



A to Z

A Gojri Nature-Culture Resource





The Rangelands We Conserve, The Heritage We Preserve, The Communities We Empower — It All Takes Roots in Pastoral Traditions.



Connecting Learning to the Natural World

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A to Z

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Language, Landscape, and Learning

The Kashmir Himalayas are home to one of South Asia's largest seasonal pastoral migrations. The Gujjar and Bakarwal pastoral tribes have lived here for centuries, and always in close connection with their environment. Their life is one of rhythm; the rhythm of migration, of seasons, of animals, and of pastoral lands. Embedded in this rhythm is a wealth of ecological and cultural knowledge that has been passed down orally or through practice from generation to generation. The Gojri language is their mother tongue. It is rich in pastoral expressions like folk songs, proverbs, and stories about the flora and fauna around them. Gojri is a living reflection of their worldview. Their language carries within it the intimate relationship of its people with their animals, plants, their grazing lands, and the beautiful and vast mountains they call home. Yet, despite its essential role, the Gojri language finds little space in formal education systems. Children from nomadic families begin schooling in languages unfamiliar and alien to them, and this creates a gap between what they learn at school and what they experience at home. The absence of Gojri in classrooms means that children rarely see their language, culture, or environment represented in textbooks and learning materials. This lack of recognition contributes to low retention and engagement, especially among young learners whose formal education is already disrupted by seasonal migration events. For many families, formal school education remains both a hope and a challenge. Schools along migratory routes are rare, and when available, the teaching materials are




detached from the lived realities of pastoral and community life. While curricula promote literacy, they often fail to affirm the child's identity or celebrate their own knowledge systems. The Gojri Nature-Culture Resource was conceived as a response to this gap and as a bridge between the world of formal learning and the world of the pastures.

Why the Gojri Nature-Culture Resource?

The idea for this resource emerged from conversations with pastoral families, teachers, and community elders who shared a common concern: children were beginning to lose connection with their mother tongue and cultural identity. As migration patterns change and pastoral livelihoods face increasing pressure from climate variability and policy constraints, the transmission of oral traditions has weakened. Younger generations often grow up bilingual, but with limited reading and writing skills in Gojri. Combining Gojri words with an English alphabet book, not only makes the process of learning English more inclusive, enjoyable, and relatable, but it also achieves the sharing of the beautiful Gojri language, script and culture with the next generation.

Language, however, is more than a means of communication; it is a vessel of knowledge. In every Gojri word lies an ecological insight; the name of a herb used for healing, the call used to guide livestock, the expression for changing weather, and the song that marks the start of migration.




When such words fade from daily use, an entire cultural and ecological worldview risks being forgotten. Creating the alphabet booklet was therefore an act of preservation and empowerment. It was not simply about teaching the alphabets and letters of Gojri, but about teaching children to see and feel their cultural and natural world through their own language. This resource makes literacy a doorway to self-recognition, and to understanding that their language, their songs, their tools, and their landscapes are valuable and worthy of pride, learning, nurturing and preserving.

Local Context: Learning in Motion

The Gujjar and Bakerwal communities live in one of the most diverse ecological regions of the Himalayas, migrating seasonally between the lower forests of Jammu and the alpine meadows of Kashmir and Ladakh. This constant movement shapes both their livelihoods and their learning systems. Traditional education among these communities has always been oral, passed through stories, riddles, proverbs, and folk songs sung by the elders during long migrations or around evening fires.

However, the introduction of formal schooling, while important, has not adapted to the realities of mobile life. Schools remain stationary, while families move. Textbooks speak of cities and plains, while pastoral children live among pines, rivers, and sheep. Language becomes another barrier: few teachers in government schools are fluent in Gojri, and very few teaching materials incorporate pastoral culture.



This is where The Gojri Nature-Culture Resource finds its significance. Developed collaboratively through Himalayan Pastoral Trust's Grasslands to Classrooms initiative and Nature Classrooms, it aims to bring teaching-learning spaces and classrooms closer to the community by making learning culturally and ecologically visible and relevant. By connecting alphabets to elements of nature and pastoral life, the resource helps children see themselves reflected in what they learn. For instance, the letter B is linked to Bakri (goat), an animal that defines their livelihood and J is Jaberdi, a water pond constructed to harvest and store the rainwater that sustains both people and herds in climate crisis situations that have come.

Development of the Resource

The process of creating the resource was collaborative and participatory. It began with discussions involving the Nature Classrooms' team - an organisation having expertise in creating locally-culturally-ecologically relevant material, community educators, and young people who brainstormed the most meaningful words for each alphabet. The guiding principle was inclusivity and the idea that every letter should connect with something familiar to the teacher and the child, something rooted in their lived environment.




How the Resource Can Be Used

This booklet is designed for flexibility and accessibility. It can be used in several ways to promote learning both in and outside classrooms:

In Mobile Schools: Teachers and educators can use the resource as a visual aid to introduce letters through interactive activities - matching words with pictures, singing alphabet songs, or storytelling using each letter. Lessons can integrate environmental and cultural themes such as animal care, seasonal migration, or local crafts. Since many pastoral families move seasonally, this booklet can serve as a portable teaching-learning resource that can be displayed in tents, or grazing camps.

Creative Expression: Each letter can serve as a starting point for local stories, riddles, or folk songs. Elders can share tales associated with the objects or animals depicted, turning literacy lessons into spaces for oral tradition revival. Children can be encouraged to draw, colour, or create their own alphabet cards using materials from their surroundings, blending art, literacy, and cultural learning.

Environmental Learning: This resource doubles as a tool for ecological education. Teachers can use the images to discuss local species, weather patterns, or conservation, fostering awareness about local nature, livelihoods and cultural practices linked to the environment, and climate change and resilience.



A Tool for Reviving Belonging

At its heart, this resource is more than an educational tool, it is a statement of belonging. It reminds young learners that their language, however small or overlooked, is a part of the world's cultural and ecological diversity. It asserts that literacy should not erase local knowledge, but illuminate it. In celebrating Gojri words, the resource celebrates the Gujjar-Bakarwal way of seeing - where nature is not separate from culture, and learning is inseparable from living. Each letter becomes a symbol of continuity, carrying forward stories, wisdom, and identity, from one generation to the next.

Through initiatives like these, we envision a future where every pastoral teacher and child can teach and learn in a language that speaks of their land, their animals, and their dreams. Because to teach a child in their mother tongue is not merely to give them words — it is to give them a world of connection and possibilities to their local ecologies, their communities and their lands.

Shahid Sulaiman
Founder, Himalayan Pastoral Trust



اس چارٹ کو ہر حرف فطرت تے خانہ بدوشی آلی زندگی گا پہلو نال جڑیو ہے مثال کا طور ور
 حرف "J" حرف بکری نال جوڑیو گیو ہے۔ وہ جانور جیہڑو ان کی معیشت کی بنیاد ہے۔ تے "B"
 جیڑنال، یعنی وہ پانی آو تلاب جیہڑو بارش کا پانی نا ذخیر و کرن واسطے بنایو جائے

چارٹ کی بنیاد

اس چارٹ کی بنیاد "ہمالین پستورل ٹرسٹ" ہور "نیچر کلاس رومز" کی ٹیم جیہڑی اس طرح
 کا تعلیمی مواد تیار کرن مامہارت رکھے نے مل کے رکھی ہے

چارٹ کا استعمال گو طریقو

موبائل اسکولاں ما استاد اس چارٹ نا آوازی مدد کا طور ور حرف نا پہچانو، تصویری مقابلہ،
 گیت گانا، یا کہانیں سنان کے ذریعے استعمال کر سکیں۔ سبق ما خانہ بدوشی کی زندگی، مال
 چوکھر کی دیکھ بھال، موسمی تبدیلی، یا مقامی ہنر نا شامل کیو جاسکے۔
 تخلیقی اظہار واسطے، ہر حرف اک کہانی، بھارت، یا لوک گیت کی بنیاد بن سکے ہور یوہ چارٹ
 ماحولیات نا سمجھن کو ذریعو بھی ہے۔ استاد اس کے ذریعے مقامی بیڑپوداں، مال چوکھر،
 موسماں، یا پانی کے ذریعاں ور گل کر سکیں تا نچے بچاں ما فطرت تے ماحول کی حفاظت
 کو شعور پیداوے۔

شاہد سلیمان

بانی، ہمالین پستورل ٹرسٹ

مُج ساری خانہ بدوش پریوراں واسطے تعلیم اک امید بھی ہے تے اک آزمائش بھی۔ ہجرت کا رستاں وراسکول کہٹ ہیں، تے جیہڑا موجود ہیں، ان کا نصاب تیں چرواہاں آلی زندگی کی جھلک غائب ہے۔ حالانکہ تعلیمی نصاب تعلیم نابادوے ہووہ اکثر بچہ کی پچھاڑنا قبول کرن یا اس کی برادری کا علمی نظام جن ماں اناں نامہارت ہے۔ اسما "گو جری۔ انگلش حروف تہجی چارٹ" اس خلانا پھرن واسطے تیار کیو گیو ہے تانجے رسمی تعلیم کی دینا تے ڈھو کاں کی دینا کے بشکار اک پل قائم کیو جاسکے۔

گو جری۔ انگلش حروف تہجی چارٹ کی ضرورت

اس چارٹ کو خیال اس فکر تو ہووے جھڑی گل بات 'ہمالین پستورل ٹرسٹ' کے نال خانہ بروش کنباں، استادان، تے بزرگاں کے بشکار ہوئی۔ سب اک ہی فکر مندی کو اظہار کر رہیا تھا کہ بچہ اپنی مادری زبان تے ثقافتی جڑاں تیں دور ہوتا جا رہیا ہیں۔ موسمی تبدیلی تے بدلتا بالاتاں نے خانہ بدوش زندگی نا خطرہ ماسٹ دتو ہے۔ نتیجہ کا طور و زبانی روایتاں کو سلسلو کمزور ہون لگو ہے۔ اس واسطے انگریزی حروف نا گو جری الفاظ نال جوڑن کو مقصد صرف زبان سکھانو نہیں بلکن زبان جین کو احساس دینو ہے تانجے بچہ انگریزی سکھتاں و ان اپنی زبان تے اپنا کلچر نال بھی جڑیا رہیں۔

مادری زبان ہور تعلیم

کشمیر کی وادیاں جنوبی ایشیا کی سب سے بڑی موسمی خانہ بدوش یعنی گوجر تے بکروال، لوکاں کی ہجرتاں کو اک ٹھکانو ہے۔ گوجر اور بکروال قبائل صدیوں میں ات اپنی زمی تے ماحول کے نال ڈونگا لگاؤ سنگ زندگی گزار رہیا ہیں۔ ان کی زندگی اک نظم ہے، یعنی موسماں، مال چوکھر، تے ڈھوکاں کے نال ہجرت کی اک لگاتار دھن ہے اسی دھن مان کو علم تے عقل، ان کی ثقافت، تے ان کا صدیاں پرانا تجربہ چھپیا ہیں۔ جہڑا زبانی روایتاں یا عملی تربیت کے ذریعے پیڑھی در پیڑھی منتقل ہوتا آیا ہیں۔ ان کی مادری زبان گوجری ہے۔ اک اسی زبان جیہڑی چرواہاں آلی زندگی کا طور طریقاں، محاوراں، لوک گیتاں، جانوراں تے بوٹاں کی کہانیاں تے کہاوٹاں نال مالا مال ہے۔ یاہ زبان ان کی سوچ، ان کو احساس زندگی، تے ان کا ماحول کے نال ان کا قریبی تعلقات ناظاہر کرے۔

ہور اس گہرا رشتہ کے باوجود، گوجری زبان نارسی تعلیمی نظام ما کوئے خاص جا حاصل نہیں۔ خانہ بدوش بچاں نا اسی زباناں ما تعلیم شروع کرنی پوئے جیہڑی ان واسطے اجنبی ہیں، نتیجہ کا طورور ان کا گھریلو تجرباں تے نصابی علم کے بشکار اک خللید ا ہو جائے۔ جد گوجری زبان تعلیمی نصاب ما شامل نہیں ہوتی، تاں بچہ نا اپنو ماحول، ثقافت، یا شناخت کتاباں ما نہیں لبھتی۔ یاہ نمائندگی کی کمی تعلیم سنگ جڑاؤ نا کہٹ ہون تے کہٹ حاضری کی وجہ بنے، خاص طورور ان بچاں ما جن کی تعلیم پہلاں ہی موسمی ہجرت میں متاثر ہوتی وے۔

Aa

اجڑی

Ajardi

ا + ج + ژ + ی

Ajard refers to a flock of sheep and goats, and Ajardi is the person who grazes and manages the flock.



Bb

بکری

Bakri

ب + ک + ر + ی

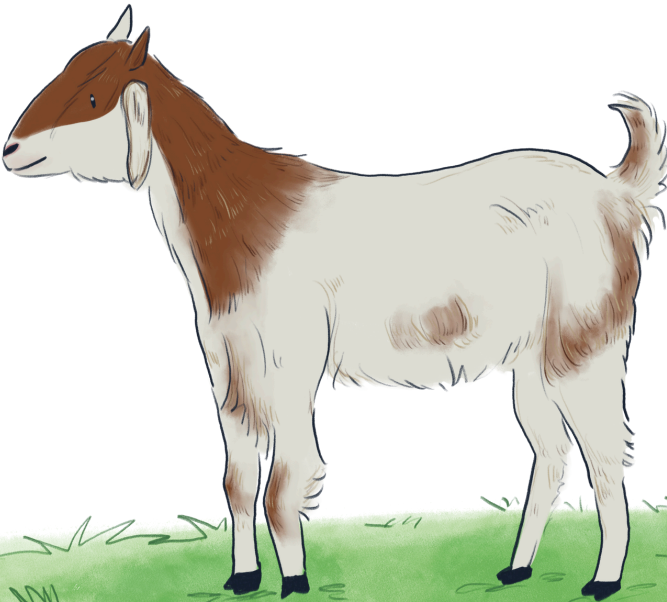
Goats are one of the most important animals in the nomadic pastoral life of Gujjar-Bakarwals. They provide milk, meat, wool, and are very adaptive to mountains.

There are different kind of goats reared by the nomads of Kashmir.

Kaghani Bakri is known for its hardiness and adaptability

Poonchi Bakri is famous for good milk production

Gaddi Bakri is valued for thick wool





Bakri


Bakri, Bakri, soft and white,
Wakes with sun and sleeps at night.
Climbing rocks with silent grace,
Leaves no trail, yet knows her place.

Bell around her neck goes ding,
Echoes through the pine trees ring.
Over meadows, near the stream,
She walks like wind inside a dream.

Milk she gives, so pure and warm,
Feeds the camp through cold and storm.
Wool for shawls, and meat for stew,
Bakri gives and asks so few.

Dadi says, "she is our pride,"
She walks with flocks by Majeed's side.
Born to roam, but knows her way,
From Pir Galli to Harmukh High.

Bakri, Bakri, not just a beast
She's heart and soul of every feast.
In every tale the elders say,
The goat walks with us, day by day

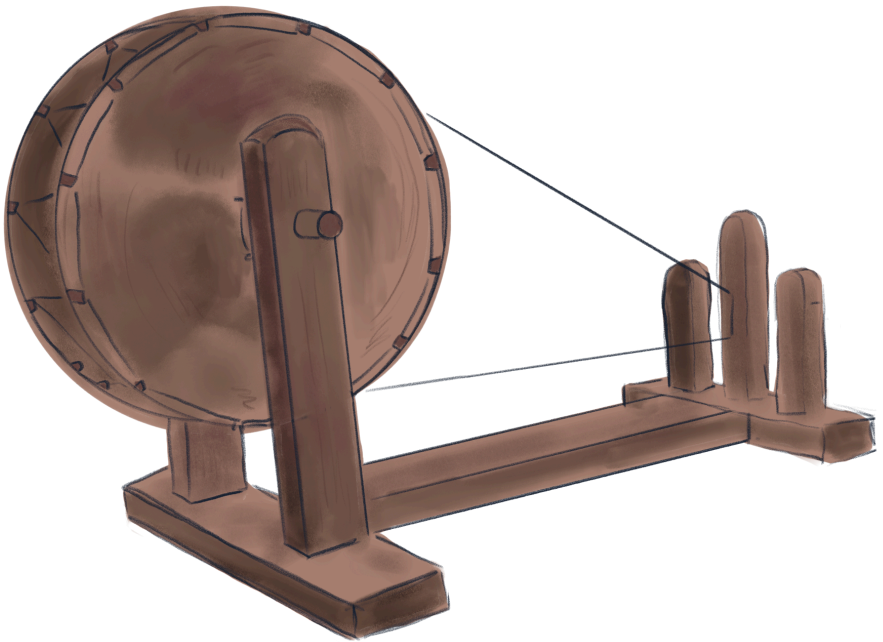


Cc

چرکھو

Charkho چ + ر + ک + ہ + و

Charkho is a traditional spinning wheel used to spin natural fibers into yarn. Among Gujjar-Bakarwals, the Charkho is often used to spin sheep wool into a thread, which is later woven into blankets, shawls, and ropes.



Dd

ڈھوک

Dhok

ڈ + ہ + و + ک

Dhok are the high-altitude summer meadows or pastures where nomads migrate with their herds during the summer grazing season. They become the school as well as playground for children during this time.



Ee

اینو

Eenu

ا + ی + ن + و

Eenu is a round, coiled ring made of cloth or grass and is used by people to carry pots or loads on their heads.



Ff

فُطْرِي

Fu'rie

ف + ر + ي

Fu'rie is a traditional handwoven mat made from grasses. It is known to keep the floor warm in winters and cool in summers.



Gg

گچھی

Guchii

گ + چ + ہ + ی

Guchii is a rare, wild morel mushrooms found in the high-altitude forests and meadows of the Himalayas. It has a distinctive honeycomb shape and is highly valued for its rich flavour and medicinal properties.



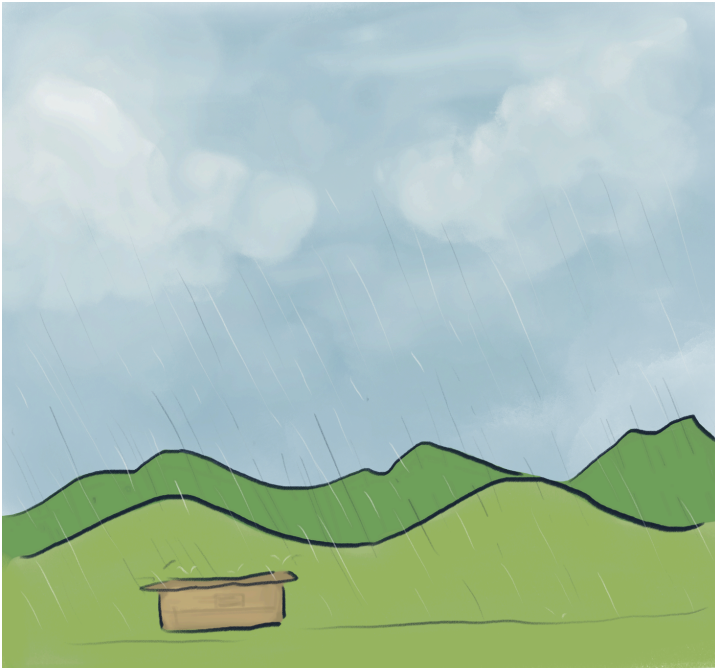
Hh

ہڑاس

Hadras

ہ + ژ + ا + س

Hardas or hail are small, hard balls of ice that are formed inside thunderstorms. Strong winds inside a cloud push raindrops up and down until they freeze into little ice balls. Hardas can fall during summer storms, especially in the mountains and animals are provided shelter to protect them. It makes a loud tapping or banging sound on rooftops, tents, and fields.



ہڑاس (Hail)

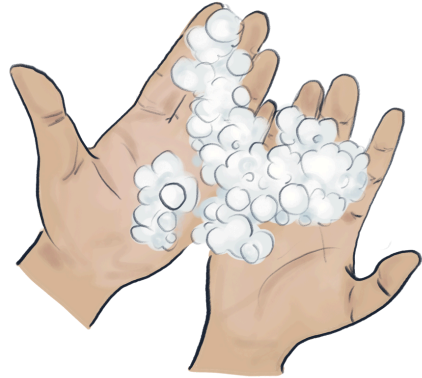
ہڑاس آئی واگے نال
اگے کتو چھے مال

اسمان کڑے اک کڑکار
سارا ٹکیں ٹارا بشکار

اسمان لسکے تمبو بھی کھسکے
اجرٹی بھی پچھو اجرٹے نال

چھٹی چلے رارو پار
چلو بچھو توں گی بہار

ہڑاس رکی بکریں سکیں
چلو بلیو چا بھی تپی



Ii

اِئِي

Itti

اِ + ت + ي

Itti (Gaddi) is a small pile or bundle, often of grass, firewood, or twigs.



Jz

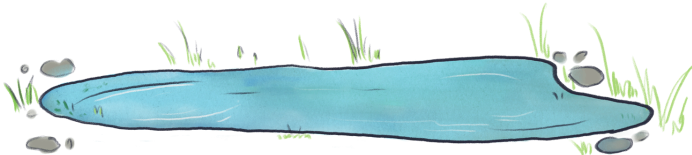
جبرط

Jaberd

ج + ب + رط

Jaberd is a small water pond constructed to harvest and store the rainwater.

A Jaberd serves as a vital drinking water source for livestock such as sheep, goats, and cattle during the grazing seasons in drought months when natural springs dry out. In the nomadic way of life, maintaining these ponds has become essential for ensuring that animals have access to water in the alpine grassland region.





Kk

گُنْجی

Kunji

ک + ن + ج + ی

Kunji saag (fiddlehead fern) are the tightly curled young leaves of certain ferns especially the Ostrich Fern. In mountain areas, pastoral and nomadic families gather them in season and cook them as a special delicacy. Nutritious and tasty, they're usually boiled first and then stir-fried or added to simple dishes. It should be harvested carefully so the plants keep growing.



ل

لوئی

Loh'ii

ل + و + ئ

Loh'ii is a traditional woollen pastoral shawl. It is handwoven from local sheep wool, offering warmth and protection against the chill of the mountains. The Loh'ii is not just a clothing, it's a symbol of identity.



Mm

مهيس

Mehas

م + ه + ي + س

Mehas is the Gojri word for buffalo. The buffalo is highly valued for its milk, strength, and resilience. The milk is often used to make ghee, curd, cheese, and butter, the staples of the pastoral diet.



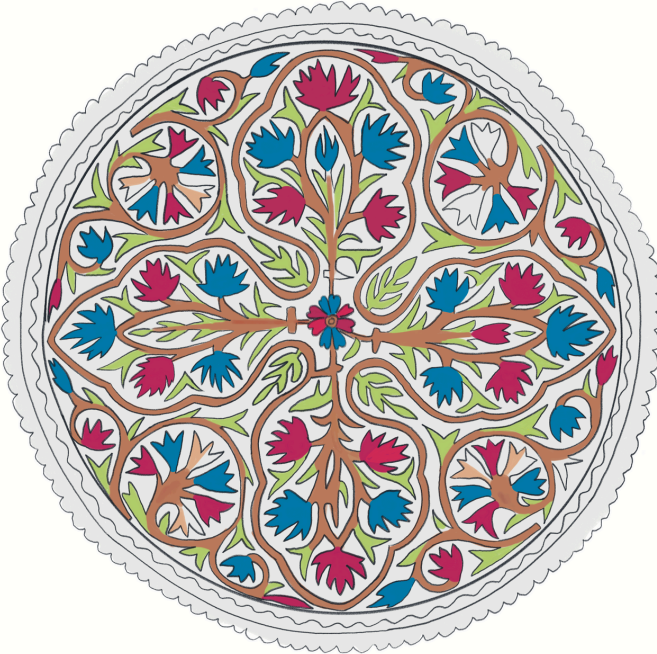
Nn

نَمْدَه

Namda

ن + م + د + ا

Namda is a traditional woollen carpet made through felting, a technique where wool is flattened and bound together without weaving. It is a significant craft in Kashmir and other regions, and known for its intricate floral designs and vibrant patterns.



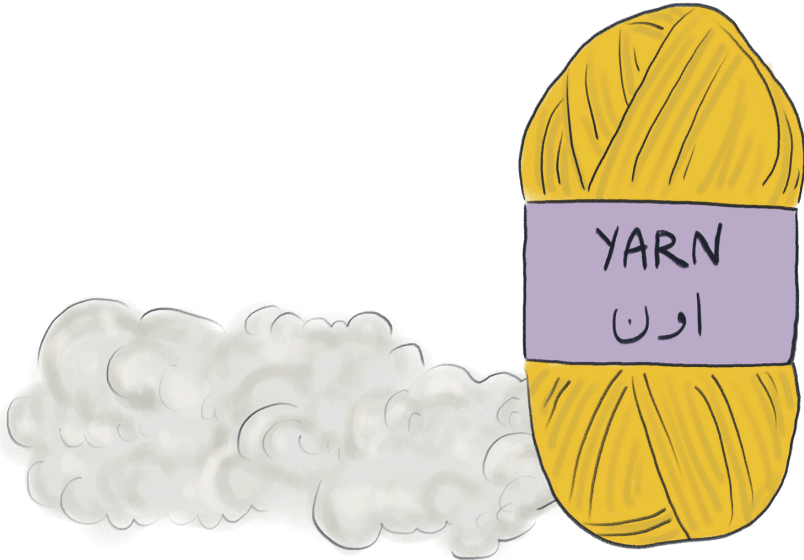
Oo

أُون

Oon

أ + و + ن

Oon means wool in Gojri. It is one of the most valuable resources for pastoralists, sheared from goats and sheep. Oon is used to make warm clothes, blankets, ropes, and traditional items like Loh'ii, and Namda.



Pp

پَتْرِيس

Patris پ + ت + ر + ی + س

Patris is a medicinal plant. It is well-known among pastoral communities for its therapeutic properties. The roots of this plant are highly valued and used in traditional medicine to treat ailments such as diarrhea, general weakness, and fever.



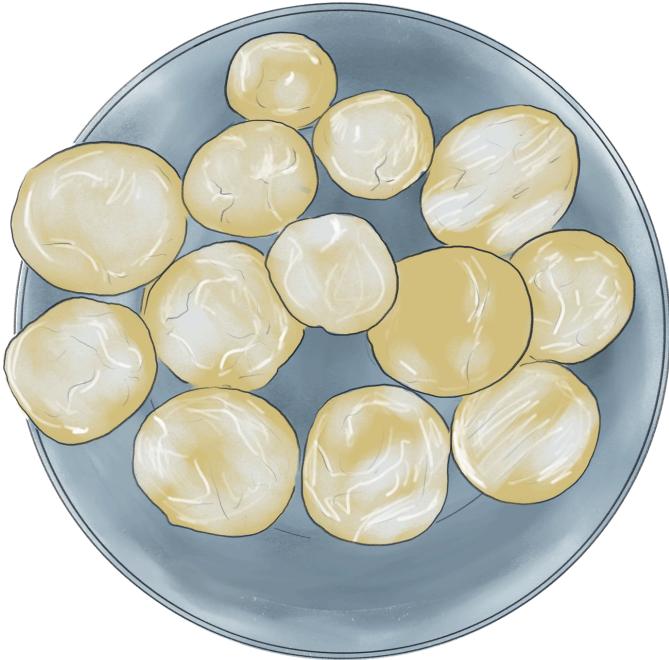
Qq

قُرّان

Qudain

قُ + رُ + ا + ن

Qudain is a type of local cheese made from buttermilk by drying out the water from it. This traditional cheese is an essential part of the diet among pastoral community.



Rr

رَتَن جَوَگ

Ratanjog

ر + ت + ن + ج + و + گ

Ratanjog is a medicinal herb found in the Himalayan region. Its roots produce a natural red dye and are used in traditional medicine to heal wounds, improve skin health, and relieve pain. Pastoral communities value Ratanjog for both its healing and colouring properties.



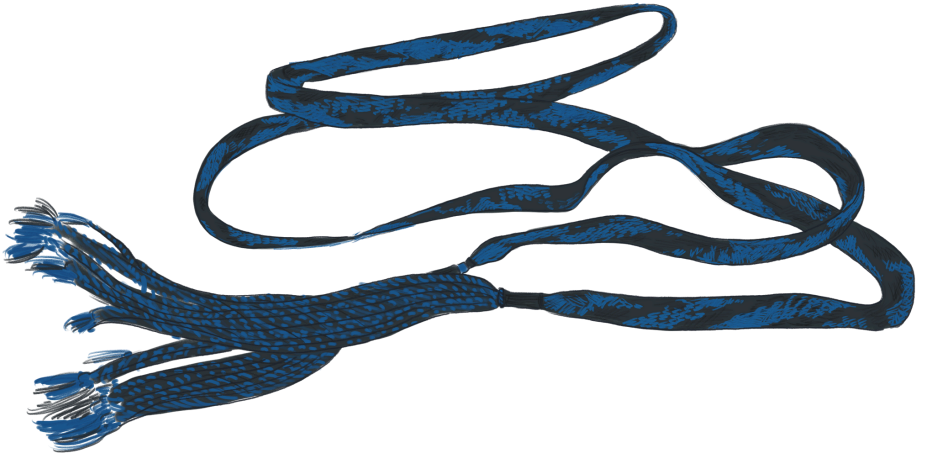
Ss

سپلی

Sai'le

س + ی + ل + ئ

In Gojri language, the word "Sai'le" means a rope made of goat's wool. It is known for its strength.



Tt

ٹھارو

Tha'roo ط + ه + ا + ر + و

Tha'roo is a traditional wooden hut, a summer home made of a mud-covered roof of pine leaves and shrubs under it, built by nomads migrating to mountain pastures during the summer season.





Tha'roo

Tha'roo stands with roof of pine,
Built in pastures, strong and fine
 Wooden walls and leafy top,
 Cool inside when heat won't stop
It's home for months when summer's near,
 With goats and songs and simple cheer

Uu

الْلُو

Ullu

أ + ل + ل + و

It is a quiet, night-time bird with large, round eyes, and soft feathers. Ullu comes out when it's dark and can see even in the night. It lives in trees and old huts and makes a soft "hoo-hoo" sound. The owl is a watchful bird, often seen sitting still, listening to every sound.



Vv

وسکٹ

Vascut

و + س + ک + ٹ

Vascut is a traditional men's wear. It is made from thick, warm fabric to protect against the cold winds of the mountains. A vascut has pockets, which are used to carry small, useful things.



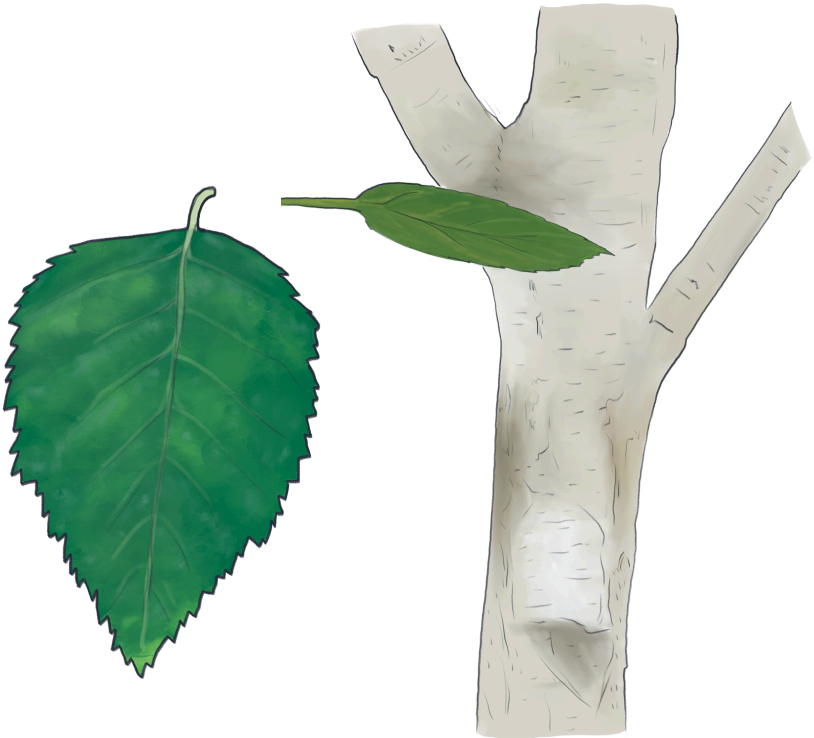
Ww

وارکو

Warko

و + ک + ر + ا + و

Warko means a page or a piece of paper used for writing or drawing. Long ago, before notebooks and printed books, people made pages from natural things like Birch tree also known as Purzi Buto. A warko could carry a message, a memory, a map, or even a prayer.



Xx

زِمَى

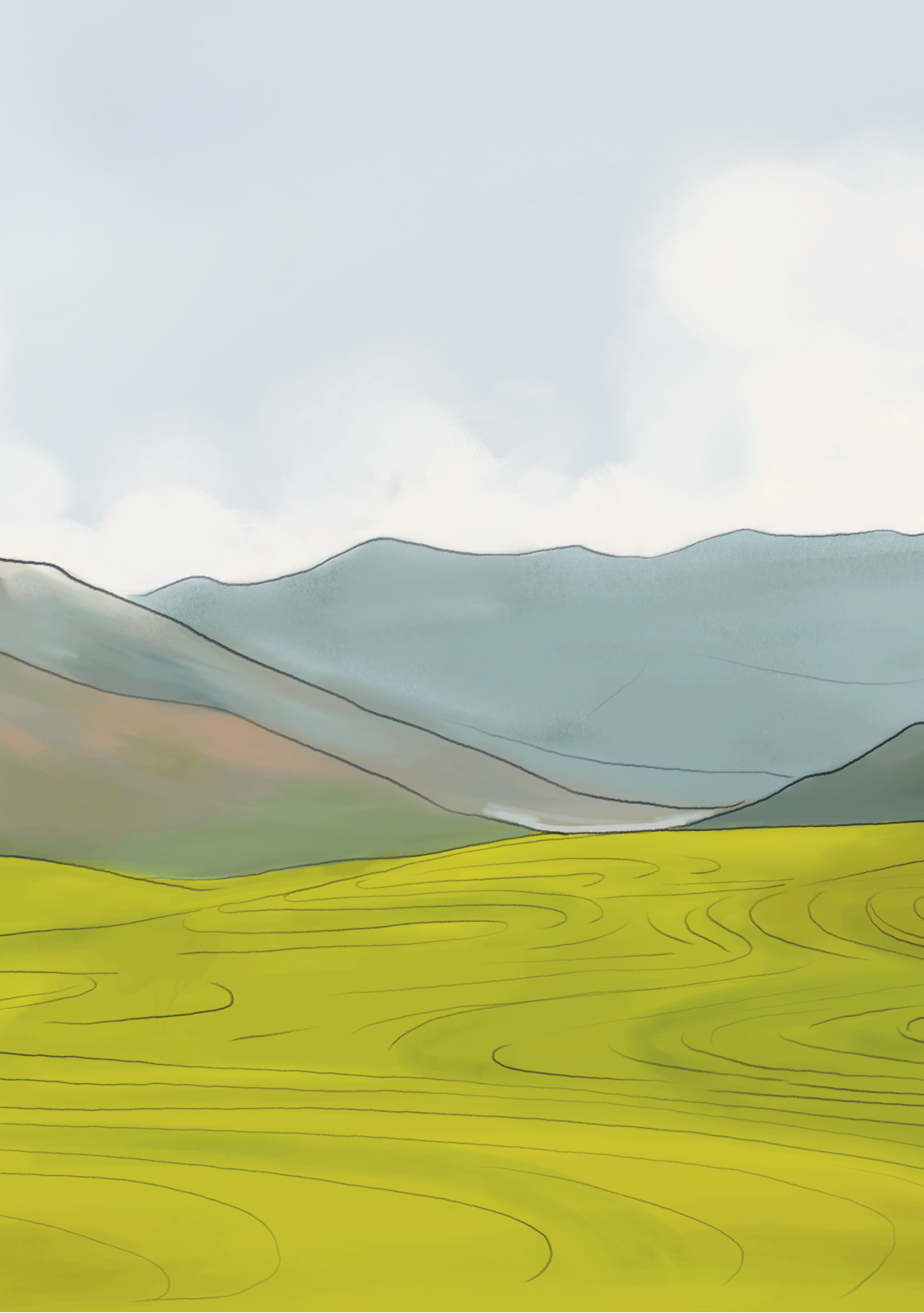
Xi'me

زِمَى + م + ي

Xei'me means land, especially cultivated or fertile land. It is the ground that not only supports our footsteps but also provides life through what it grows.

For pastoralists who move with their animals, Xei'me is a companion that nourishes both people and herds. It gives grass, water, and shelter, and must be treated with deep respect, care, and love.





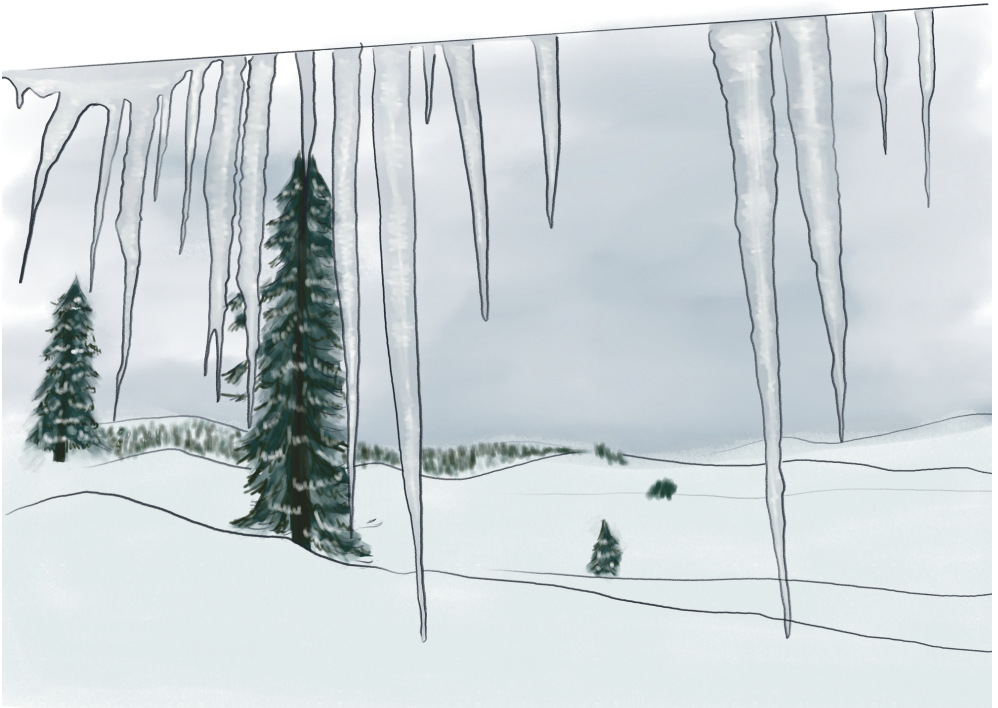
Yy

يخ

Yakh

ي + خ

Yakh, is a Gojri word for extreme cold. It reflects the harsh weather conditions, and reminds people of crossing icy rivers and enduring freezing nights in high-altitude mountains.



Zz

زیتون

Zaitoon ز + ی + ت + و + ن

Zaitoon means olive in Gojri. It is a small green or black fruit that grows on the Zaitoon tree. Zaitoon is known for its oil, which is used for cooking, healing, and even as a natural skin rub.



Colouring Activity

Jaberd

جَابَرْدُ



Namda

نَمْدَه



This book dreams to reach children from the nomadic pastoralist Gujjar-Bakarwal community in Jammu and Kashmir. Through this Gojri Nature-Culture Resource, it intends to bring focus to the landscape, ecology, knowledge, and culture of the Gujjar-Bakarwals.



The Rangelands we Conserve, The Heritage we Preserve, The Communities we Empower — It all takes Roots in Pastoral Traditions.



Connecting Learning to the Natural World

From Grasslands to Classrooms

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