

Bioactive Compounds from *Elaeodendron Genus*

Subjects: [Plant Sciences](#)

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Elaeodendron is a genus of tiny trees, shrubs, vines, and herbs consisting of about 23 species. It is used in traditional medicine and has a wide range of pharmacological activities. From the plants in this genus, flavonoids, terpenoids, cardiac glycosides, and cardenolides have been isolated. Preclinical investigations have also revealed antiviral, anti-HIV, anticancer, antiproliferative, antioxidant, antifungal, anti-inflammation, cytotoxic, anti-plasmodial, anti-arthritic, antibacterial, and anti-diabetic activities. Bioactive substances found in *Elaeodendron* that function in a variety of ways are related to these biological processes.

Elaeodendron

Celastraceae

cardenolides

1. Introduction

Elaeodendron is a genus in the Celastraceae family [1]. The Celastraceae belongs to the order Celastrales and consists of approximately 96 genera and 1350 species of herbs, vines, shrubs, and small trees [2]. The Celastrales is a flowering plant order that may be found in the tropical and subtropical regions, with just a few genera expanding into temperate areas. *Elaeodendron* is a genus of approximately thirty to forty species native to Africa, Bermuda, the Mexican coast, Madagascar (particularly Mascarene), Australia, Melanesia, and India [2][3]. This genus includes evergreen and, on rare occasions, deciduous shrubs and trees. The lenticels are frequently evident in the yellow pigment layers found in the bark. The leaves are either subopposite or opposite or rotate on occasion. The petals are cream to greenish, and the stamens are upright. The fruits are smooth-surfaced, drupaceous, spherical, white to yellow, and drupaceous. Reddish-brown seeds with succulent cotyledons are squashed [1][2].

Flavonoids [1], terpenoids [1][4], cardiac glycosides [5], and cardenolides [6] have been isolated from these species, which are mainly shrubs and deciduous trees. Plants of this genus have been shown to have antiviral, anti-HIV, anticancer, antiproliferative, antioxidant, anti-inflammation, anti-plasmodial, cytotoxic, antifungal, anti-arthritic, and antibacterial properties in earlier research [7][8].

2. Traditional Uses

Elaeodendron buchananii (Loes.) Loes. is an evergreen shrub or tree with a branching, rounded crown found in eastern Africa, particularly Uganda and Kenya [9]. Despite its toxic nature, *E. buchananii* is occasionally utilized in conventional practice of medicine. Leaf extracts are used to treat fever, as an abortifacient, oxytocic, tonic, and

vermifuge [10][11][12]. Chewing the leaves is considered beneficial for the treatment of diarrhea. Gastrointestinal problems, bloody coughing, excessive uterine bleeding, and infertility are treated using root decoctions. Syphilis is treated using root powder [10][13][14]. On wounds, the root powder is administered topically. The bark decoction is also used to cure leukemia [9].

Elaeodendron croceum (Thunb.) DC., also known as saffron, saffron wood, and forest saffron, is an evergreen tree with a tidy, vertical frame found in various parts of South Africa (Ladismith, KwaZulu-Natal, Limpopo, Southern Cape forests) and in Zimbabwe (Mount Cherinda) [4]. The bark of this plant is used as a febrifuge and emetic in therapeutic approaches to treat opportunistic infections caused by the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) [4][15]. Tuberculosis and other associated disorders, such as blood in sputum, chest congestion, cough, and sore throat have historically been treated and managed using the bark [15]. The roots, bark, and leaves of the plant are used as herbal treatments to clear the gastrointestinal system and control fever [16].

Preparations of *Elaeodendron glaucum* (Rottb.) Pers. have been employed by conventional healers as a remedy for a number of diseases such as diabetes. As sternutatories, the dried and powdered leaves are employed [17]. The dried leaves are also burned, and the resulting smoke is utilized as a disinfectant to treat some nerve illnesses, especially to rouse women from hysterics [18]. Headache is relieved by snuffing the powdered leaves. Fresh root bark is ground into a paste with water and applied to swellings as a poultice. The root is reported to have anti-snake-venom properties. As an emetic, cold-water infusion of the pulverized roots is employed [1][19].

Elaeodendron orientale Jacq., sometimes known as the fake olive, is an indigenous plant of the Mascarene Islands and Madagascar [6]. The bark has traditionally been used to cure chest infections, venereal illness, and scorpion fish poisoning. The leaves are emetic and astringent. The combination of leaves with those of *Kalanchoe pinnata* (Crassulaceae) generate bufadienolides, used to alleviate hypertension and treat seafood allergies [6].

3. Bioactive Compounds from *Elaeodendron* Species

Bioactive chemicals are extra nutritional components detected in tiny concentrations in plants and foods that provide health advantages in addition to the basic nutritional value [20]. Bioactive substances appear to have significant immunological, behavioural, and physiological effects. They are being examined extensively to determine their effect on the human body. They are gaining popularity in various fields, including contemporary pharmacology, food business, plant science, nanobioscience, cosmetics, and agrochemicals [20].

Plant bioactive chemicals are categorized using a variety of criteria. Strongly linked species of plants typically generate similar or slightly structurally comparable active compounds. It might be helpful to categorize active molecules based on the genera and families in which they exist. However, there are several situations when genetically unrelated organisms create identical secondary chemicals. The bioactive chemical compounds are the major emphasis. Thus, it is helpful to organize them into biochemical and chemical classes [21].

Elaeodendron species are rich in various biologically active chemicals responsible for a wide range of pharmacological actions. Environmental circumstances, climatic conditions, harvesting season and methods, genetic conditions, species variety, plant part and age, vegetative phase, and soil may all influence the quantitative and qualitative composition of bioactive chemicals [14][22]. **Table 1** lists the chemical compounds found in *Elaeodendron* species (**Figure 1**).

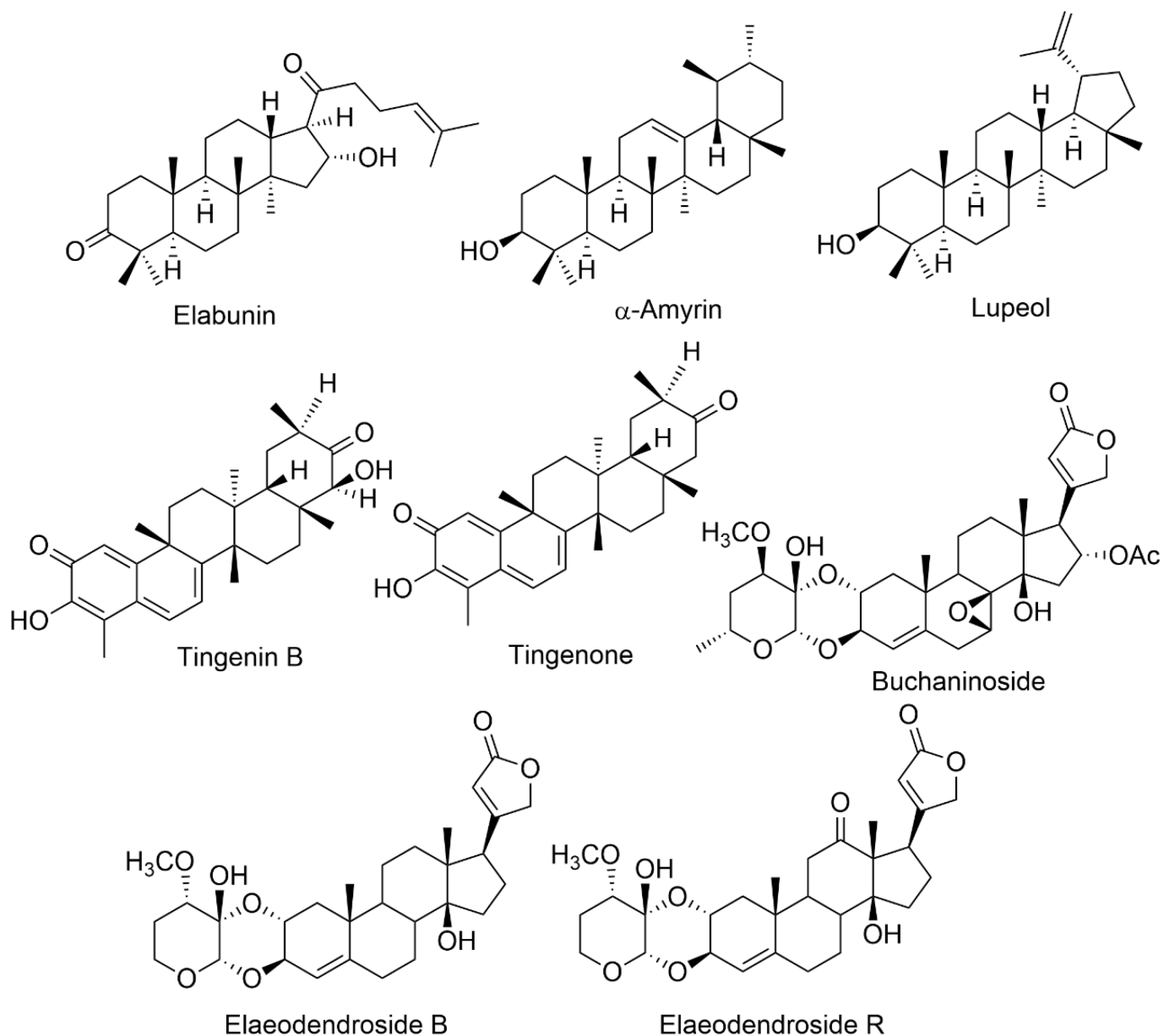


Figure 1. Chemical structures of some selected bioactive compounds isolated from *Elaeodendron* species.

Table 1. Bioactive phytochemicals, traditional uses, part used, and biological activities of *Elaeodendron* species.

Species	Isolated Compounds	Traditional Uses	Part Used	Reported Biological Activity	Reference
<i>E. buchananii</i>	Elabunin; lupeol; 19 α , 28-trihydroxyurs-12-en-23-oic acid; 3 β , 11 α , 3 β -acetoxo-19 α , 23, 28-trihydroxyurs-12-ene; 3-oxo-19 α , buchanoside; 19 α -trihydroxyurs-12-en-23, 28-dioic acid; mutangin; methyl 3 β -acetoxo-11 α , 28-dihydroxyurs-12-en-24-oic acid	Fever, diarrhea gastrointestinal problems, bloody coughing, excessive uterine bleeding, infertility, syphilis, wounds, and leukemia	Leaves, Roots Bark	Anticancer, gastrointestinal disturbances, antimicrobial	[9][11]
<i>E. croceum</i>	30-Hydroxylup 20(29)-en-3-one; (+)-6R,13R-11,11-dimethyl-1,3,8,10-tetrahydroxy-9-methoxy-peltogynan; galactitol; canophyllol; (-)-4'-O-methoxyepigallocatechin; tingenin B; ouratea-proanthocyanidin A; tingenone; 3-hydroxylupeol; 11 α -hydroxy- β -amyrin; naringenin	Tuberculosis, blood in sputum, chest congestion, cough, sore throat, gastrointestinal system, fever	Stem bark	Anti-HIV, antibacterial, anti-arthritic, antimycobacterial, antifungal, antioxidant, anti-inflammatory, cytotoxic	[4][15]
<i>E. glaucum</i>	30-Hydroxylup-20(29)-en-3-one; tingenone; canophyllol; tingenin B; 3-hydroxylupeol; elaeodendroside; isocardenolide	Diabetes, sternutatories, nerve illnesses, swellings, headaches, emetic	Leaves, Root bark	Ani-diabetic, anti-snake-bite properties	[17]
<i>E. orientale</i>	Elaeodendroside F; elaeodendroside G; elaeodendroside T; elaeodendroside B; elaeodendroside C; elaeodendroside R; 20(22)-dienolid, 6 β , 8 β , 11 α , 14 β -tetrahydroxy-12-oxo-2 α -O; 11 α , 14 β -dihydroxy-2 α -O; 3 β -O-(30 α -methoxy-40-deoxy-50-dehydroxymethyl hexosulose)-card-4;	chest infections, venereal illness, scorpion fish poisoning, astringent emetic, hypertension	Leaves, root bark	Anti-arthritic, antiproliferative, anticancer	[3][6]

Species	Isolated Compounds	Traditional Uses	Part Used	Reported Biological Activity	Reference
	20(22)-dienolide, 3 β -O-(20 α ,30 β -methylendioxy)-40-desoxy-50-deshydroxymethyl-hexosu-lose]-card-4, 11 α ,14 β -dihydroxy-2 α -O; 3 β -O-(30 α -methoxy-40-deoxy-50-dehydr-oxy-methyl-hexosulose)-card-4; 20(22)-dienolide				
<i>E. schweinfurthianum</i>	3 α -Hydroxyfriedelane; α -amyrin acetate; α -amyrin; 3-oxo-29-hydroxyfriedelane; β -sitosterol; lanosterol; stigmasterol; 3-oxofriedelane; 3-oxofriedelan-28-al	Fever	Roots	Antibacterial, anti-HIV, anti-plasmodial	[1]
<i>E. schlechteranum</i>	4',4''-Di-O-methyl-prodelphinidin; B ₄ ,3 β ,29-dihydroxyglutin-5-ene; 4'-O-methyl-epigallocatechin; tingenin B; 4'-O-methylgalocatechin; cangoronine methyl ester	Menstrual irregularities, anaemia, heart issues, high blood pressure, basic body discomfort, inflammatory disease, carbuncles boils, wounds	Roots, stem bark, root bark, leaf	Anti-HIV, anti-inflammatory	[23]
<i>E. transvaalense</i>	4'-O-Methyl-epigallocatechin; canophyllal; (+)-, 11,11-dimethyl-1,3,8,10-trahydroxy-9-methoxypeltogynan; 6 β -hydroxy-lup-20(30)-ene-3-one; galactitol; hydroxylup-20(29)-ene-3-one; lup-20(29)-ene-30-hydroxy-3-one; Ψ -taraxastanonol; lup-20(30)-ene-3 α ,29-diol; lup-20(30)-ene-3 α ,29-diol; β -sitosterol; 3,28-	Diarrhea, stomachache, rashes, skin infections, inflammations, menorrhagia, women's fertility issues, hypertension, HIV, sexually transmitted diseases (STDs).	Root bark	Anti-HIV, anti-inflammatory, antimicrobial, antioxidant, antimalarial, cytotoxic	[7][24][25]

Species	Isolated Compounds	Traditional Uses	Part Used	Reported Biological Activity	Reference
	<p>dihydroxybetuli-20(29)-ene; lup-20(30)-ene-3α,29-diollup-20(29)-ene-30-hydroxy-3-one; 4'-O-methyl-epigallocatechin; 3-oxo-28-hydroxybetuli-20(29)-ene; 30-hydroxylup-20(29)-ene-3-one.</p>				
<i>E. xylocarpum</i>	<p>3,25-Epoxy-olean-12-ene; 3β,21a-dihydroxyglut-5-ene; baruol; friedelin; cangoronine; cangoronine methyl ester; glutinol; 3β,29-dihydroxyglut-5-ene; wilforol E; 6β,30-dihydroxylup-20(29)-en-3-one; 6β-hydroxy-3-oxolup-20(29)-en-30-al; 3-oxolup-20(29)-en-30-oic acid; 3β,6β,20-trihydroxylupane; 11α,28-dihydroxylup-20(29)-en-3-one; 3-oxolup-20(29)-en-30-al; ochraceolide A; 12 3-oxo-30-hydroxylupane; 11 3-epiglochidiol; lupenone; botulin; 11 6β,20-dihydroxylupan-3-one; 16 lupan-3β-caffeate; 11 betulin-3β-caffeate; glochidiol; 3-epibetulin; betulone; 11α hydroxyglochidone; lupeol; rigidenol; nepeticin; glochidone; 25-hydroxylupeol; 15 3β,30-dihydroxylupane; 3-epinepeticin; 3b,29-Dihydroxy-olean-18-ene; 29-Hydroxy-3-oxo-olean-18-ene; 6b,29-Dihydroxy-3-oxo-olean-18-ene; 6b-Hydroxy-3-oxo-olean-18-ene; 3b,21a-Dihydroxy-</p>	Stimulant	Root bark	Anti-HIV	[26][27]

Species	Isolated Compounds	Traditional Uses	Part Used	Reported Biological Activity	Reference
	olean-18-ene; 3b,6b-Dihydroxy-olean-18-ene; 21a-Hydroxy-3-oxo-olean-18-ene; 3b,11a,28-Trihydroxy-olean-18-ene; 29-Acetoxy-3-oxo-olean-18-ene; 3b,21a-Diacetoxy-olean-18-ene; 3b-Acetoxy-6b-hydroxy-olean-18-ene; 6β,30-Dihydroxylup-20(29)-en-3-one; 6β-Hydroxy-3-oxolup-20(29)-en-30-al; 3-Oxolup-20(29)-en-30-oic acid; 3β,6β,20-Trihydroxylupane; 1β,3α,28-Trihydroxylup-20(29)-ene; 11α,28-Dihydroxy-3-oxolup-20(29)-ene; 3β,28-Di-O-octanoylbetulin; 28-O-(1-Naphthoyl)botulin; 3β,28-Di-O-(1-naphthoyl)botulin; 28-O-acetyl-3β,20,29-trihydroxylupane; 28-O-acetyl-20R,29-epoxy-3β-hydroxylupane; 2 (28-O-acetyl-3β-hydroxylup-20(29)-en-30-al; 3β,30-di-O-acetylup-20(29)-ene; 2-bromo-3-oxolup-20(29)-ene; 11α-O-acetyl-3-oxolup-20(29)-ene; 11α-O-Acetyl-30-chloro-3-oxolup-1,20(29)-diene				2017, kotobe, ds from plant, 60–67. ion of a macol. ing,

antibacterial, antifungal, and cytotoxicity activity of commonly used medicinal plants by traditional healers in Borabu Sub-County, Nyamira County, Kenya. PLoS ONE 2017, 12, e0185722.

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4. Pharmacological Properties of *Elaeodendron* Species
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4.1. Antioxidant Activity

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 Odeyemi and Afolayan used FRAP (reducing power), ABTS (2,2-azino-bis(3-ethylbenzothiazole-6-sulphonate), and DPPH (2,2-diphenyl-1-picrylhydrazyl) free radical scavenging tests to assess the antioxidant properties of *E.*

croceum stem bark and leaf acetone extracts [28]. Rutin, butylated hydroxytoluene (BHT), and ascorbic acid were used as reference antioxidant compounds. The leaf acetone extract IC₅₀ (Inhibitory Concentration) values were 0.1 mg/mL for the DPPH test, 2.5 mg/mL for FRAP, and 0.09 mg/mL for ABTS, whereas the IC₅₀ values of bark extract

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4.2. Anti-inflammatory Activity

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4.3. Antibacterial Activity

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Tshikalanga et al. investigated the antimicrobial activities of *E. transvaalense* chloroform and aqueous bark extracts

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4.6. Anti-HIV Activity

31. Khumalo, G.P.; Sadgrove, N.J.; Van Vuuren, S.F.; Van Wyk, B.E. **Antimicrobial lupenol triterpenes and a polyphenol from *Elaeodendron transvaalense*, a popular Southern African medicinal bark**. *S. Afr. J. Bot.* 2019, **122**, 518–521. Prinsloo et al. tested the anti-HIV effects of *E. croceum* stem bark by measuring signaling pathway inhibition in the MT-2 VSV-pseudotyped and HeLa-TAT-Luc recombinant virus tests. At 100 ng/mL, the extracts inhibited signaling pathways effectively [36]. Mamba et al. used an RT (non-radioactive HIV-reverse transcriptase) colorimetric test with doxorubicin as a standard drug to assess the anti-HIV activity of *E. croceum* ethanol bark extract against

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35. Elisha, I.L.; Botha, F.S.; McGaw, L.J.; Eloff, J.N. **The antibacterial activity of extracts of nine plant species with good activity against *Escherichia coli* and five other bacteria and cytotoxicity of *E. schlechteranum*** [39]. The anti-HIV drug was discovered to be digitoxigenin-3-O-glucoside, a cardiac glycoside. Regardless of the fact cardiac glycosides are recognized for their toxicity, which may be connected to their anti-HIV

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4.7. Antiplasmodial Activity

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4.8. Larvicidal Activities

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4.9. Anti-pyretic Activities

Nethengwe et al. investigated the anti-pyretic effects of *E. transvaalense* bark of methanolic and dichloromethane extracts in male and female Sprague-Dawley rats, using paracetamol as a control medication. The extracts reduced pyrexia in the provoked rats. Their effects were concentration and time course-dependent, with the extracts exhibiting action as soon as thirty minutes, even at the least dose of 100 mg/kg. The activity of the methanol extract was equivalent to that of paracetamol, the reference medication [40]. These data reinforce the use of *E. transvaalense* as a fever-fighting herbal medication.

4.10. Hypoglycaemic Activity

The inhibitory effects of *E. transvaalense* stem bark acetone extract on carbohydrate-hydrolysing enzymes α-glucosidase and α-amylase on hypoglycaemic activity were researched by Deutschländer et al. By assessing glucose absorption, the acetone extracts were tested against Chang liver, C2C12 myocyte, and 3T3-L1 preadipocyte cells. At 50 µg/mL concentration, the extracts demonstrated a 138.6% potential to reduce blood glucose levels in 3T3-L1 preadipocytes in an *in vitro* experiment. The extracts' 50% IC₅₀ for α-glucosidase and α-amylase were reported to be 50.6 µg/mL and 1.1 µg/mL, correspondingly [41]. These results demonstrate the use of *E. transvaalense* as an antidiabetic herbal medication [41].

4.11. Anti-arthritis Activity

Using an anti-protein denaturation experiment, Elisha et al. examined the anti-arthritis effects of *E. croceum* acetone leaves extract. In an *in vitro* anti-arthritis test, the extract displayed an amount of the drug response, with

an IC₅₀ value of 80.0 µg/mL, greater than the positive control diclofenac sodium's IC₅₀ value of 32.4 µg/mL [30]. The extracts' promising properties back up the species' longstanding use for inflammatory diseases [30].

4.12. Anti-diabetic Activity

In an alloxanized rat model, Lanjhiyana et al. investigated the anti-diabetic effect of stem bark methanolic extract of *E. glaucum* [17]. The goal of the investigation was to quantify the total phenolic content of ED methanolic extract (MED) and assess its antidiabetic potential in normal and alloxan-induced diabetic rats. The trial employed inbred adult male Charles-Foster (CF) albino rats for antidiabetic activity in OGTT and nondiabetic rats, as well as antidiabetic activity in alloxan-induced rats. MED responded positively for carbohydrates, flavonoids, alkaloids, tannins saponins, triterpenes, and sterols, according to phytochemical analysis. The MED also revealed a total phenolic content of 285.2 mg/g. In diabetic control experimental rats, the increasing level of glycosylated hemoglobin (HbA1c) is exactly proportionate to the reduced level of total hemoglobin. For assessing the degree of protein glycation during diabetes mellitus, glycosylated hemoglobin (HbA1c) is utilized as the most accurate marker and standard diagnostic technique. Protein glycation is a non-enzymatic process that occurs when excess glucose in the blood reacts with free amino groups on hemoglobin's globin component. The HbA1c level is used to determine long-term glycemic status and to connect with different problems associated with diabetes. In experimental rats, oral treatment with MED dramatically reduced HbA1c levels, probably due to normoglycemic control mechanisms, which also reflected lower protein glycation condensation reactions, and the results were consistent with prior findings [17]. The continuing post-treatment with MED for 21 days demonstrated potential hypoglycemic action in OGTT and normoglycemic rats, as well as antidiabetic activity in alloxan-induced rat models, according to the findings. This suggests that plants may have an insulin-like function, which might assist in lowering the risk of lipid-related problems. Significant lipid management may help to prevent the coexistence of hypercholesterolemia and hypertriglyceridemia, as well as lower cardiovascular risk factors [17].