6) [1, 14, 19–22, 24]. Although the amounts of terpenoids isolated from *P. pubescens* were limited, there are still some compounds with distinctive structures. For example, 5-*O*-(*E*-feruloyl) blumenol (122) was regarded as the product of esterification reaction between sesquiterpene and phenylpropanoid. Some terpenoids isolated from *P. pubescens* existed in the form of glycosides, such as oleuropein (120), pulsatilla saponin A (124), pulsatilla

saponin D (125), and 3,6,11-trimethyl-3-hydroxyl-1,6*E*,10-dodecatriene-8-*O*- β -D-glucoside (126). Moreover, lubimin (130) is a rare vetispirane-type sesquiterpenoid which has been isolated from *P. pubescens* in 2020 [18].

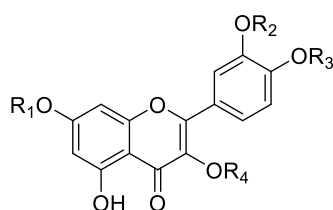
N-containing compounds

Three *N*-containing compounds have been separated from the roots of *P. pubescens*. (Figure 7), which are two alkaloids, uridine (137) and adenosine (138), and one amide *N*-*trans*-feruloglytyramine (136) [1, 17, 20].



53 R=H

54 R=OGlc-Glc (6→1)



55 R₁=R₂=R₃=R₄=H

56 R₁=R₄=CH₃, R₂=R₃=H

57 R₁=R₃=CH₃, R₂=R₄=H

58 R₁=R₂=R₃=CH₃, R₄=H

59 R₁=R₂=R₄=CH₃, R₃=H

60 R₁=R₂=R₃=H, R₄=Glc

61 R₁=R₂=R₃=H, R₄=Gal

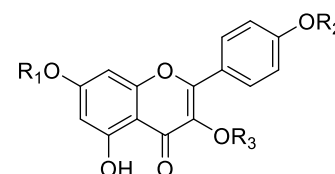
62 R₁=R₂=R₃=H, R₄=Ara

63 R₁=R₂=R₃=H, R₄=Rha

64 R₁=R₂=R₃=H, R₄=Glc-COO-CHCH-C₆H₅OH

65 R₁=R₃=R₄=CH₃, R₂=H

66 R₁=CH₃, R₂=R₃=R₄=H



67 R₁=R₂=R₃=H

68 R₁=R₃=H, R₂=CH₃

69 R₁=CH₃, R₂=R₃=H

70 R₁=R₃=CH₃, R₂=H

71 R₁=Rha, R₂=H, R₃=Glc

72 R₁=Rha, R₂=R₃=H

73 R₁=R₂=H, R₃=Rha

74 R₁=Glc, R₂=H, R₃=Glc-Glc (2→1)

75 R₁=R₂=H, R₃=Gal

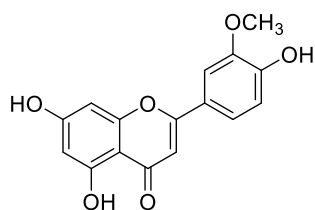
76 R₁=R₂=H, R₃=Glc

77 R₁=R₂=H, R₃=Rutinose

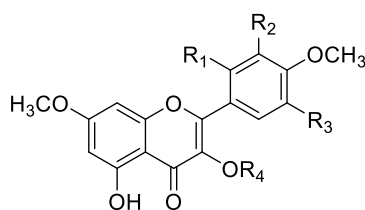
78 R₁=R₂=H, R₃=Sop

79 R₁=R₂=H, R₃=Rha-Glc(6→1)

80 R₁=Glc, R₂=H, R₃=Rha



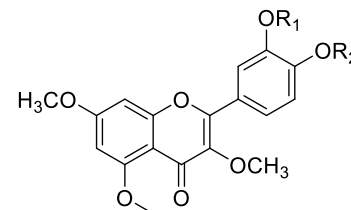
81



82 R₁=H, R₂=R₃=OH

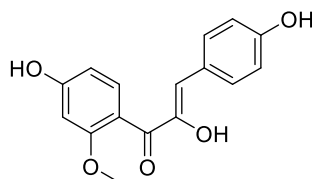
83 R₁=R₂=H, R₃=OH, R₄=CH₃

84 R₁=CH₃, R₂=OH, R₃=R₄=H

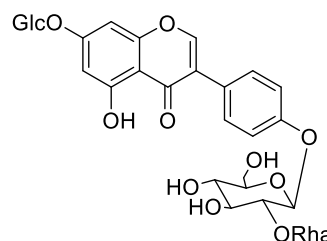


85 R₁=Glc, R₂=H

86 R₁=H, R₂=CH₃

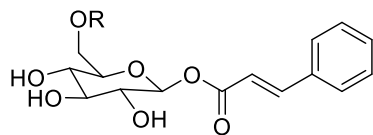


87

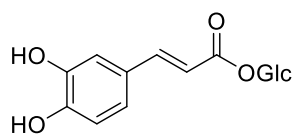


88

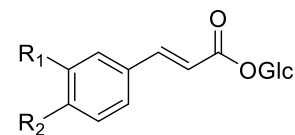
Figure 4 Flavonoids isolated from *P. pubescens*



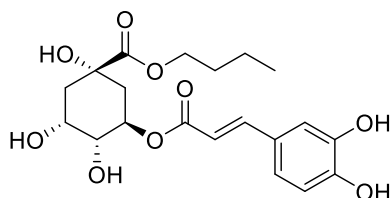
89 R=H
90 R=Glc



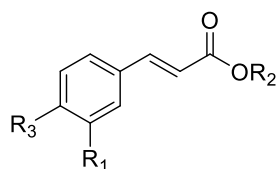
91



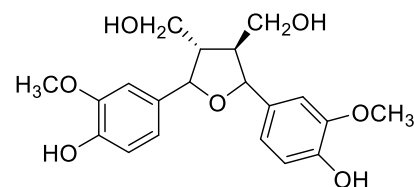
92 R₁=OH, R₂=OCH₃
93 R₁=H, R₂=OH



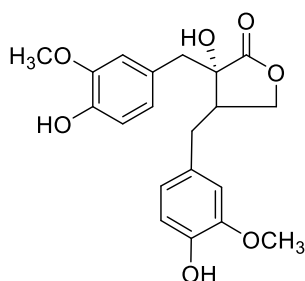
94



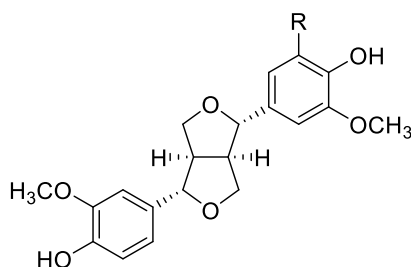
95 R₁=H, R₂=CH₂CH₃, R₃=OH
96 R₁=R₃=H, R₂=CH₃
97 R₁=R₃=OH, R₂=CH₂CH₃



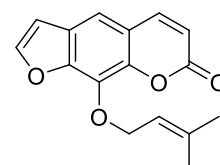
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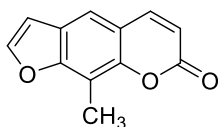
99



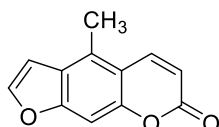
100 R=OCH₃
101 R=H



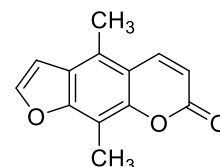
102



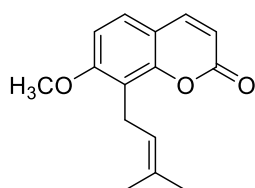
103



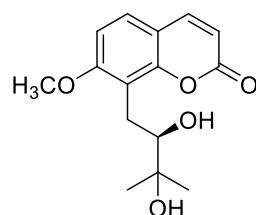
104



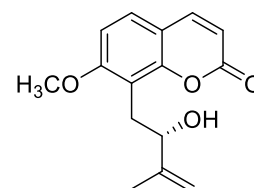
105



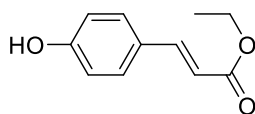
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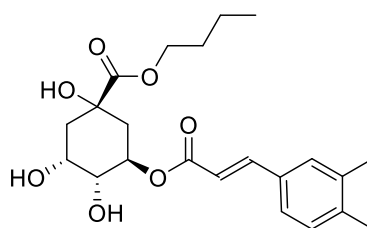
107



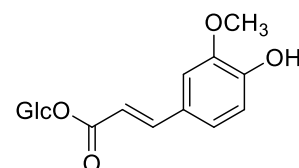
108



109



110



111

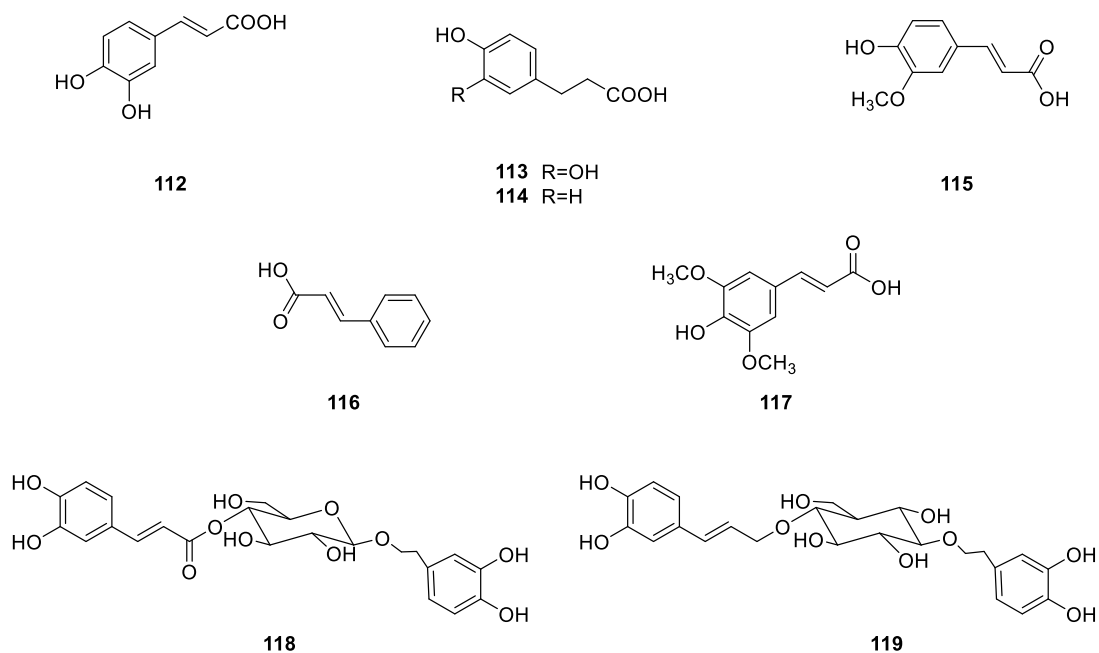


Figure 5 Phenylpropanoids isolated from *P. pubescens*

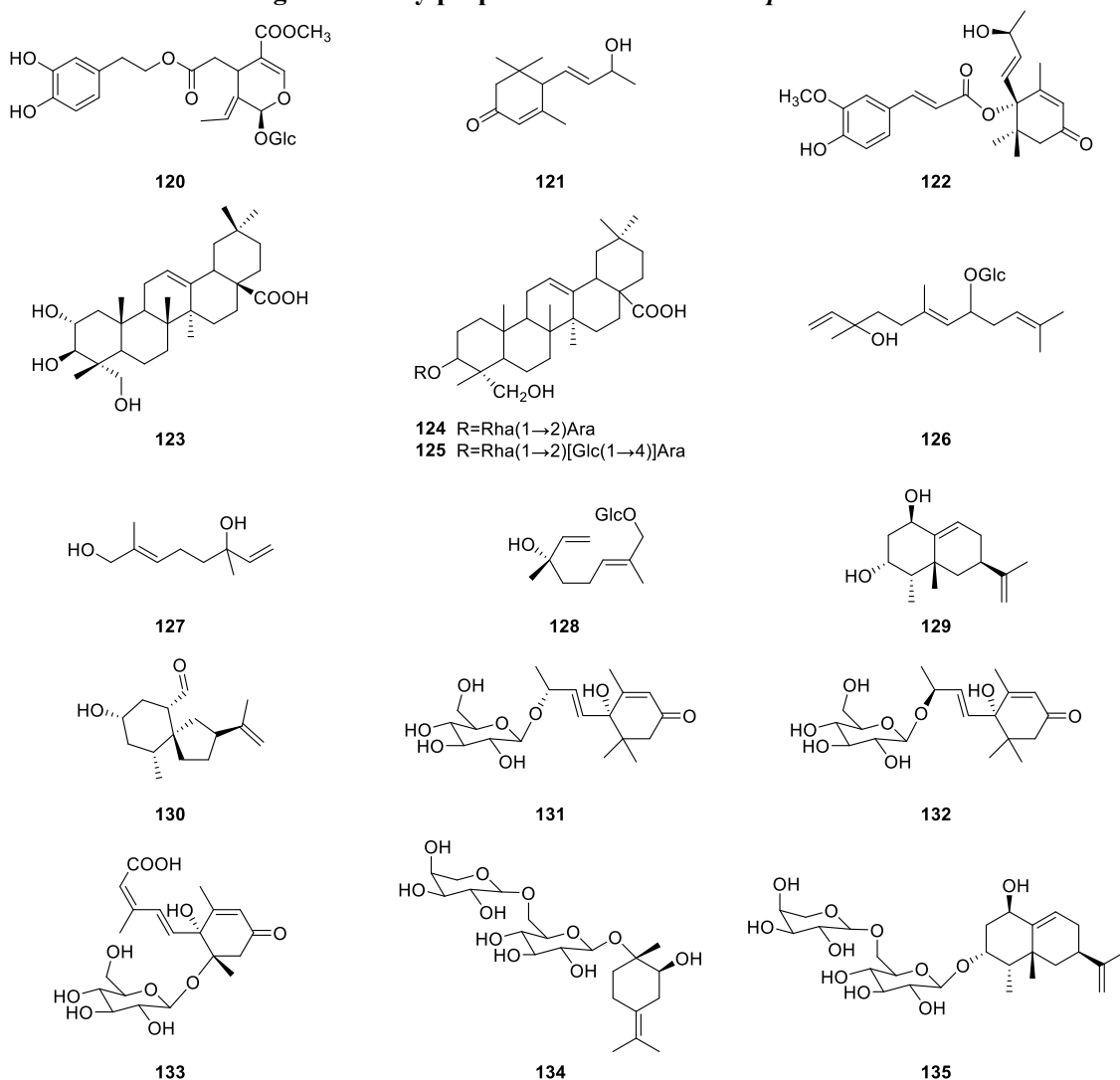


Figure 6 Terpenoids isolated from *P. pubescens*

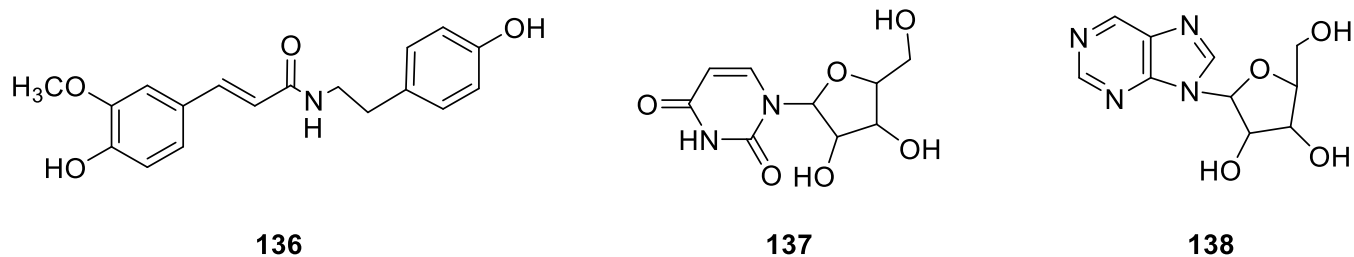


Figure 7 N-containing compounds isolated from *P. pubescens*

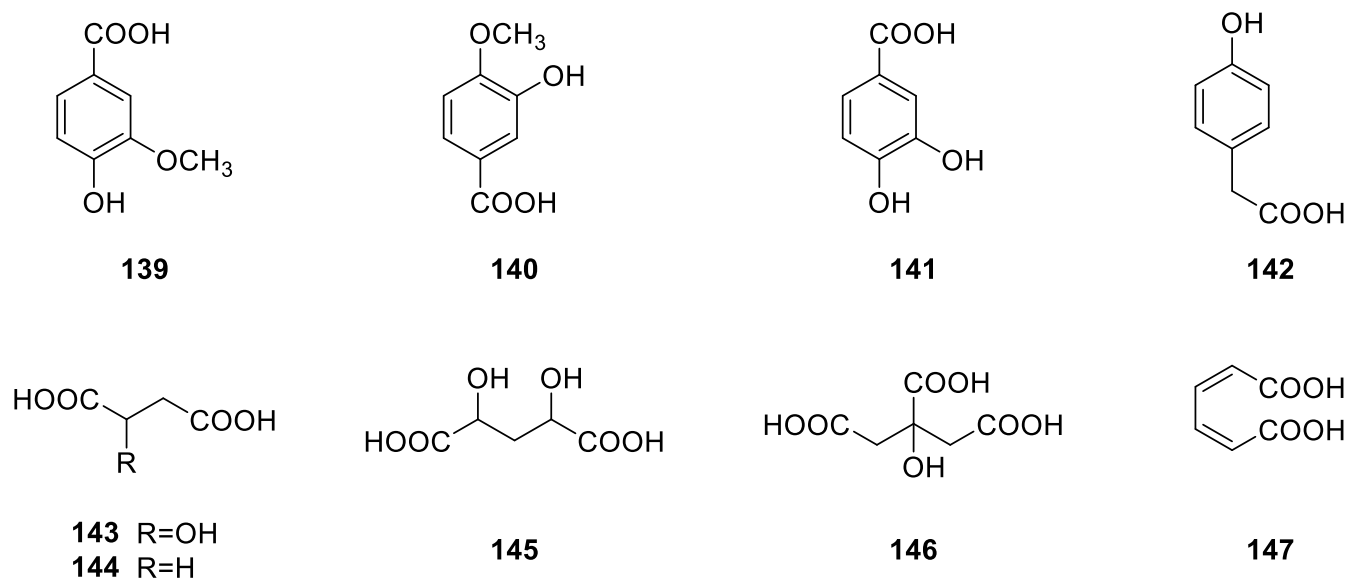


Figure 8 Organic acid isolated from *P. pubescens*

Organic acids

Natural organic acids from *P. pubescens* are mainly classified as aliphatic organic acids and aromatic organic acids (Figure 8). At present, four aromatic organic acids are isolated from *P. pubescens*, which are 4-hydroxy-3-methoxy benzoic acid (139), 3-hydroxy-4-methoxy benzoic acid (140), 3,4-dihydroxy benzoic acid (141), and 2-(4-hydroxyphenyl) acetic acid (142) [1, 14, 19, 20]. Aliphatic organic acids are dihydroxysuccinic acid (143), citric acid (144), malic acid (145), butanedioic acid (146) and *cis,cis*-muconic acid (147) [19].

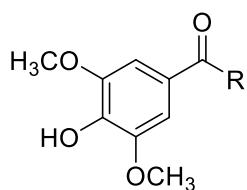
Miscellaneous constituents

Plenty of other ingredients have been isolated, such as aromatic compounds (148-158), quinones (159), heterocyclic compounds (161-166), and aliphatic derivatives (Figure 9) [1, 9, 14, 18-22, 25]. Moreover, polyphenols (0.766 g/L) exemplified by tannic acid and pectins were rich in *P. pubescens*. Catechin, salicylic, paracumaric, and chlorogenic acids are the most abundant phenolic compounds in the juice [26]. The content of oil in juice is very low (1.1 g/L), and most of it is unsaturated fatty acid, which makes *P. pubescens* a healthy fruit [27].

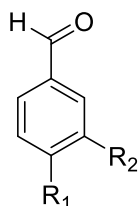
Nutrient content

The fruits of *P. pubescens* are consumed as high-quality fruit for their good taste and rich nutrition in many parts of the world. In Egypt, *P. pubescens* is used by local residents as a good source of vitamin supplements [28]. In Northeast China, it is also used to supplement nutrients, provide minerals, and regulate the body health. The contents of potassium, calcium, magnesium, zinc, copper, iron, phosphorus, and manganese in its juice are higher than the lime, lemon, and orange, suggesting that *P. pubescens* is an important source of these trace elements [29]. There is a high content of natural pigments with anti-oxidation and anti-cancer effects in *P. pubescens* [30].

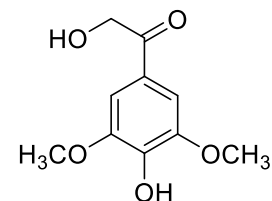
The fruits of *P. pubescens* contain more than 18 kinds of amino acids, among which the essential amino acid content is distributed as follows: leucine (3.95%), valine (2.75%), lysine (2.58%), threonine (2.54%), phenylalanine (2.23%), isoleucine (1.91%), histidine (1.52%), methionine (1.02%), and tryptophan (0.51%) [31]. Thus, it is a good potential source of essential amino acids such as isoleucine, valine, and tryptophan [(4.2, 3.9, and 3.9) g/100 g protein] [28].



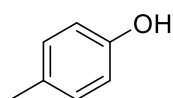
148 R=OGlc
149 R=CH₃



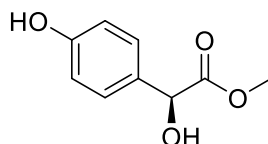
150 R₁=OCH₃, R₂=OH
151 R₁=OCH₃, R₂=OCH₂CH₂CH₃
152 R₁=OH, R₂=H



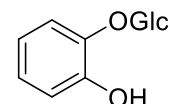
153



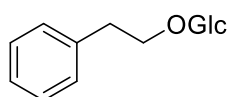
154



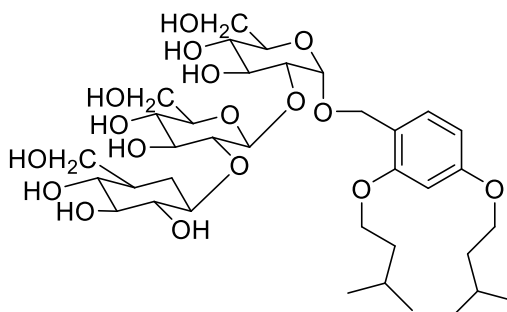
155



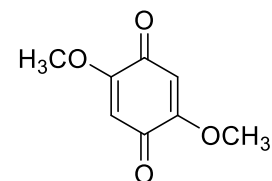
156



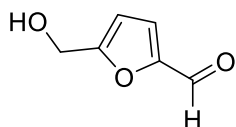
157



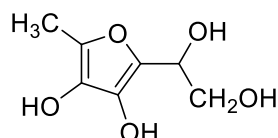
158



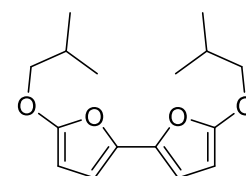
159



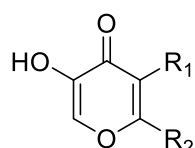
160



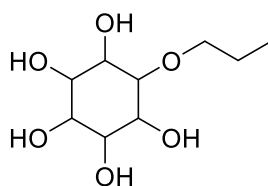
161



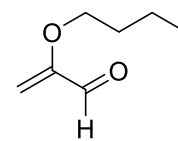
162



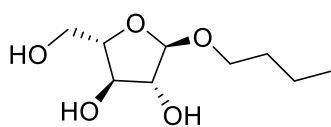
163 R₁=OH, R₂=H
164 R₁=OH, R₂=CH₂OH
165 R₁=H, R₂=CH₂OH
166 R₁=OH, R₂=CH₃



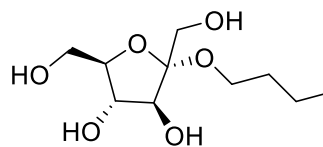
167



168



169



170

Figure 9 Miscellaneous constituents isolated from *P. pubescens*

Table 1 Chemical constituents isolated from the plant of *P. pubescens*

Classification	No	Chemical ingredient	Part of plant	Ref
Steroids	1	physalin P	fruits	[9]
	2	withaferin A	whole plant	[32]
	3	pubesenolide	whole plant	[32]
	4	pubesenolide triacetate	whole plant	[32]
	5	physalolactone B	whole plant	[32]
	6	deacetylphysalolactone B	whole plant	[32]
	7	physalolactone B monoacetate	whole plant	[32]
	8	physapubescin A	calyxes	[22]
	9	physapubescin B	calyxes and fruits	[7, 22, 33–36]
	10	physapubescin C	calyxes and fruits	[22, 33]
	11	physapubescin D	calyxes, fruits, and leaves	[20, 22, 33]
	12	physapubescin E	stems and leaves	[37]
	13	physapubside A	stems and leaves	[37]
	14	physapubside B	stems and leaves	[37]
	15a	26 <i>S</i> -physapubescin F	stems and leaves	[37]
	15b	26 <i>R</i> -physapubescin F	stems and leaves	[37]
	16a	26 <i>S</i> -physapubside C	stems and leaves	[37]
	16b	26 <i>R</i> -physapubside C	stems and leaves	[37]
	17	physapubescin H	stems and leaves	[37]
	18	physapubescin I	stems, leaves, and fruits	[37, 38]
	19	(20 <i>S</i> ,22 <i>R</i> ,24 <i>S</i> ,25 <i>S</i> ,26 <i>R</i>)-15 <i>α</i> -acetoxy-5,6 <i>β</i> :22,26:24,25-triepoxy-26-methoxy-4 <i>β</i> -hydroxyergost-2-en-1-one	stems, leaves, and fruits	[37, 39]
	20	(20 <i>S</i> ,22 <i>R</i> ,24 <i>S</i> ,25 <i>S</i> ,26 <i>R</i>)-15 <i>α</i> -acetoxy-6 <i>α</i> -chloro-22, 26:24, 25-diepoxy-4 <i>β</i> ,5 <i>β</i> ,26-trihydroxyergost-2-en-1-one	fruits	[39]
	21a	(20 <i>S</i> ,22 <i>R</i> ,24 <i>S</i> ,25 <i>S</i> ,26 <i>S</i>)-15 <i>α</i> -acetoxy-5,6 <i>β</i> :22,26:diep-oxy-24-methoxy-4 <i>β</i> ,25,26-trihydroxy-ergost-2-en-1-one	fruits	[39]
	21b	(20 <i>S</i> ,22 <i>R</i> ,24 <i>S</i> ,25 <i>S</i> ,26 <i>R</i>)-15 <i>α</i> -acetoxy-5,6 <i>β</i> :22,26:diep-oxy-24-methoxy-4 <i>β</i> ,25,26-trihydroxyergost-2-en-1-one	fruits	[39]
	22a	(20 <i>S</i> ,22 <i>R</i> ,24 <i>R</i> ,25 <i>S</i> ,26 <i>S</i>)-15 <i>α</i> -acetoxy-5,6 <i>β</i> :22,26:diep-oxy-4 <i>β</i> ,24,25,26-tetrahydroxyergost-2-en-1-one	fruits	[39]
	22b	(20 <i>S</i> ,22 <i>R</i> ,24 <i>R</i> ,25 <i>S</i> ,26 <i>R</i>)-15 <i>α</i> -acetoxy-5,6 <i>β</i> :22,26:diep-oxy-4 <i>β</i> ,24,25,26-tetrahydroxyergost-2-en-1-one	fruits	[39]
23a	(20 <i>S</i> ,22 <i>R</i> ,24 <i>S</i> ,25 <i>S</i> ,26 <i>Φ</i>)-15 <i>α</i> ,16 <i>α</i> -diacetoxy-5,6 <i>β</i> :22,26:diepoxy-24-methoxy-4 <i>β</i> ,25,26 <i>α</i> -trihydroxyergost-2-en-1-one	leaves	[15]	
23b	(20 <i>S</i> ,22 <i>R</i> ,24 <i>S</i> ,25 <i>S</i> ,26 <i>Φ</i>)-15 <i>α</i> ,16 <i>α</i> -diacetoxy-5,6 <i>β</i> :22,26:diepoxy-24-methoxy-4 <i>β</i> ,25,26 <i>β</i> -trihydroxyerg-ost-2-en-1-one	leaves	[15]	
24	(20 <i>S</i> ,22 <i>R</i> ,24 <i>R</i> ,25 <i>S</i> ,26 <i>R</i>)-22,26-epoxy-24,26-dimethoxy-1 <i>α</i> ,3 <i>β</i> ,25-trihydroxyergost-5-ene 3- <i>O</i> -[<i>β</i> -D-glucopyranosyl (1→6)]- <i>β</i> -D-glucopyranoside	stems and leaves	[37]	
25	(20 <i>S</i> ,22 <i>R</i> ,24 <i>R</i> ,25 <i>S</i> ,26 <i>R</i>)-22,26-epoxy-24,26-dimethoxy-1 <i>α</i> ,3 <i>β</i> ,25-trihydroxyergost-5-ene	stems and leaves	[37]	
26a	(20 <i>S</i> ,22 <i>R</i> ,24 <i>R</i> ,25 <i>S</i> ,26 <i>S</i>)-15 <i>α</i> -acetoxy-5,6 <i>β</i> :22,26-	fruits	[39]	

	diepoxy-3 β ,4 β ,24,25,26-pentahydroxyergost-1-one			
26b	(20S,22R,24R,25S,26R)-15 α -acetoxy-5,6 β :22,26-diepoxy-3 β ,4 β ,24,25,26-pentahydroxyergost-1-one	fruits	[39]	
27	philadelphicalactones A	calyxes	[14]	
28	virginols A ₁	calyxes	[14]	
29	physapubenolide	calyxes	[40]	
30	nic-2	calyxes	[41]	
31	nic-2 lactone	calyxes	[40]	
32	physapubescin K	fruits	[18]	
33	physapubescin L	fruits	[18]	
34	physapubescin M	fruits	[18]	
35	peruvianolide E	fruits	[18]	
36	withapubeside B	Stems	[42]	
37	physapubescin J	fruits	[18]	
38	pubescenin	calyxes	[40]	
39	physapubescin G	stems and leaves	[37]	
40	withapubeside A	stems	[42]	
41	withapubesin	stems	[42]	
42	withapubeside C	stems	[42]	
43	withapubeside D	stems	[42]	
44	alkesterol A	fruits	[43]	
45	alkesterol B	calyxes and fruits	[15, 43]	
46	(22E,24S)-5 α ,8 α -epidioxy-24-methyl-cholesta-6,22-dien-3 β -ol	leaves	[15]	
47	(22E,24S)-5 α ,8 α -epidioxy-24-methyl-cholesta-6,9(11),22-trien-3 β -ol	leaves	[15]	
48	2 α ,3 β -dihydroxy-5 α -pregn-16-en-20-one 3-O- β -D-glucopyranosyl-(1 \rightarrow 4)- β -D-galactopyranoside	fruits	[25]	
49	(25R)-2 α -hydroxy-5 α -spirostan-3 β -yl O- β -D-glucopyranosyl-(1 \rightarrow 2)-O- β -D-glucopyranosyl-(1 \rightarrow 4)- β -D-galactopyranoside	fruits	[25]	
50	β -sitosterol	calyxes and fruits	[1, 14, 43, 44]	
51	daucosterol	calyxes and fruits	[1, 14]	
52	stigmasterol	fruits	[16]	
Flavonoids	53	luteolin	calyxes	[19]
	54	rutin	calyxes	[14]
	55	quercetin	calyxes	[14, 19]
	56	3,7-dimethylquercetin	calyxes	[44]
	57	ombuine	calyxes and fruits	[18, 19]
	58	3'-methoxy ombuine	calyxes and fruits	[22]
	59	3,7,3'-trimethylquercetin	calyxes and fruits	[44]
	60	quercetin-3-O- β -D-glucopyranoside	calyxes and fruits	[1, 14]
	61	quercetin-3-O- β -D-galactoside	calyxes	[14]
	62	quercetin-3-O- β -D-arabinopyranoside	calyxes	[14]
	63	quercetin-3-O- α -L-rhamnoside	calyxes	[14]
	64	quercetin-3-O-(6'-O-trans-coumarinoyl)- β -D-glucopyranoside	fruits	[21]
	65	3,7,4'-trimethyl-myricetin	calyxes	[14]

	66	3,5,3',4'-tetrahydroxyl-7-methoxyflavone	calyxes	[14]
	67	kaempferol	calyxes and fruits	[19]
	68	kaempferide	calyxes	[44]
	69	7-methyl kaempferol	calyxes	[44]
	70	3,7-dimethyl kaempferol	calyxes	[44]
	71	kaempferol-3-glucose-7-rhamnoside	calyxes	[14]
	72	kaempferol-7-O- α -L-rhamnopyranoside	calyxes	[14]
	73	kaempferol-3-O- α -L-rhamnoside	calyxes	[14]
	74	kaempferol-7-O- β -D-glucose-3-O- β -D-glucosyl-(1 \rightarrow 2)- β -D-glucoside	calyxes	[14]
	75	kaempferol-3-O- β -D-galactoside	calyxes	[14]
	76	kaempferol-3-O- β -D-glucopyranoside	calyxes	[14]
	77	kaempferol-3-O- β -D-rutinoside	fruits	[21]
	78	kaempferol-3-O- β -D-sophoroside	calyxes	[14]
	79	kaempferol-3-O- α -L-rhamnosterin-(1 \rightarrow 6)- β -D-glucoside	calyxes	[14]
	80	kaempferol-3-O- β -D-glucoside-7-O- α -L-rhamnosterin	calyxes	[14]
	81	chrysoeriol	fruits	[1]
	82	3',5',5-trihydroxy-3,4',7-trimethoxyflavone	calyxes	[22]
	83	oxyyanin A	calyxes	[44]
	84	physalis pubescens flavones A	calyxes	[44]
	85	quercetin-3,5,7-trimethyl ether 3'-O- β -D-glucopyranoside	fruits	[21]
	86	3',5-dihydroxy-3,7,4'-trimethoxyflavone	calyxes	[14]
	87	4,4'-dihydroxy-2'-methoxychalcone	fruits	[21]
	88	genistein-7-O- β -D-glucoside-4'-O- α -L-rhamnose-(1 \rightarrow 2)- β -D-glucoside	calyxes	[14]
Phenylpropanoid	89	<i>trans</i> -cinnamoyl β -D-glucoside	fruits	[18]
	90	1-O- <i>trans</i> -cinnamoyl- β -D-Glucopyranosyl-(1 \rightarrow 6)- β -D-glucopyranoside	fruits	[20]
	91	1-O-caffeoyl- β -D-glucopyranoside	fruits	[1]
	92	1-O- <i>p</i> -ferulyl- β -D-glucopyranoside	fruits	[1]
	93	1- <i>p</i> -coumaroyl- β -D-glucopyranoside	fruits	[1]
	94	5-O-caffeoyl quinic acid butyl ester	fruits	[1]
	95	<i>E</i> -ethyl 3-(4-hydroxyphenyl) acrylate	calyxes and fruits	[21, 24]
	96	<i>E</i> -methyl cinnamate	calyxes	[24]
	97	ethyl caffeate	fruits	[21]
	98	neo-olivil	fruits	[1]
	99	nortrachelogenin	fruits	[1]
	100	medioresinol	fruits	[1]
	101	pinoresinol	fruits	[1]
102	imperatorin	fruits	[20]	
103	xanthotoxin	fruits	[20]	
104	bergapten	fruits	[20]	
105	isopimpinellin	fruits	[20]	
106	osthol	fruits	[20]	
107	(-)-meranzin hydrate	fruits	[20]	
108	auraptenol	fruits	[20]	
109	<i>trans-p</i> -coumaric acid ethyl ester	calyxes	[22]	
110	5-O-caffeoylquinic acid butyl ester	fruits	[1]	

	111	1-ferulylglucose	fruits	[18]
	112	caffeic acid	fruits	[1]
	113	3,4-dihydroxybenzenepropionic acid	fruits	[20]
	114	<i>p</i> -hydroxybenzene propanoic acid	fruits	[20]
	115	ferulic acid	fruits	[45]
	116	cinnamic acid	fruits	[45]
	117	sinapic acid	fruits	[45]
	118	1'- <i>O</i> - β -D-(3,4-dihydroxyphenyl)-4'- <i>O</i> -caffeoyl glucoside	fruits	[1]
	119	calceolarioside A	fruits	[1]
Terpenoids	120	oleuropein	fruits	[21]
	121	blumenol A	fruits	[1]
	122	5- <i>O</i> -(<i>E</i> -feruloyl) blumenol	calyxes	[22, 24]
	123	arjunolic acid	fruits	[1]
	124	pulsatilla saponin A	fruits	[1]
	125	pulsatilla saponin D	fruits	[1]
	126	3,6,11-trimethyl-3-hydroxyl-1,6 <i>E</i> ,10-dodecatriene-8- <i>O</i> - β -D-glucoside	calyxes	[14]
	127	8-hydroxylinalool	fruits	[18]
	128	betulalbuside A	fruits	[18]
	129	capsidiol	fruits	[18]
	130	lubimin	fruits	[18]
	131	(6 <i>S</i> ,9 <i>R</i>)-roseoside	fruits	[25]
	132	(6 <i>S</i> ,9 <i>S</i>)-roseoside	fruits	[25]
	133	(1' <i>S</i> ,6' <i>R</i>)-8'-hydroxyabscisic acid β -D-glucoside	fruits	[25]
	134	<i>p</i> -menth-4(8)-ene-12-diol 1- <i>O</i> - α -L-arabinopyranosyl-(1 \rightarrow 6)- β -D-glucopyranoside	fruits	[25]
	135	1 β ,3 α -dihydroxy-7 α -eremophila-9,11-dien-3- <i>O</i> -[α -L-arabinopyranosyl-(1 \rightarrow 6)]- β -D-glucopyranoside	fruits	[25]
N-containing compounds	136	<i>N</i> - <i>trans</i> -ferulogltyramine	fruits	[20]
	137	uridine	fruits	[1]
	138	adenosine	fruits	[1]
Organic acids	139	4-hydroxyl-3-methoxy benzoic acid	fruits and calyxes	[1, 44]
	140	3-hydroxyl-4-methoxy benzoic acid	calyxes	[14]
	141	3,4-dihydroxy benzoic acid	calyxes	[44]
	142	2-(4-hydroxyphenyl) acetic acid	fruits	[20]
	143	dihydroxysuccinic acid	calyxes	[45]
	144	citric acid	calyxes	[45]
	145	malic acid	calyxes	[45]
	146	butanedioic acid	calyxes	[45]
	147	<i>cis,cis</i> -muconic acid	calyxes	[44]
Miscellaneous constituents	148	syringic acid β -D-glucopyranosyl ester	fruits	[1]
	149	1-(4-hydroxy-3,5-dimethoxyphenyl) ethanone	fruits	[20]
	150	isovanillin	fruits	[24]
	151	4-methoxy-3-propoxybenzaldehyde	fruits	[9]
	152	<i>p</i> -hydroxybenzaldehyde	calyxes	[22, 24]

153	danielone	calyxes and fruits	[22, 24]
154	4-methyl phenol	calyxes	[22, 24]
155	(S)-methyl 2-hydroxy-2-(4-hydroxyphenyl) acetate	fruits	[20]
156	pyrocatechol 1-O-β-D-glucopyranoside	fruits	[20]
157	2-phenylethyl-O-β-D-glucopyranoside	fruits	[20]
158	β-D-glucose-(1-2)-β-D-glucose-(1-2-α-D-glucose-2,4-diisopentyl-oxybenoside	fruits	[9]
159	2,5-dimethoxybenzoquinone	fruits	[20]
160	5-hydroxymethylfurfural	fruits	[21]
161	physalis pubescens furansu	calyxes	[44]
162	5,5'-diisobutoxy-2,2'-bifuran	calyxes and fruits	[22, 24]
163	3,5-dihydroxy-pyran-4-one	calyxes	[44]
164	3,5-dihydroxy-2-hydroxymethyl-pyran-4-one	calyxes	[44]
165	5-hydroxy-2-hydroxymethyl-pyran-4-one	calyxes	[44]
166	5-hydroxymaltol	calyxes	[44]
167	5-O-propyl-myo-inositol	fruits	[9]
168	α-butoxy-acrolein	fruits	[9]
169	butyl-α-L-arabinofuranoside	fruits	[18]
170	butyl-α-D-fructofuranoside	fruits	[18]

Pharmacology

From the perspective of modern medicine, the diseases which were treated by *P. pubescens* in TCM, such as sore throat, aphonia, phlegm, heat, and coughing, were highly related to inflammation, redox imbalance, and microbial invasion [46]. The extracts and the purified compounds of *P. pubescens* showed anti-inflammation, anti-oxidant, and antibacterial activities. Moreover, they also exerted diverse pharmacological activities, such as anticancer, regulating immunological competence, and antihyperglycemic effects. We focused on the pharmacology effects related to the traditional uses of *P. pubescens*, particularly on the anti-inflammation, anti-oxidant, and antibacterial activities, and try to establish their correlations. Furthermore, pharmacological effects of the extracts and ingredients were also discussed, which was expected to provide a basis for further investigations (Figure 10).

Anti-inflammatory effect

80% ethanol extract of the fruits of *P. pubescens* attenuated acute pyelonephritis. Treatment with ethanol extract of fruits relieved mouse ear edema and rats cotton ball granuloma. Treatment with 0.625 and 1.25 mg/mL ethanol extract significantly decreased the concentration of tumor necrosis factor-α (TNF-α) and interleukin-6 (IL-6) via inhibiting the mRNA and protein levels of nuclear factor-κB (NF-κB) [47]. Moreover, treatment with 0.3 and 0.6 g/kg ethanol extract of the fruits of *P. pubescens* significantly attenuated the kidney inflammation caused by ligation and reduced the accumulation of neutrophils [9]. The extract of crude polysaccharides (POL) from *P.*

pubescens fruits ameliorated dextran sulfate sodium salt (DSS)-induced intestinal injury via attenuating the inflammation and oxidative stress in mice. Pretreatment with POL before DSS-stimulation suppressed the neutrophil infiltration and modulated the NF-κB/inducible nitric oxide synthase (iNOS)-cyclooxygenase-2 (COX-2) signal transduction pathway [4].

Steroids isolated from *P. pubescens* exert anti-inflammatory effects. Withaferin A (2) suppressed NF-κB and Akt and thus inhibiting the production of iNOS and NO in RAW 264.7 macrophages induced by lipopolysaccharide (LPS) [48]. Treatment with 2 protected kidneys from the inflammation induced by unilateral ureters obstruction (UUO) via inhibiting the expression of inflammatory factors [49]. Moreover, 2 suppressed the inflammatory disease state in several disease models, such as diabetes, obesity, neurodegenerative disorder, cystic fibrosis, and osteoarthritis [50]. Physapubescin A (8), physapubescin I (18), and physapubescin M (34) were all able to inhibit the production of NO in LPS-induced RAW 264.7 macrophages [18]. Withapubescin A (40), withapubescin B (36), withapubescin C (42), and withapubescin D (43) inhibited the production of NO induced by LPS via decreasing the level of iNOS [42].

The anti-inflammatory effects of flavonoids isolated from *P. pubescens* was also extensively studied, such as luteolin (53), quercetin (55), kaempferol (67), and chrysoeriol (81). 53 inhibited the LPS, nigericin, and adenosine triphosphate (ATP)-induced nod like receptor family pyrin domain-containing 3 (NLRP3) inflammasome activation in J774A.1 macrophages via interfering with ASC oligomerization. Treatment with 53 at doses from 5 to 40 μM suppressed the activation of caspase-1 and the

secretion of IL-16 derived by NLRP3 inflammasome in J774 A.1 macrophages [51]. Moreover, **53** exerts anti-inflammatory effects in many animal inflammation models. Treatment with 100 mg/kg **53** suppressed the symptom of ulcerative colitis induced by DSS by regulating the SHP-1 / STAT3 pathway in mice [52]. Similarly, **53** inhibited the inflammation in the ovalbumin (OVA)-stimulated allergic rhinitis rat model [53]. In the diabetic nephropathy mouse model, **53** exerted anti-inflammatory effects via regulating the STAT3 pathway [54]. Treatment with **55** was able to suppress atherosclerosis by inhibiting NLRP3 inflammasome activation [55]. **55** also dose-dependently suppressed oedema and inhibited acute inflammation induced by monosodium urate (MSU) in rats [56]. Moreover, **55** attenuated lung and liver injury by suppressing inflammation induced by LPS and nickel [57–59]. Treatment with **55** exerted an inhibitory effect on systemic inflammation stimulated by LPS in mice [60]. **67** suppressed the inflammation in osteoarthritis via regulating the NF- κ B pathway and inflammatory factors [61, 62]. Moreover, **67** showed a therapeutic effect in DSS-induced colitis and cisplatin-induced cardiac dysfunction and injury by suppressing inflammation [63, 64]. Pathogenic microbial invasion is the main cause of inflammation, **67** reduced the expression of TNF- α , IL-1 β , IL-8, and IL-18 in human gastric adenocarcinoma AGS cells [65]. The inhibition of **81** on NF- κ B, AP-1, and phosphorylation of phosphatidylinositol 3-kinases (PI3K)/Akt and mitogen-activated protein kinase (MAPK) was related to its potent anti-inflammatory effects [66, 67]. Collectively, flavonoids are important sources of anti-inflammatory activity in *P. pubescens*.

Phenylpropanoids from *P. pubescens*, including ethyl caffeate (**97**), pinoselin (**101**), imperatorin (**102**), xanthotoxin (**103**), and caffeic acid (**112**), showed anti-inflammatory effects. **97** inhibited the activation of NF- κ B and the production of iNOS, COX-2, and PGE in vitro or in mouse skin [68]. **101** could significantly reduce levels of IL-6 and COX-2 human intestinal Caco-2 cells [69]. **103** suppressed the production of NO, prostaglandin E2 (PGE2), TNF- α , and IL-6 by downregulating the NF- κ B, AP-1, and JAK/STAT3 signaling pathways in LPS-induced RAW 264.7 macrophages [70]. **102** could regulate MRGPRX2 and CamKII/ERK pathway, thus attenuating OVA-induced lung inflammation in mice [71]. **102** also exerted an anti-inflammatory effect in atherosclerosis by regulating the MAPKs signaling pathway [72] and suppressed the iNOS expression and NO production, which was related to its regulating effect of ERK-MAPK/AP1, JAK/STAT, and NF- κ B pathway [73–75]. Treatment with **102** attenuated the symptoms of ulcerative colitis by regulating the nuclear factor erythroid 2-related factor 2 (Nrf2) pathway [76]. **112** inhibited the secretion of TNF- α , IL-6, and IL-1 β via inhibiting NF- κ B and MAPKs

signaling pathways in the mammary gland [77]. Moreover, **112** suppressed DSS-induced murine ulcerative colitis through deactivating macrophages [78].

Two terpenoids, oleuropein (**120**) and arjunolic acid (**123**), exhibited anti-inflammation activities. **120** protected the kidney from the inflammation after acute injury because of its regulatory effect on TLR4-MyD88-NF- κ B/MAPK axis [79]. **120** could suppress the secretion of TNF- α , IL- β , and IL-6 and inflammation-related genes in mice that received LPS injection [80]. Treatment with **123** significantly suppressed the expressions of TNF- α , IL-1 β , and IL-6 in serum of complete Freund's adjuvant (CFA)-induced arthritic rats [81].

The anti-inflammatory effects of the calyx and fruit extracts of *P. pubescens* and its constituents have been sufficiently evaluated and verified using diverse models in vitro and in vivo. Steroids, flavonoids, terpenoids, and phenylpropanoids are responsible for their anti-inflammatory effects. The mechanism for alleviating inflammation have also been investigated, which was related to inhibition of inflammation-regulating pathways (e.g. NF- κ B, AP-1, MAPK, and STAT3). Thus, all of the above data supported the ethnomedical uses of *P. pubescens* for treating inflammation-related diseases.

Antioxidant effect

The antioxidant capability of hydroalcoholic extracts of the pulp and seeds of *P. pubescens* was evaluated using a 2,2-diphenyl-1-picrylhydrazyl (DPPH) scavenging capability assay, and high antioxidant activity of both the pulp (2210.46 μ M irgin/g) and seeds (2807.74 μ M irgin/g) was observed [82]. The Ferric reducing ability of plasma (FRAP), 2,2'-azino-bis (3-ethylbenzthiazoline-6-sulfonic acid) (ABTS), and superoxide radical scavenging activity of the yellow pigment extracted from *P. pubescens* were 6.11 ± 0.22 mmol/g, 2.80 ± 0.27 mmol/g, and 57281.5 ± 2749.5 U/g, respectively, which indicated that the yellow pigment enables to maintain redox balance [30].

Steroids of *P. pubescens* exhibited antioxidant activity. Withaferin A (**2**) was reported to be a SIRT3 activator that could suppress the oxidative stress stimulated by CCl₄ in mice [83]. The quinone reductase (QR) induction activities of physapubescin A (**8**), physapubescin B (**9**), and physapubescin C (**10**) were 2.41, 2.30, 1.86-fold of control at 10 μ M which suggested their antioxidative effect [33].

The antioxidant effects of flavonoids extracted from *P. pubescens* have been investigated extensively. As a Nrf2 activator, luteolin (**53**) alleviates oxidative stress stimulated by ochratoxin A and high blood sugar, thus protecting cells and tissues [84, 85]. Treatment with **53** at doses of 2.5-50 μ M protected cells against H₂O₂-induced oxidative stress in human umbilical vein endothelial cells through regulating MAPK/NF- κ B [86]. Quercetin (**55**) could also alleviate oxidative stress induced by D-glucose in human hepatocellular carcinomas HepG2 cells via

inducing the activity of antioxidant enzymes superoxide dismutase (SOD), catalase (CAT), glutathione peroxidase (GPx), glutathione reductase (GR), and cellular levels of glutathione (GSH) [87]. Kaempferol (**67**) suppressed the oxidative stress induced by different stimulants including Cu^{2+} , clozapine, and radiation in vitro [88–90]. **67** exhibited potential therapeutic effects in lung ischemia-reperfusion injury and skin fibrosis via keeping oxidative balance [91, 92]. Chrysoeriol (**81**) reversed retinal pigment epithelium (RPE) cells dysfunction which is involved in age-related macular degeneration via antioxidant effect, treatment with 2.5–10 μM . **81** significantly suppressed cell death and decreased reactive oxygen species (ROS) stimulated by H_2O_2 [93]. Quercetin (**55**), 3,7,3'-trimethylquercetin (**59**), and kaempferol (**67**) displayed DPPH free radical scavenging ability [19].

Arjunolic acid (**123**) protected uterine tissue against DNA damage, and counteracted ROS induced by As^{3+} in rats via activating endogenous enzymatic antioxidants [94]. Treatment with **123** effectively attenuated oxidative stress-induced I/R injury in rats subjected to middle cerebral artery occlusion [95]. The EC_{50} values of kaempferol-3-*O*- β -D-galactoside (**75**), bergapten (**104**), blumenol A (**121**), and caffeic acid (**112**) for scavenging DPPH radical were 0.51, 1.86, 1.47, and 1.75 $\mu\text{g}/\text{mL}$, which indicated that those compounds displayed significant antioxidant effect [17].

Antibacterial effect

Bacterial infestation is an important factor that induces and exacerbates inflammation. The extract of fruits inhibits the proliferation of the standard strain of *Escherichia coli* (ATCC 25922), *Escherichia coli* from hospital, the standard strain of *Staphylococcus aureus* (ATCC 25925), and the clinical isolates of *Staphylococcus aureus* with MICs of 31–125 mg/mL [6]. Besides, flavonoids such as quercetin (**55**), 3,7,3'-trimethylquercetin (**59**), and kaempferol (**67**) exhibited inhibitory effects on different bacteria [19]. Moreover, nortrachelogenin (**99**) inhibited the survival rate of *Escherichia coli* O157 by disorganizing the cytoplasmic membrane [96].

Regulation on immune response

The extract and ingredients of *P. pubescens* also exert regulating effect on the immunological system. The pulp, peel, and seeds extract significantly downregulated cellular immunity in mice through regulating T-lymphocytes. According to the delayed type hypersensitivity (DTH), carbon particle clearance test, and serum agglutination test, 40% ethanol extract had the strongest inhibitory effect against immune response. Besides, two flavonoids extracted from the fruits of *P. pubescens*, luteolin (**53**) and quercetin (**55**) increased the cell viability of natural killer NK-92 cells [97]. Ethyl caffeate (**97**) exerted the effect against arthritis by

suppressing the differentiation of CD4⁺ T cells into Th1 at a dose of 10 μM in vitro [98].

Inhibition of tumor cell proliferation

Flavonoids extracted from *P. pubescens* demonstrate inhibitory effects against cancer cells. Luteolin (**53**) inhibited the progression of carcinogenesis such as cell transformation, metastasis, invasion, and angiogenesis [99], induced apoptotic cancer cells death [100], and blocked the cell cycle arrest [101], thus suppressed the proliferation of various kinds of tumor cells [102]. Treatment with **55** at 50 μM and 75 μM suppressed the growth of human ovarian teratoma PA-1 cells via suppressing PI3k/Akt, Ras/Raf pathways, and epidermal growth factor receptor (EGFR) expression [103]. Similarly, **55** induced apoptosis or cell cycle arrest in human leukemia U937 cells, human breast cancer cells, human cells transformed by human papillomavirus type 16 oncoproteins, and nasopharyngeal carcinoma cells [104–107]. Moreover, the IC_{50} values of kaempferol (**67**) against different cancer cell lines is $19 \pm 0.33 \mu\text{M}$ for human ovarian cancer A2780 cells, $38 \pm 3.30 \mu\text{M}$ for human lung cancer H460 cells, $46 \pm 2.70 \mu\text{M}$ for human skin cancer A431 cells, $45 \pm 2.90 \mu\text{M}$ for human adenocarcinoma HT29 cells, $37 \pm 3.5 \mu\text{M}$ for human mammary epithelial MCF10A cells, $22 \pm 2.10 \mu\text{M}$ for human glioblastoma SJ-G2 cells, and $26 \pm 1.30 \mu\text{M}$ for mouse glioblastoma SMA cells, respectively [108]. The cancer cells growth was suppressed by **67** due to its cell cycle blocking and apoptosis inducing effects [109]. **67** also exerts its anticancer effect through regulating the cyclin-dependent kinase (CDK) 4/CDK6/cyclin D1 pathway in human gallbladder cancer cells [110]. Kaempferide (**68**) induced apoptosis of human lung cancer A549 cells via regulating TGF- β , NF- κB , and MAPK pathways [111]. Chrysoeriol (**81**) could significantly suppress the proliferation of human lung cancer A549 cells with an IC_{50} of 15 μM . The growth of tumor could be suppressed while treated with **81** in xenografted mice models [112]. **81** inhibited the growth of RPMI 8226 and KM3 cell lines via regulating PI3K pathway [113].

Physapubescin B (**9**) inhibited human hepatocellular carcinomas HepG2, human prostate cancer PC3, human ovarian cancer SKOV3, human breast cancer MDA-MB-231, human prostate epithelial RWPE-1, and human prostate cancer Du145 cells with IC_{50} values ranging from 1.8 to 16.0 μM by blocking cancer cells in G2-M phase [7], which was related to its inhibitory effect of STAT3 activation [35]. **9** also promoted the apoptosis and autophagy of cancer cells [114, 115]. Kidney-type glutaminase (KGA) is crucial for energy supply, thus overexpressed in different cancers. Physapubescin I (**20**) showed an inhibition effect on human pancreatic cancer SW1990 cells, human fibrosarcoma HT1080 cells, and human breast cancer MDA-MB-231 cells with IC_{50} 3.34 \pm

0.04 μ M, 5.04 \pm 0.05 μ M, and 2.06 \pm 0.03 μ M by inhibiting the activity of KGA [116]. Similarly, physapubescin A (**8**) was able to inhibit the growth of human non-small cell lung cancer HCC827 cells and human fibrosarcoma HT1080 cells by inhibiting the activity of KGA [117].

As a KGA inhibitor, **21** exhibited inhibitory effects on proliferation of human pancreatic cancer SW1990 and human non-small cell lung cancer HCC827 cancer cells by blocking glutamine metabolism [118]. **21**, **26**, and virginols A₁ (**28**) inhibited the growth of four kinds of human cancer cell lines (human renal carcinoma 786-O cells, human renal carcinoma A-498 cells, human clear renal carcinoma Caki-2 cells, and human renal carcinoma ACHN cells). **24** was identified to be the inhibitor of tumor necrosis factor-related apoptosis ligand (TRIL) belonging to the TNF superfamily [39].

Withanolides exemplified by withaferin A (**2**) and 2 α ,3 β -dihydroxy-5 α -pregn-16-en-20-one-3-O- β -D-glucopyranosyl-(1 \rightarrow 4)- β -D-galactopyranoside (**48**) showed inhibitory effect on proliferation of human cancer cells. **2** demonstrated inhibitory effects against cancer cell proliferation, which was verified in several types of cancer [119–121]. 1 β ,3 α -dihydroxy-7 α -eremophila-9,11-dien-3-O-[α -L-arabinopyranosyl-(1 \rightarrow 6)]- β -D-glucopyranoside (**135**) from the fruit of *P. pubescens*, inhibited the proliferation of human prostate cancer C4-2B cells and human melanoma A375 cells with IC₅₀ values of 12.8 and 28.3 μ M [25].

Moreover, ethyl caffeate (**97**) inhibited the proliferation, migration and invasion of human ovarian cancer SKOV-3 cells through regulating Akt, ERK, and MAPK [122]. Similarly, nortrachelogenin (**99**) inhibited proliferation of prostate cancer cells through suppressing the membrane localization and activation of growth factor receptors [123]. Pinoresinol (**101**) showed cytotoxic activity and killed human breast cancer MDA-MB-231 cells and human breast cancer MCF-7 cells, which suggested its potential antitumor activity [124]. **101** suppressed the migration, and invasion of human hepatocellular carcinomas HepG2 cells by regulating E-cadherin, vascular cell adhesion molecule-1, and MMP-9 expression [125] and has an inhibitory effect on human ovarian cancer SKOV-3 cells with an IC₅₀ of 20 μ M [126]. Treatment with 50 μ M arjunolic acid (**123**) exerted inhibitory activity against the proliferation of human breast cancer MCF-7 and human cervical cancer Hela cells through regulating ROS, NF- κ B, and TNF- α [127]. Pulsatilla saponin A (**124**) caused G2 arrest, differentiation, and apoptosis of myeloma cells by regulating MEK/ERK signaling pathway [128]. Treatment with 20, 50, and 100 nmol/L pulsatilla saponin D (**125**) inhibited the proliferation of human cervical cancer Hela cells with inhibition rates of 47.16%, 17.90%, and 25.28% via regulating the Wnt signaling pathway [129].

Hypoglycemic and hypolipidemic effects

In diabetic rats induced by alloxan monohydrate, administration with the juice of *P. pubescens* exerts antidiabetic and hypolipidemic effects, which are mainly attributed to its antioxidant potential, regulating β cells of the pancreas and insulin production [8]. In streptozocin (STZ)-induced rats, oral administration of 5 mL/kg *P. pubescens* juice significantly decreased the blood glucose and protected against diabetes-induced neurodegenerative complications via inhibiting oxidative stress and inflammation [130]. The polysaccharide was able to inhibit the activity of α -glucosidase in vitro. Meanwhile, it improved the oral glucose tolerance in the diabetic mouse model induced by STZ [131].

Treating with kaempferol (**67**) enhanced the process of glucose metabolism to protect body from damage from diabetes [132]. **67** promoted β cells survival, insulin secretory function, ameliorates, and insulin sensitivity in type 2 diabetes rats [133, 134]. Administration of **67** at 10 mg/kg attenuated obesity, hyperlipidemia, hyperglycemia, and insulin resistance via activating PPAR γ /LXR α /ABCA1 and PPAR γ /PI3K/AKT pathways in high-fat-diet rats [135]. In STZ-induced diabetes rats, **67** regulated a series of carbohydrate metabolic enzymes to maintain the blood sugar [136].

Withaferin A (**2**) significantly improved the insulin sensitivity in hepatic metabolic via inhibiting ROS production and inflammation [137, 138]. Moreover, **2** effectively combated STZ-induced type 1 diabetes mellitus (T1DM) through modulating of Nrf2/NF- κ B pathway and holding substantial potential for therapy of T1DM [139].

Imperatorin (**102**) significantly reduced obesity, hypertension, dyslipidemia, and increased insulin sensitivity in fat diet-fed rats. Oleuropein (**120**) ameliorated diabetes and relieved diabetes complications since its capability of modulating insulin secretion, repairing islet morphology, activating hepatic AMP-activated protein kinase signaling, and improving glucose tolerance and insulin resistance [140]. Treatment with **120** efficiently reduced blood glucose, insulin, and hepatic glycogen levels in gestational diabetes mellitus mice via regulating oxidant and inflammation [141]. Arjunolic acid (**123**) prevented the over-production of ROS, RNS, advanced glycation end products (AGEs), and decrease oxidative damage induced by hyperglycemia in type 1 diabetes [142]. Caffeic acid (**112**) inhibited AGEs formation in vitro, and decreased the inflammatory and oxidative damage in HUVECs exposed to AGEs. **112** markedly decreased lipid accumulation in the liver and the levels of ER stress markers, improved glucose intolerance and insulin sensitivity [143].

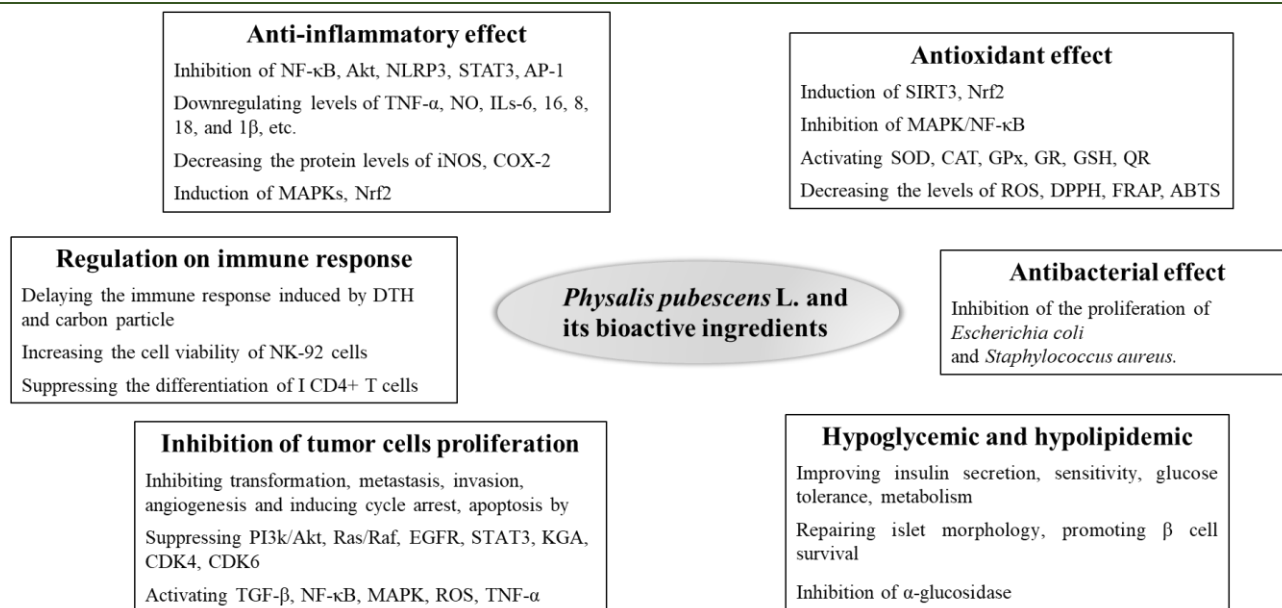


Figure 10 Mechanism of pharmacological activities of *P. pubescens*

Diuretic effect

Treatment with 80% ethanol extract of *P. pubescens* significantly enhanced the urination function of the kidney in rats. The diuretic effect of 0.15, 0.3, and 0.6 g/kg ethanol extract of *P. pubescens* was equivalent to hydrochlorothiazide in the 1-2 h measurement period and disappeared after 4 hours [9].

Discussion

P. pubescens has been recorded as an important herbal medicinal plant for treating sore throat, aphonia, phlegm, heat, coughing, and urogenital system diseases in TCM and folk medicine for a long history [1, 3, 25]. In the present review, we have summarized the ethnomedicinal use, nutrition, phytochemistry, and pharmacology aspects of *P. pubescens*, which helps to explain its mechanisms of treating the diseases, and thus supports the ethnomedicinal use and establish a basis for future investigations.

The present review summarized 170 constituents including steroids (1-52), flavonoids (53-88), phenylpropanoids (89-119), terpenoids (120-135), *N*-containing compounds (136-138), organic acids (139-147), and miscellaneous constituents (148-170), which were derived from calyxes, stems, leaves, and fruits of *P. pubescens*. Of which, steroids, flavonoids, and phenylpropanoids were the main constituents. Those constituents and crude extract exhibited diversity of bioactivities, such as anti-inflammation, anti-oxidation, antibacterial, regulating immunological competence, and diuretic effects which support its ethnomedicinal use [4, 6, 30, 130]. In TCM systems, *P. pubescens* was often used together with other plants of the Solanaceae *Physalis*, but

differences in constituents between *P. pubescens* and other plants have been found. Physalins and withaferins which are representative and common compounds in other *Physalis* plants were rarely reported in the phytochemical research of *P. pubescens*. Instead, physapubescins, exemplified by physapubescin A and physapubescin B are rich and representative ingredients in *P. pubescens* [7, 33]. Moreover, compared to other plants of the same genus, *P. pubescens* is more consumed as fruits now.

In the present review, we tried to establish the connection between the modern survey of phytochemistry and bioactivities with the ethnomedicinal use of *P. pubescens*. The diseases of sore throat, aphonia, phlegm, heat, and coughing, are usually accompanied by the inflammation in trachea, throat, or lung [144, 145]. The previous review didn't focus on the anti-inflammatory effect of *P. pubescens*, which is essential for its ethnomedicinal use. The constituents derived from *P. pubescens*, especially steroids, flavonoids, and phenylpropanoids exert anti-inflammatory effects *in vitro* and *in vivo*. Moreover, inflammation is also closely related to the oxidative stress and infection of bacterial [146, 147]. Active molecules represented by flavonoids and steroids exhibit the potential to scavenge free radicals, maintain redox balance, and attenuate microbial infections. All the observed evidences have indicated that the pharmacological effects supporting the ethnomedicinal use of *P. pubescens* in TCM and folk medicine are produced by flavonoids, steroids, and phenylpropanoids. In addition to respiratory diseases, inflammation is also involved in many chronic diseases, such as neurodegenerative disorders, diabetic nephropathy, heart failure, and so on [148-151]. Among those anti-inflammatory constituents, withaferins and physapubescins exhibited strong anti-

inflammatory activity as characteristic components of *P. pubescens*, which suggested the potential of *P. pubescens* to be a therapeutic agent for these chronic diseases.

Since long history of ethnomedical application and remarkable therapeutic effects, TCM herbs are an important source for drug discovery and development for various diseases. Besides the pharmacological activities of *P. pubescens* which are closely related to the ethnomedicinal use in TCM and folk medicine, other bioactivities are also discussed in the present review, such as effect on immunological competence, anticancer, antihyperglycemic, antihyperlipidemic, and diuretic effects. Initially, these pharmacological activity studies focused on the extracts of *P. pubescens*, and with continuous in-depth research on the components and pharmacology, a series of components represented by flavonoids, steroids, and phenylpropanoids with those activities have been discovered in *P. pubescens*. Those activities observed in modern research not only confirm the medicinal value of *P. pubescens*, but also broadened his medicinal use, which provides the basis for the further development and utilization of this medicinal herb. Among those activities, anticancer, antihyperglycemic, and antihyperlipidemic effects of *P. pubescens* are more outstanding. The active flavonoids, steroids, and phenylpropanoids possessing above mentioned biological effects are potential lead compounds to explore agents for the therapy of cancer or diabetes.

Moreover, in addition to the medicinal herb, the fruits *P. pubescens* are also consumed as high-quality fruits with good taste and rich nutrition in many areas. Its fruits are excellent supplements of trace elements, especially for zinc and magnesium. The organic acids, such as tartaric acid, malic acid, citric acid, succinic acid, which promote digestion and absorption, were high content in the fruits. In addition, the rich natural pigments in fruits exert antioxidant activity. Taken together, the fruits of *P. pubescens* are excellent fruits with rich trace elements, organic acids, and flavonoids.

Phytochemistry research on *P. pubescens* indicated that the major bioactive constituents of *P. pubescens* are flavonoids, steroids, and phenylpropanoids. In recent decades, much important research has been performed to support its traditional applications. However, problems about *P. pubescens* which need further study and discussion still remains.

(i) The phytochemistry research about *P. pubescens* have been going on for a few decades. However, the understanding of the chemical composition in *P. pubescens* is not sufficient. the further phytochemistry research on *P. pubescens* is needed, especially the research on the water-soluble part of *P. pubescens*, because water decoction is the main method of administration in TCM clinic.

(ii) In folk medicine, *P. pubescens* was totally used with the same pharmacological effect as plants from the genus of *Physalis*, such as *Physalis alkekengi* L. var. *franchetii* (Mast.) Makino. With the development of modern botany, we now know that they are different plants. Further clarifying the similarities and differences between those plants in phytochemical and pharmacological activities is of great significance for the development and utilization of the resources of the medicinal plants.

(iii) *P. pubescens* is a medicinal and edible plant, the fruits of *P. pubescens* are consumed and eaten as fruits in many areas. However, the benefits or therapeutic effects of long-term consumption of *P. pubescens* fruits on the human body have not been fully revealed. More attention is needed for the direction in the future research on *P. pubescens*, which has guiding significance for the food processing of *P. pubescens*.

Data availability or Code availability

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Abbreviations

ABTS, 2,2'-azino-bis(3-ethylbenzthiazoline-6-sulfonic acid); AGEs, advanced glycation end products ; AP-1, activating protein-1; ARE, antioxidant response element; ATP, adenosine triphosphate; CAT, catalase; CFA, complete Freund's adjuvant; CDK, cyclin-dependent kinase; COX-2, cyclooxygenase-2; DPPH, 2,2-diphenyl-1-picrylhydrazyl; DSS, dextran sulfate sodium salt; EGFR, epidermal growth factor receptor; FRAP, ferric reducing ability of plasma; GPx, glutathione peroxidase; GR, glutathione reductase; GSH, glutathione; HO-1, heme oxygenase-1; IL, interleukin; iNOS, inducible nitric oxide synthase; KGA, kidney-type glutaminase; LPS, lipopolysaccharide; MAPK, mitogen-activated protein kinase; MSU, monosodium urate; NK, natural killer; NLRP3, nod like receptor family pyrin domain-containing 3; NO, nitric oxide; Nrf2, nuclear factor erythroid 2-related factor 2; OVA, ovalbumin; PGE2, prostaglandin E2; PI3K, phosphatidylinositol 3-kinases; polysaccharides, POL, polysaccharides; QR, quinone reductase; ROS, reactive oxygen species; RPE, retinal pigment epithelium; SHP-1, src homology 2 domain-containing protein tyrosine phosphatase 1; SOD, superoxide dismutase; STAT3, signal transducer and activator of transcription 3; T1DM, type 1 diabetes mellitus; TCM, traditional Chinese medicines; TNF- α , tumor necrosis factor- α .

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Author contributions

Xin-Ping Cheng, Xiao-Ning Wang, and Tao Shen conceived and designed the review. Xin-Ping Cheng, Bin-Yin, and Qian-Kun Zheng collected and analyzed literatures. Xin-Ping Cheng, Lin-Tao Xu, and Guang-Cheng Peng drafted the manuscript. Xiao-Ning Wang, Zhen-Peng Xu, and Tao Shen revised the manuscript.

Competing interests

The authors declare no competing interests.

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