

## Benefits of Total Phenolic and Flavonoid Content of *Portulaca oleracea* as Antioxidant and Antidiabetic: A Review

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## ABSTRACT

Degenerative disease is a disease that causes damage or destruction to tissues or organs of the body. This damaging process can be caused by age, unhealthy lifestyle, and environmental pollution, which causes a decrease in the production of antioxidant compounds. One of the plants that have the potential as a source of natural antioxidants is *Portulaca oleracea*. This study aims to determine the phenolic and flavonoid content of *P. oleracea* and their pharmacological activities. This study uses several databases indexed by Scopus, Pubmed, and Google Scholar. Several studies related to pharmacological activities such as antioxidants and antidiabetics have been reported in this review, where the compounds that play a role in the pharmacological activity of *P. oleracea* are phenolic and flavonoid compounds. The compound of phenolic and flavonoid compounds and antioxidant activity are influenced by several factors such as growth stages, the solvent used, extraction temperature, and the target metabolite. The antioxidant activity of this plant has been investigated using the DPPH, FRAP, and ABTS assays. As antidiabetic, kaempferol and quercetin are compounds that have the highest activity in this plant.

**Keywords:** *Portulaca oleracea*, pharmacological effects, degenerative disease, phenolic compound, and flavonoid compound.

## Introduction

Degenerative diseases are diseases that cause damage or destruction to tissues or organs of the body. Damage or destruction of these tissues or organs can be caused by an imbalance in the levels of free radicals and antioxidants, resulting in oxidative stress.<sup>1</sup> Factors that cause tissue or organ damage are increasing age and an unhealthy lifestyle. These degenerative diseases include kidney, cholesterol, hypertension, heart disease, stroke, diabetes mellitus, and gout. The surprising fact is that global epidemics are worse in many low- and middle-income countries, where 80% of deaths from degenerative diseases occur in some of these countries. An unhealthy lifestyle is one of the leading causes of degenerative diseases.<sup>2</sup> In addition, environmental pollution can also cause degenerative diseases because it can reduce the production of bodyguard compounds or antioxidants.<sup>3</sup> One of the plants that can be used as a source of natural antioxidants is purslane (*Portulaca oleracea*). *Portulaca oleracea* L., family Portulacaceae, commonly known as purslane, is a common weed found in grass areas as well as in field crops.<sup>4</sup> Although considered a weed, in some places, this plant is used as a vegetable to be consumed by eating it raw, made into salads, or cooked into soup.<sup>5</sup> The characteristic of purslane is that it has a purplish-brown round stem, single leaf, grows upright, thick fleshy stems and leaves are oval with dark green leaves and dark red underside, the tips of the leaves are round and curved inward with a long stalk short.<sup>6</sup>

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Purslane is an herbal remedy in Central Europe, Asia, and the Mediterranean region.<sup>7</sup> *Portulaca oleracea* has been used as a traditional medicine in many countries, acting as a febrifuge, antiseptic, and vermifuge.<sup>8</sup> Purslane exhibits various pharmacological effects, including antibacterial, antiulcerogenic, anti-inflammatory, antioxidant<sup>9</sup>, and wound healing.<sup>10</sup> Purslane is also referred to as an important source of omega-3 fatty acids.<sup>11</sup> Purslane is listed by the World Health Organization (WHO) as one of the most widely used medicinal plants and has been given the term "Global Panacea".<sup>12</sup> According to Husein *et al.*,<sup>5</sup> *Portulaca oleracea* contains phenolic compounds in the form of caffeic acid, p-coumaric acid, scopoletin, ferulic acid, and chlorogenic acid. Phenolic compounds are one of the secondary metabolites of plants that can act as antioxidant agents. These compounds can be identified using liquid chromatography such as HPLC, UPLC, and LC/MS. In addition, this type of purslane also contains flavonoid compounds such as quercetin, myricetin, apigenin, and kaempferol. The presence of phenolic and flavonoid content provides many benefits in the development of natural medicines, especially as antioxidants.<sup>13</sup>

## Methods

This review article uses several databases indexed by Scopus, Pubmed, and Google Scholar. This review uses keywords such as *Portulaca oleracea*, pharmacological effects, degenerative disease, phenolic compound, and flavonoid compound. These databases were identified and analyzed based on their relevance to the topic. The inclusion criteria use journals containing total phenolic, total flavonoid, and pharmacological effects such as antioxidant and alpha-glucosidase inhibitor of *P. oleracea*.

## Results and Discussion

Several studies on the activity of the bioactive components of *Portulaca oleracea* have been presented in Table 1, along with the solvents and

extraction methods used. Based on Table 1, most studies use the maceration method for extraction because maceration is an extraction method by immersing the material with a solvent suitable for the active compound to be taken with low heating or without a heating process. The main advantage of the maceration extraction method is that the procedures and equipment used are simple, not heated, so natural materials do not decompose and directly extract polyphenols from plants.<sup>14</sup>

In addition, Fernandez *et al.*<sup>15</sup> and Guo *et al.*<sup>16</sup> used the Ultrasound-assisted extraction (UAE) technique to examine total phenolics, total flavonoids, and antioxidant activity in *Portulaca oleracea*. UAE is a new extraction technique that has proven to be a simple, inexpensive,

and environmentally friendly process for extracting natural products.<sup>17,18</sup> Ultrasound can break cell walls and increase the mass transfer rate, which leads to higher extraction rates. In addition, cavitation can cause collisions on the surface of the extracted material resulting in surface peeling and erosion.<sup>19,21</sup> Therefore, UAE is a technique for extracting bioactive compounds from plant materials that can increase yields and efficiency.

The pharmacological activity of *P. oleracea* has been reported in several studies listed in Table 1, such as antioxidant and antidiabetic. Phenolics and flavonoids compounds were identified in *P. oleracea* presented in Table 2.

**Table 1:** Several pharmacological studies of *Portulaca oleracea*

Sample	Extraction method	Solvent	Method	Properties	Result/ finding	Ref.
Whole plant of <i>P. oleracea</i> from Xiachang Dist., Taipei City, Taiwan	Maceration	n-hexane, chloroform, dichloromethane, ethyl acetate, acetone, methanol, ethanol	TPC, TFC, DPPH, ABTS scavenging assays, Alpha-glucosidase inhibitory assay	TPC, TFC, Antioxidant, Antidiabetic	Ethanol extract has TPC (219.27 ± 4.13 mg/g), and TFC (437.38 ± 13.14 mg/g) higher than other solvents <i>P. oleracea</i> has seven compounds that affect as an alpha-glucosidase inhibitor which kaempferol and quercetin showed the highest IC <sub>50</sub> Ethanol extract has antioxidant activity higher than other solvents via DPPH and hydroxyl radical scavenging assays Ethyl acetate extract has antioxidant activity higher than other solvents via ABTS radical scavenging assays	22
Aerial parts of <i>P. oleracea</i> from Andujar (southeast of Spain)	Ultrasonic Assisted Extraction (UAE)	Methanol	TPC, HPLC Analysis, ABTS and DPPH scavenging assays	TPC, Antioxidant	DPPH assays value of the raw and steamed extract were 260 µmol TE / g DE and 160 µmol TE / g DE ABTS assays value of the raw and steamed extract were 390 µmol TE/ g DE and 200 µmol TE / g DE HPLC-MS results, raw extract (57 mg GAE/g DE) has phenolic content higher than steamed extract (33 mg GAE/g DE) Steamed extract (30 mg/100 g DE) has flavonoid content	15

Aerial of <i>P. oleracea</i> at different plant growth stages	Maceration Methanol, ethanol, aquadest	TPC, DPPH, FRAP scavenging assays TFC, and Antioxidant TPC, TFC, Antioxidant	<p>higher than raw extract (28 mg/ 100 g DE)</p> <p><i>P. oleracea</i> contains phenolic compound such as caffeoylglucaric acid, caffeic acid glucuronide isomers, ferulic acid-O-hexoside, ferulic acid derivative, caffeic acid-O-hexoside, and sinapoyl hexoside</p> <p><i>P. oleracea</i> contains flavonoid compound such as catechin, epicatechin, quercetin-O-hexoside isomers, kaempferol-O-hexoside, and isorhamnetin-O-hexoside</p> <p>The methanol extract (360,3 mg GAE/100 g DW) has TPC higher than other solvents (Ethanol 276.8; water 142.8 mg GAE/100 g DW)</p> <p>The flavonoid contents were also markedly higher in the methanolic extract (49.18 mg rutin equivalent/g DW) compared to the ethanol extract (41.30 mg rutin equivalent/g DW) and water extract (28.7 mg rutin equivalent/g DW)</p> <p>The values of TPC and FRAP at 15 days were significantly lower than those at 30, 45, and 60 days</p> <p>The values of TPC at 15, 30, 45, 60 days were 174.5 mg GAE/100 g, 276.8 mg GAE/100 g, 300.5 mg GAE/100 g, 348.5 mg GAE/100 g respectively</p> <p>The values of FRAP at 14, 30, 45, and 60 days were 1.8 mg GAE/g, 2.8 mg GAE/g,</p>	23
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Aerial parts of <i>P. oleracea</i> from Alappuzha, Kerala State, India	Maceration (stirring with acetone)	Aqueous (70:30)	acetone	TPC, DPPH, and ABTS	TFC, FRAP, Antioxidant	TPC, TFC, Antioxidant	3.6 mg GAE/g, 4.3 mg GAE/g respectively	The values of DPPH showed by ascorbic acid equivalent antioxidant activity (AEAC) at 15, 30, 45, and 60 days were 229.5 mg AA/100 g, 263.8 mg AA/100 g, 293.0 mg AA/100 g, 319.3 mg AA/100 g respectively	25
<p>The values of TPC of <i>P. Oleracea</i> raw, <i>P. oleracea</i> boiled, and <i>P. oleracea</i> blanched were 22.94 mg GAE/g extract, 19.25 mg GAE/g extract, 10.02 mg GAE/g extract, respectively</p> <p>The values of TFC of <i>P. Oleracea</i> raw, <i>P. oleracea</i> boiled, and <i>P. oleracea</i> blanched were 64.99 mg rutin equivalent/ g extract, 85.14 mg rutin equivalent/ g extract, 81.57 mg rutin equivalent/ g extract</p> <p>DPPH assay values of the <i>P. oleracea</i> raw, boiled, and blanched were 11 440.39 mmol TEA/g extract, 3 561.92 mmol TEA/g extract, 11 452.15 mmol TEA/g extract.</p> <p>ABTS assay values of the <i>P. oleracea</i> raw, boiled, and blanched were 51 041.34 mmol TEA/g extract, 53 818.25 mmol TEA/g extract, 53 037.68 mmol TEA/g extract</p> <p>FRAP assay value of the <i>P. oleracea</i> raw, boiled, and blanched were 5 474.42 mmol Fe (II)/g extract, 5 971.68 mmol Fe (II)/g extract, 5 499.16 mmol Fe (II)/g extract</p>									

Whole plant of <i>P. oleracea</i> from six casual locations in Turkey	Maceration	Methanol	DPPH, ABTS scavenging assays	Antioxidant	The crude extract has an antioxidant activity value 511.8 µgram/mL via ABTS radical scavenging assays Fraction 3 has the highest absorption in the selected wavelength range (200-400 nm) among all fractions and crude extract Fraction 3 appears to have the lowest IC <sub>50</sub> and the highest TEAC values among the fractions and crude extract, indicating its higher antioxidant activity. Crude extract's IC <sub>50</sub> value was found to be 511.8 µgram/mL whereas fraction 3 was detected to have IC <sub>50</sub> values of 154.1 µgram/mL. ABTS (TEAC values) of fraction 3 (1.9 mM Trolox) was found to be almost four times higher than that of the crude extract (0.5 mM Trolox)	34
The seeds, leaf, and stem of <i>P. oleracea</i> from Dire Dawa, Ethiopia	Soxhlet	Ethanol (DPPH), Methanol (Hydrogen peroxide)	DPPH and Hydrogen peroxide scavenging assays	Antioxidant	The highest DPPH activity was obtained for leaf oil (12.55%), followed by seed oil (2.05%) and stem oil (0.35%) The peroxide scavenging was indicated to be the highest for stem oil (0.70%), followed by seed oil (0.45%), and leaf oil (0.35%)	35
The whole plant of <i>P. oleracea</i>	Maceration	n-hexane, dichloromethane, chloroform, ethylacetate, methanol	TPC, radical scavenging assays	TPC, Antioxidant	The highest total phenolic content was shown in methanol extract (22.8 mg GAE/g extract) The total phenolic content in n-hexane, dichloromethane, chloroform, and ethylacetate solvents was 9.3 mg GAE/g extract, 6.6	29



					<p>mg GAE/g extract, 9.5 mg GAE/g extract, and 20.3 mg GAE/g</p> <p>The highest IC<sub>50</sub> of <i>P. oleracea</i> extract via DPPH radical scavenging showed in ethyl acetate extract (62.9 g/mL)</p> <p>IC<sub>50</sub> values for n-hexane, dichloromethane, chloroform, and methanol via DPPH radical scavenging were 63.5 g/mL, 91.0 g/mL, 86.0 g/mL, and 85.7 g/mL, respectively.</p> <p>The IC<sub>50</sub> of <math>\alpha</math>-glucosidase inhibition was lower than that of <math>\alpha</math>-amylase. But, in all <i>P. oleracea</i> extracts obtained the IC<sub>50</sub> of <math>\alpha</math>-glucosidase inhibition was higher</p>
Seed oil of <i>P. oleracea</i> from Xinjiang Yuansen Agriculture Science and Technology Development	Ultrasound assisted and soxhlet extraction method	Ethanol, aquabidest	DPPH and hydroxyl radical scavenging activity assays	Antioxidant	<p>The IC<sub>50</sub> value of purslane seed oil (PSO) with the hydroxyl free radical method is 1.388 mg/mL</p> <p>The IC<sub>50</sub> value of PSO is higher than TBHQ (2.193 mg/mL), almond oil (2.53 mg/mL), and grape seed oil (6.66 mg/mL)</p> <p>The higher content of linolenic acid influences the high antioxidant power of PSO</p> <p>The IC<sub>50</sub> value of purslane seed oil (PSO) with the DPPH radical scavenging method is 11.16 mg/mL</p> <p>This IC<sub>50</sub> value is lower than TBHQ, which is 0.07886 mg/mL</p> <p>IC<sub>50</sub> PSO value is higher than walnut oil (147.0 mg/mL) but lower than flaxseed oil (3.31 mg/mL)</p>

The stronger DPPH radical scavenging ability is influenced by the higher content of omega-3 linolenic fatty acids.

#### Total Phenolic Compound (TPC)

Research conducted by Chen *et al.*<sup>22</sup> stated that the ethanolic extract of *P. oleracea* had the highest TPC compared to n-hexane, chloroform, dichloromethane, ethyl acetate, acetone, and methanol. Fernandez *et al.*<sup>15</sup> stated that the total phenolic content of raw *P. oleracea* was higher than that of steamed *P. oleracea*. The TPC value in *P. oleracea* was influenced by growth stages. Research conducted by Uddin *et al.*<sup>23</sup> stated that TPC in mature plants (60 days growth stages) was higher than in developing plants (15 days growth stages). This increase in TPC is because species exclusivity, vegetation period, and growing conditions (climate factors, altitude, and soil properties) affect the biosynthesis and accumulation of secondary metabolites in plants, including phenolic compounds.<sup>24</sup> HPLC analysis of aerial parts of *P. oleracea* showed that *P. oleracea* has phenolic compounds such as caffeoylglucuronic acid, caffeic acid glucuronide isomers, ferulic acid-O-hexoside, ferulic acid derivative, caffeic acid-O-hexoside, and sinapoyl hexoside.<sup>15</sup>

#### Total Flavonoid Compound (TFC)

Research conducted by Nagarani *et al.*<sup>25</sup> stated that raw *P. oleracea* had the lowest TFC value compared to boiled and blanched *P. oleracea*, where boiled *P. oleracea* had the highest TFC value. This is due to the polyphenol oxidase enzyme's inactivation, which causes polyphenol degradation inhibition.<sup>26</sup> In addition, heating can trigger the Maillard reaction, which decomposes phenolic compounds and produces new products with higher antioxidants.<sup>27</sup> HPLC analysis of aerial parts of *P. oleracea* showed that *P. oleracea* has flavonoid compounds such as catechin, epicatechin, quercetin-O-hexoside isomers, kaempferol-O-hexoside, and isorhamnetin-O-hexoside.<sup>15</sup>

#### Antioxidant Activity

The difference in antioxidant activity is related to the type of antioxidant present in each extract. Phenols and flavonoids are antioxidant components, and these compounds can affect the antioxidant activity found in plants. DPPH, ABTS, and FRAP assay are several methods for determining antioxidant activity. DPPH and ABTS assays have been commonly used to determine antioxidant activity based on the principle of the ability to donate hydrogen atoms of the target compound. FRAP is a method used to measure the antioxidant content of a sample by reducing  $Fe^{3+}$  ions to  $Fe^{2+}$  ions. The antioxidant power is indicated by the ability to reduce the  $Fe^{3+}$  ion.<sup>28</sup>

#### DPPH assay

The results of a study by Salehi *et al.*<sup>29</sup> showed that the ethyl acetate extract had the highest antioxidant activity of the whole plant of *P. oleracea*, described as  $IC_{50}$  value. However, in the study by Chen *et al.*<sup>22</sup>, ethanol extract had the highest antioxidant activity compared to n-hexane, chloroform, dichloromethane, ethyl acetate, acetone, and methanol. This can occur due to several factors in the natural product extraction process, such as the solvent used, the extraction temperature, and the target metabolite. Changes in solvent polarity cause significant differences in phytochemical composition and biological activity.<sup>22</sup>

#### ABTS assay

Ethyl acetate extract has the highest antioxidant activity compared to n-hexane, chloroform, dichloromethane, acetone, methanol, and ethanol.<sup>22</sup> Raw extract from aerial parts of *P. oleracea* has higher antioxidant activity than steamed extract.<sup>15</sup> The decrease in antioxidant activity due to steam follows research conducted by Haw *et al.*<sup>30</sup>, where *Hibiscus cannabinus* samples treated with steam blanched at 80°C and

120°C experienced a decrease in antioxidant activity compared to the crude extract.

#### FRAP assay

The antioxidant activity of *P. oleracea* in the FRAP method increased as the growth stages progressed, where the highest antioxidant activity was found on day 60.<sup>23</sup> In addition, a study conducted by Nagarani *et al.*<sup>25</sup> showed that the highest FRAP value was found in boiled extract compared to blanched extract and raw extract. Garinstein *et al.*<sup>31</sup> found that thermal treatment maintained their bioactive components (polyphenols, flavonoids, flavanols, and tannins) and total antioxidant capacity in samples processed by the FRAP assay. The production of redox-active secondary metabolites (Maillard reaction and Amadori rearrangement products) and the breakdown of complex phenolic compounds by heat treatment, which softens or damages plant cell walls, account for the increase in reducing activity in the prepared samples observed in this study.

#### Inhibitor alpha-glucosidase

In addition to antioxidant activity, *P. oleracea* has a pharmacological effect as an antidiabetic. According to Chen *et al.*<sup>22</sup> seven *P. oleracea* ingredients have pharmacological effects as alpha-glucosidase inhibitors, whereas kaempferol and quercetin have the highest  $IC_{50}$  values. This follows a study by Salehi *et al.*<sup>29</sup>, where *P. oleracea* has a high  $IC_{50}$  value of alpha-glucosidase inhibition. In previous research by Sharma *et al.*<sup>32</sup> 50% ethanol extract of *P. oleracea* had antidiabetic activity against STZ mice. This follows the study of Li *et al.*<sup>33</sup> which showed that polysaccharide extract from *P. oleracea* could significantly reduce fasting blood glucose (FBG), total cholesterol (TC), and triglyceride (TG) concentrations in diabetic rats.

#### Conclusion

*Portulaca oleracea* has a pharmacological effect as an antioxidant. The antioxidant activity of this plant is influenced by several factors such as growth stages, the solvent used, extraction temperature, and the target metabolite. Besides antioxidants, the content of kaempferol and quercetin from *P. oleracea* has potential as antidiabetics by inhibiting alpha-glucosidase activity.

#### Conflict of Interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

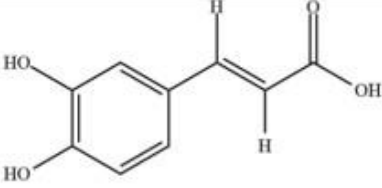
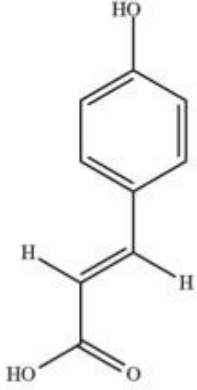
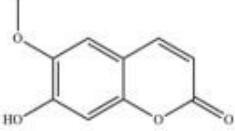
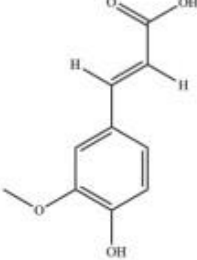
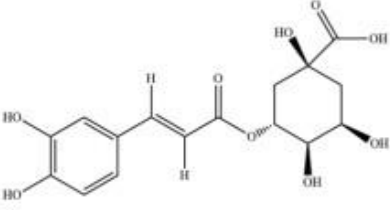
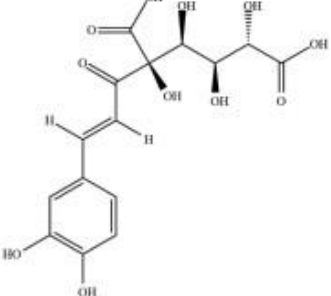
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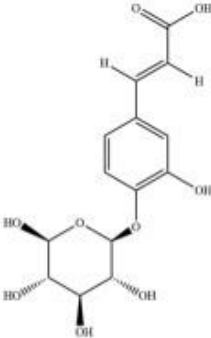
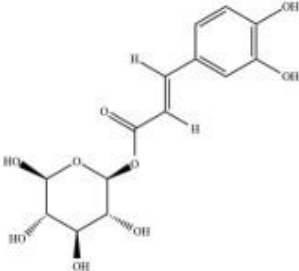
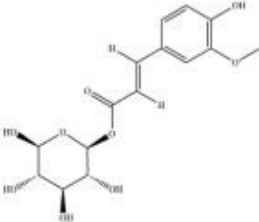
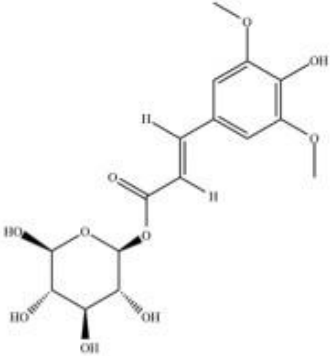
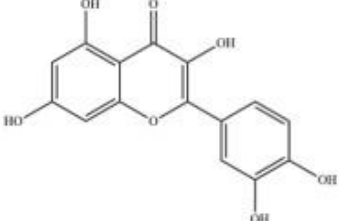
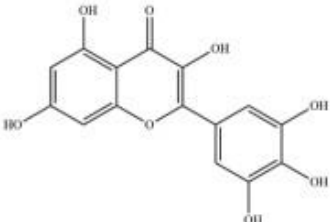
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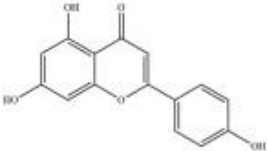
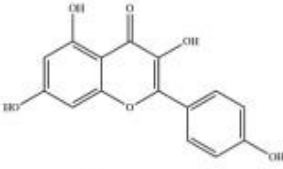
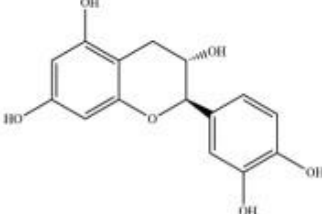
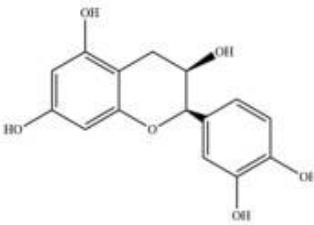
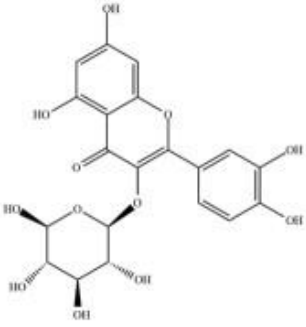
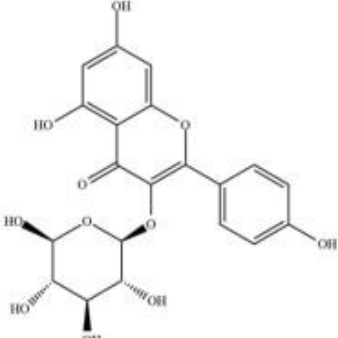
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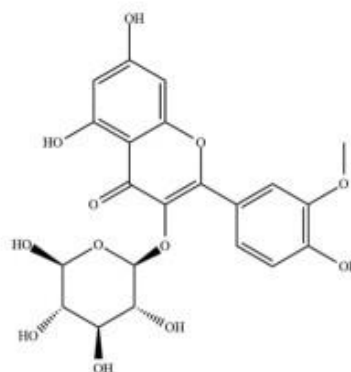
**Table 2:** Phenolic and Flavonoid compounds in *Portulaca oleracea*

Type	Compound	Structure	Ref.
Phenolic	Caffeic acid		5
	p-coumaric acid		5
	Scopoletin		5
	Ferulic acid		5
	Chlorogenic acid		5
	Caffeoylglucaric acid		15



	Caffeic acid glucuronide isomer		15
	Caffeic acid-O-hexoside		15
	Ferulic acid-O-hexoside		15
	Sinapoyl-O-hexoside		15
Flavonoid	Quercetin		5
	Myricetin		5

Apigenin		5
Kaempferol		5
Catechin		15
Epicatechin		15
Quercetin-O-hexoside isomers		15
Kaempferol-O-hexoside		15



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