

ORIGINAL ARTICLE

**PLANT DIVERSITY OF POYYUR AYYANAAR SACRED GROVE AT ARIYALUR DISTRICT,
TAMIL NADU**

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ABSTRACT

In the present study, plant diversity on Poyyur Ayyanaar Sacred groves were conducted and the results were reported here for the first time. The results revealed the presence of In the present study, the plant diversity of Poyyur Ayyanaar Sacred groves were conducted and the results were reported here for the first time. Ayyanaar Sacred Grove comprises totally of about 185 plant species belonged to 50 families and 120 genera were recorded. Among the plant families distribution, Euphorbiaceae was the dominant families followed by Acanthaceae and Malvaceae, Asteraceae and Caesalpiniaceae, Fabaceae, Mimosaceae, Solanaceae, Amaranthaceae, Poaceae and others. Among the plant genericwise distribution, *Sida* and *Solanum* were the dominant genera followed by *Cyperus*, *Euphorbia*, *Senna*, *Albizia*, *Amaranthus* and others. Thus the present study indicated as the basic evidence of plant diversity to support the view that the sacred groves are the repository and home to several threatened plants which needs for urgent conservation.

Keywords: Plant diversity, Sacred grove, Management, Tamil Nadu

1. INTRODUCTION

Traditional societies all over the world have established sacred natural places and protected them from destruction from time immemorial (Verschuuren *et al.*, 2009). Since the ancient days, setting aside pockets of forest lands has been the practice for centuries in India. To protect these biological resources more meaningfully, a religious tag was attached which served over the years as a key factor in genetic conservation through the mechanism of Sacred Groves. Sacred Groves thus represent a tradition of conservation by the people much prior to the modern concepts of "Wildlife Reserves". The practice of assigning a patch of forest as the abode of Gods or Goddesses is not new. The societies of Greece, Roman, Asia and Africa had long preserved sections of the natural environment as sacred grove to Gods and Goddesses (Gadgil and Vartak, 1975; Khiewtam and Ramakrishnan, 1989; Hughes, 1984; Ramakrishnan, 1998). Many areas have been declared as protected areas and various *in-situ* and *ex-situ* conservation practices are being undertaken in different parts of the world. Many laws governing the biodiversity conservation have been enacted from time to time including "The Biological Diversity Act 2002" of India. Besides these formal laws, there were many traditional conservation practices of indigenous communities

in many parts of the world, which contributed to the conservation and protection of biodiversity. A good example of such traditional practices is the conservation and protection of small forest patches by dedicating them to the local deities by various indigenous communities of the world. Such forest patches are called Sacred Groves.

Sacred groves are like the traditional natural museum with live specimens conserved by the local community through religious practice (Karthikeyan and Tangavelou, 2011). In India, several reports have been discussed on the floristic wealth of sacred groves from several states including Tamil Nadu. In this paper, the floristic wealth of Poyyur Ayyanaar Sacred Grove from Ariyalur district of Tamil Nadu state was reported here first time in order to know the plant diversity for conservation.

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

Study Area

The study area Poyyur Ayyanaar sacred grove covers an area of about 4 ha. and geographically located between N. 11.063 latitude and E . 79.109 longitude of Ariyalur taluk at Ariyalur district, Tamil Nadu. Temperature is moderately high and the average temperature during summer is 34°C and fewer less in winter. The average humidity ranged from 31 to 33% during November to December. Annual rainfall is ranging from 850 to 1000 mm. However, during the two decades the district has experienced rainfall only below normal. Most of the rains

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occur during north east monsoon. Soil is a ferruginous type with admixture of limestone. The soil is shallow in rocky areas and deeper in valley with little or no humus. The vegetation of Poyyur Ayyanaar Sacred Grove is degraded tropical forest with man-made cultivations.

Methods

Intensive field surveys were made during the year 2015-2016 to explore the plant diversity and the conservation status of the Poyyur Ayyanaar Sacred Grove at Ariyalur district in Tamil Nadu. All the plant specimens available in the study areas were collected for authenticity and the herbarium specimens are prepared by following the methodology of Jain and Rao (1976). Photographs were also taken. The herbarium specimens were identified with the help of the Flora of the Presidency of Madras (Gamble and Fischer, 1915 - 1936), The Flora of British India (Hooker, 1872 - 1897) and The Flora of Tamil Nadu Carnatic (Matthew, 1982). The Flora of Tamil Nadu by Henry *et al.*, (1987 and 1989) and Nair and Henry (1983) has been referred for the correct botanical names for the specimens identified. The herbarium specimens were prepared for all the plants and deposited at PG & Research Department of Botany, M. R. Arts College, Mannaargudi, Tamil Nadu for reference.

3. RESULTS

In the present study, the plant diversity of Poyyur Ayyanaar Sacred Grove comprises totally of about 185 plant species belonged to 50 families and 150 genera were recorded (Table 1). Among habitwise distribution, herbs were the dominant form represented by 514 % with 94 species followed by trees (20 % with 38 species), shrubs (19 % with 36 species), climbing herbs (8 % with 14 species), climbing shrubs (1 % with 2 species) and liana (>1 % with single species) respectively. Among the top 10 families, Euphorbiaceae was the dominant families represented by 16 % with 12 species followed by Acanthaceae and Malvaceae (14 % with 11 species each), Asteraceae and Caesalpiniaceae (10 % with 8 species each), fabaceae, Mimosaceae and Solanaceae (9 % with 7 species each), Amaranthaceae and Poaceae (8% with 6 species each) respectively. Among top 10 genericwise distribution, the genera such as *Sida* and *Solanum* were the dominant genera represented by 14 % with 5 species each followed by *Cyperus*, *Euphorbia* and *Senna* (9 % with 3 species each) and *Albizia* and *Amaranthus* by 6 % with two species each respectively.

Table 1. Floristic inventory recorded from Poyyur Ayyannar Sacred groves from Ariyalur district, Tamil Nadu.

S. No.	Botanical Name	Family	Habit
1	<i>Abelmoschus ficulneus</i> (L.) Wight & Arn.	Malvaceae	Shrub
2	<i>Abrus precatorius</i> L.	Fabaceae	Climbing herb
3	<i>Abutilon indicum</i> (L.) Sweet	Malvaceae	Shrub
4	<i>Acalypha indica</i> L.	Euphorbiaceae	Herb
5	<i>Achyranthes aspera</i> L.	Amaranthaceae	Herb
6	<i>Actinoscirpus grossus</i> (L.f.) Goetgh. & D.A.Simpson	Cyperaceae	Herb
7	<i>Aerva lanata</i> (L.) Juss.	Amaranthaceae	Herb
8	<i>Alangium salviifolium</i> (L.f.) Wangerin	Alangiaceae	Tree
9	<i>Albizia saman</i> (Jacq.) Merr.	Mimosaceae	Tree
10	<i>Albizia wightii</i> Wight & Arn.	Mimosaceae	Tree
11	<i>Allamanda cathartica</i> L.	Apocynaceae	Shrub
12	<i>Aloe vera</i> L.	Liliaceae	Herb
13	<i>Amaranthus caudatus</i> L.	Amaranthaceae	Herb
14	<i>Amaranthus spinosus</i> L.	Amaranthaceae	Herb
15	<i>Ammannia baccifera</i> L.	Lythraceae	Herb
16	<i>Andrographis echinoides</i> (L.) Nees	Acanthaceae	Herb
17	<i>Andrographis paniculata</i> (Burm.f.) Nees	Acanthaceae	Herb
18	<i>Andropogon pumilus</i> Roxb.	Poaceae	Herb
19	<i>Areca catechu</i> L.	Arecaceae	Tree
20	<i>Argemone mexicana</i> L.	Papaveraceae	Herb
21	<i>Aristida adscensionis</i> L.	Poaceae	Herb
22	<i>Aristolochia bracteolata</i> Lam.	Aristolochiaceae	Herb
23	<i>Artocarpus integer</i> (Thunb.) Merr.	Moraceae	Tree
24	<i>Asparagus racemosus</i> Willd.	Liliaceae	Climbing herb

25	<i>Azadirachta indica</i> A.Juss.	Meliaceae	Tree
26	<i>Bacopa monnieri</i> (L.) Wettst.	Scrophulariaceae	Herb
27	<i>Barleria cristata</i> L.	Acanthaceae	Herb
28	<i>Barleria prionitis</i> L.	Acanthaceae	Herb
29	<i>Bauhinia tomentosa</i> L.	Caesalpiniaceae	Tree
30	<i>Bidens pilosa</i> L.	Asteraceae	Herb
31	<i>Blepharis maderaspatensis</i> (L.) Heyne ex Roth	Acanthaceae	Herb
32	<i>Boerhavia procumbens</i> Banks ex Roxb.	Nyctaginaceae	Herb
33	<i>Borassus flabelliformis</i> L.	Arecaceae	Tree
34	<i>Cadaba fruticosa</i> (L.) Druce	Capparaceae	Shrub
35	<i>Calophyllum inophyllum</i> L.	Clusiaceae	Tree
36	<i>Calotropis gigantea</i> (L.) Dryand.	Asclepiadaceae	Shrub
37	<i>Canthium coromandelicum</i> (Burm.f.) Alston	Rubiaceae	Tree
38	<i>Cardiospermum halicacabum</i> L.	Sapindaceae	Climbing herb
39	<i>Catharanthus roseus</i> (L.) G.Don	Apocynaceae	Herb
40	<i>Celosia argentea</i> L.	Amaranthaceae	Herb
41	<i>Cenchrus ciliaris</i> L.	Poaceae	Herb
42	<i>Chamaerops humilis</i> L.	Arecaceae	Tree
43	<i>Chloris barbata</i> Sw.	Poaceae	Herb
44	<i>Chloris montana</i> Roxb.	Poaceae	Herb
45	<i>Chlorophytum tuberosum</i> (Roxb.) Baker	Liliaceae	Herb
46	<i>Cissus quadrangularis</i> L.	Vitaceae	Climbing shrub
47	<i>Citrullus colocynthis</i> (L.) Schrad.	Cucurbitaceae	Climbing herb
48	<i>Cleome gynandra</i> L.	Capparaceae	Herb
49	<i>Cleome viscosa</i> L.	Capparaceae	Herb
50	<i>Clerodendrum phlomidis</i> L.f.	Verbenaceae	Shrub
51	<i>Clitoria ternatea</i> L.	Fabaceae	Climbing herb
52	<i>Cocculus acuminatus</i> DC.	Menispermaceae	Climbing herb
53	<i>Cocculus hirsutus</i> (L.) W.Theob.	Menispermaceae	Climbing herb
54	<i>Cocos nucifera</i> L.	Arecaceae	Tree
55	<i>Coldenia procumbens</i> L.	Boraginaceae	Herb
56	<i>Commelina benghalensis</i> L.	Commelinaceae	Herb
57	<i>Convolvulus gangeticus</i> L.	Convolvulaceae	Herb
58	<i>Corchorus olitorius</i> L.	Tiliaceae	Herb
59	<i>Couropita guianensis</i> Aublet.	Lecythidaceae	Tree
60	<i>Crateva adansonii</i> subsp. <i>odora</i> (Buch.-Ham.) Jacobs	Capparaceae	Tree
61	<i>Crinum asiaticum</i> L.	Amaryllidaceae	Herb
62	<i>Crossandra infundibuliformis</i> (L.) Nees	Acanthaceae	Shrub
63	<i>Crotalaria verrucosa</i> L.	Fabaceae	Herb
64	<i>Croton bonplandianus</i> Baill.	Euphorbiaceae	Herb
65	<i>Curculigo orchioides</i> Gaertn.	Hypoxidaceae	Herb
66	<i>Cynodon dactylon</i> (L.) Pers.	Poaceae	Herb
67	<i>Cyperus articulatus</i> L.	Cyperaceae	Herb
68	<i>Cyperus distans</i> L.f.	Cyperaceae	Herb
69	<i>Cyperus pilosus</i> Vahl	Cyperaceae	Herb
70	<i>Cyperus rotundus</i> L.	Cyperaceae	Herb
71	<i>Datura metel</i> L.	Solanaceae	Herb
72	<i>Delonix regia</i> (Hook.) Raf.	Caesalpiniaceae	Tree

73	<i>Desmodium collinum</i> Loudon	Fabaceae	Herb
74	<i>Diospyros montana</i> Roxb.	Ebenaceae	Tree
75	<i>Dodonaea viscosa</i> (L.) Jacq.	Sapindaceae	Shrub
76	<i>Drimia indica</i> (Roxb.) Jessop	Liliaceae	Herb
77	<i>Eclipta prostrata</i> (L.) L.	Asteraceae	Herb
78	<i>Elatine alsinastrum</i> L.	Elatinaceae	Herb
79	<i>Elytraria acaulis</i> (L.f.) Lindau	Acanthaceae	Herb
80	<i>Epicarpurus orientalis</i> Blume	Moraceae	Tree
81	<i>Euphorbia antiquorum</i> L.	Euphorbiaceae	Shrub
82	<i>Euphorbia parviflora</i> L.	Euphorbiaceae	Herb
83	<i>Euphorbia tirucalli</i> L.	Euphorbiaceae	Shrub
84	<i>Euphorbia tortilis</i> Rottler. ex Ainslie.	Euphorbiaceae	Shrub
85	<i>Evolvulus alsinoides</i> (L.) L.	Convolvulaceae	Herb
86	<i>Ficus benghalensis</i> L.	Moraceae	Tree
87	<i>Ficus talbotii</i> King	Moraceae	Tree
88	<i>Furcraea foetida</i> (L.) Haw.	Agavaceae	Shrub
89	<i>Glinus oppositifolius</i> (L.) Aug.DC.	Aizoaceae	Herb
90	<i>Gloriosa superba</i> L.	Liliaceae	Climbing herb
91	<i>Gmelina asiatica</i> L.	Verbenaceae	Shrub
92	<i>Gomphrena globosa</i> L.	Amaranthaceae	Herb
93	<i>Hardwickia binata</i> Roxb.	Caesalpiniaceae	Tree
94	<i>Heliotropium indicum</i> L.	Boraginaceae	Herb
95	<i>Hemidesmus indicus</i> (L.) R. Br. ex Schult.	Asclepiadaceae	Climbing herb
96	<i>Hibiscus rosa-sinensis</i> L.	Malvaceae	Shrub
97	<i>Hybanthus enneaspermus</i> (L.) F.Muell.	Violaceae	Herb
98	<i>Ixora coccinea</i> L.	Rubiaceae	Shrub
99	<i>Jasminum angustifolium</i> (L.) Willd.	Oleaceae	Climbing shrub
100	<i>Jatropha curcas</i> L.	Euphorbiaceae	Shrub
101	<i>Jatropha glandulifera</i> Roxb.	Euphorbiaceae	Shrub
102	<i>Justicia adhatoda</i> L.	Acanthaceae	Shrub
103	<i>Justicia gendarussa</i> Burm.f.	Acanthaceae	Herb
104	<i>Justicia japonica</i> Thunb.	Acanthaceae	Herb
105	<i>Lannea coromandelica</i> (Houtt.) Merr.	Anacardiaceae	Tree
106	<i>Lantana camara</i> L.	Verbenaceae	Shrub
107	<i>Lawsonia inermis</i> L.	Lythraceae	Shrub
108	<i>Leucas aspera</i> (Willd.) Link	Lamiaceae	Herb
109	<i>Leucas hirta</i> (B.Heyne ex Roth) Spreng.	Lamiaceae	Herb
110	<i>Leucas martinicensis</i> (Jacq.) R.Br.	Lamiaceae	Herb
111	<i>Madhuca longifolia</i> (J.Koenig ex L.) J.F.Macbr.	Sapotaceae	Tree
112	<i>Mangifera indica</i> L.	Anacardiaceae	Tree
113	<i>Melia azedarach</i> L.	Meliaceae	Tree
114	<i>Melochia corchorifolia</i> L.	Sterculiaceae	Herb
115	<i>Mimosa pudica</i> L.	Mimosaceae	Herb
116	<i>Morinda coreia</i> Buch.-Ham.	Rubiaceae	Tree
117	<i>Moringa pterygosperma</i> Gaertn.	Moringaceae	Tree
118	<i>Mukia maderaspatana</i> (L.) M.Roem.	Cucurbitaceae	Climbing herb
119	<i>Musa × paradisiaca</i> L.	Musaceae	Tree
120	<i>Nelumbium speciosum</i> Willd.	Nymphaeaceae	Herb

121	<i>Neptunia oleracea</i> Lour.	Mimosaceae	Herb
122	<i>Nerium oleander</i> L.	Apocynaceae	Shrub
123	<i>Ocimum gratissimum</i> L.	Lamiaceae	Herb
124	<i>Ocimum tenuiflorum</i> L.	Lamiaceae	Herb
125	<i>Oldenlandia corymbosa</i> L.	Rubiaceae	Herb
126	<i>Opuntia dillenii</i> (Ker Gawl.) Haw.	Cactaceae	Shrub
127	<i>Pachygone plukenetii</i> (DC.) Miers .	Menispermaceae	Climbing herb
128	<i>Parthenium hysterophorus</i> L.	Asteraceae	Shrub
129	<i>Passiflora foetida</i> L.	Passifloraceae	Shrub
130	<i>Pavonia odorata</i> Willd.	Malvaceae	Herb
131	<i>Pedaliium murex</i> L.	Pedaliaceae	Herb
132	<i>Pentatropis capensis</i> (L. f.) Bullock	Asclepiadaceae	Shrub
133	<i>Pergularia daemia</i> (Forssk.) Chiov.	Asclepiadaceae	Climbing herb
134	<i>Phyla nodiflora</i> (L.) Greene	Verbenaceae	Herb
135	<i>Phyllanthus amarus</i> Schum.& Thonn.	Euphorbiaceae	Herb
136	<i>Phyllanthus distichus</i> Hook. & Arn.	Euphorbiaceae	Shrub
137	<i>Phyllanthus emblica</i> L.	Euphorbiaceae	Tree
138	<i>Physalis pubescens</i> L.	Solanaceae	Herb
139	<i>Pithecellobium dulce</i> (Roxb.) Benth.	Mimosaceae	Tree
140	<i>Polyalthia longifolia</i> (Sonn.) Thwaites	Annonaceae	Tree
141	<i>Pongamia pinnata</i> (L.) Pierre	Fabaceae	Tree
142	<i>Portulaca oleracea</i> L.	Portulacaceae	Herb
143	<i>Portulaca quadrifolia</i> L.	Portulacaceae	Herb
144	<i>Prosopis cineraria</i> (L.) Druce	Mimosaceae	Tree
145	<i>Prosopis juliflora</i> (Sw.) DC.	Mimosaceae	Shrub
146	<i>Psidium guajava</i> L.	Myrtaceae	Tree
147	<i>Ruellia tuberosa</i> L.	Acanthaceae	Herb
148	<i>Senna auriculata</i> (L.) Roxb.	Caesalpiniaceae	Shrub
149	<i>Senna italica</i> Mill.	Caesalpiniaceae	Shrub
150	<i>Senna sophera</i> (L.) Roxb.	Caesalpiniaceae	Tree
151	<i>Senna tora</i> (L.) Roxb.	Caesalpiniaceae	Herb
152	<i>Sesamum indicum</i> L.	Pedaliaceae	Herb
153	<i>Sesbania grandiflora</i> (L.) Pers.	Fabaceae	Shrub
154	<i>Sida acuta</i> Burm.f.	Malvaceae	Herb
155	<i>Sida rhombifolia</i> L.	Malvaceae	Herb
156	<i>Sida cordata</i> (Burm.f.) Borss.Waalk.	Malvaceae	Herb
157	<i>Sida cordifolia</i> L.	Malvaceae	Herb
158	<i>Sida spinosa</i> L.	Malvaceae	Herb
159	<i>Sigesbeckia orientalis</i> L.	Asteraceae	Herb
160	<i>Solanum indicum</i> L.	Solanaceae	Herb
161	<i>Solanum nigrum</i> L.	Solanaceae	Herb
162	<i>Solanum tematum</i> Ruiz & Pav.	Solanaceae	Herb
163	<i>Solanum torvum</i> Sw.	Solanaceae	Shrub
164	<i>Solanum trilobatum</i> L.	Solanaceae	Climbing herb
165	<i>Spermacoce hispida</i> L.	Rubiaceae	Herb
166	<i>Sphaeranthus indicus</i> L.	Asteraceae	Herb
167	<i>Sphagneticola calendulacea</i> (L.) Pruski	Asteraceae	Herb
168	<i>Tabernaemontana divaricata</i> (L.) R.Br. ex Roem. & Schult.	Apocynaceae	Shrub

169	<i>Tagetes erecta</i> L.	Asteraceae	Herb
170	<i>Tamarindus indica</i> L.	Caesalpiniaceae	Tree
171	<i>Tecoma stans</i> (L.) Juss. ex Kunth	Bignoniaceae	Shrub
172	<i>Tectona grandis</i> L.f.	Verbenaceae	Tree
173	<i>Tephrosia purpurea</i> (L.) Pers.	Fabaceae	Herb
174	<i>Terminalia catappa</i> L.	Combretaceae	Tree
175	<i>Thespesia populnea</i> (L.) Sol. ex Corrêa	Malvaceae	Tree
176	<i>Thevetia nerifolia</i> Juss. ex Steud.	Apocynaceae	Shrub
177	<i>Tragia involucrata</i> L.	Euphorbiaceae	Climbing herb
178	<i>Tribulus terrestris</i> L.	Zygophyllaceae	Herb
179	<i>Trichodesma indicum</i> (L.) Lehm.	Boraginaceae	Herb
180	<i>Tridax procumbens</i> L.	Asteraceae	Herb
181	<i>Triumfetta rotundifolia</i> Lam.	Tiliaceae	Herb
182	<i>Urena lobata</i> L.	Malvaceae	Shrub
183	<i>Vitex negundo</i> L.	Verbenaceae	Shrub
184	<i>Waltheria indica</i> L.	Sterculiaceae	Herb
185	<i>Ziziphus jujuba</i> Mill.	Rhamnaceae	Liana

4. DISCUSSION

Floristic study of vegetation is important to determine the distribution of food plants for wildlife (Ejtehad *et al.*, 2005) and prerequisite for much fundamental research in tropical community (Jayakumar *et al.*, 2011). The floristic vegetation of the sacred groves is the representatives of the relic climax vegetation of the Indian subcontinent and part of the socio-cultural traditions (Gadgil and Vartak, 1976). The present findings are comparable with other studies reported in sacred groves of adjoining districts such as Pudukottai, Thanjavur, Sivagangai in Tamil Nadu and other regions of India. In Tamil Nadu, several studies with respect to floristic inventory of sacred groves were reported includes 260 species in 176 genera and 62 families from Malliganatham (John Britto *et al.*, 2001a), 224 species in 175 genera and 63 families from Vamban (John Britto *et al.*, 2001b), 35 species in 32 genera and 22 families (Sridhar Reddy and Parthasarathy, 2006), 77 species in 61 genera and 30 families (Mani and Parthasarathy, 2006) from 4 sacred groves of Coromandel coast, 265 species from 50 sacred groves collectively (Karthikeyan and Tangavelou, 2011), 106 species belonging to 97 genera and 54 families from Manganampatti, Nadiamman and Suranviduthi village (Vinothkumar *et al.*, 2011), 185 species from 156 genera and 69 families (Vadivelu *et al.*, 2011a), 228 species from 197 genera and 85 families (Vadivelu *et al.*, 2011b), 262 species from 221 genera and 89 families from 21 sacred groves collectively (Tangavelou *et al.*, 2013) from

Pudukkottai district while 101 species from 91 genera and 51 families (Gandhi *et al.*, 2012a), 143 species from 129 genera and 58 families (Gandhi *et al.*, 2012b) of Sivagangai district, and 65 species from 64 genera and 43 families (Jayapal *et al.*, 2014a), 117 species from 102 genera and 51 families (Jayapal *et al.*, 2014b), 180 species from 158 genera and 75 families (Jayapal *et al.*, 2014a) from Thanjavur district, 98 species in 38 families and 76 genera from 33 sacred groves of

Theni district (Manikandan *et al.*, 2011), 98 species in 87 genera and 43 families from 11 miniature sacred groves. Sukumaran and Jeeva, (2008) of Kannyakumari district, 133 plant species from sacred groves in Pallipatty village of Madurai district (Ganesan *et al.*, 2007) of Tamil Nadu. In addition, Sambandan and Dhatchanamoorthy, (2012) reported 59 species in 55 genera and 30 families from Karaikal. Thus, floristic diversity assessment is significant at local and regional levels to understand the present status and to make effective management strategies for conservation (Jayakumar *et al.*, 2011).

In this grove, most of the plants were grown or cultivated by the grove authority. Thus, the groves authority took several initiatives to restore the habitat with trees. This results in plant diversity with several threatened plants. The threatened plants recorded from the study area include *Aegle marmelos*, *Curculigo orchoides*, *Gloriosa superba* and *Madhuca longifolia* respectively. *Gloriosa superba*, an endangered plant has been reported from several Sacred groves of India includes Ramlingeshwara Sacred Grove in Karnataka (Yelvattimath and Kotresha, 2011), 8 Sacred groves of Pallampatty village, Madurai district in Tamil Nadu (Ganesan *et al.*, 2009). Moreover the tree species *Aegle marmelos* was reported to be present in most of the sacred groves (Smita and Pandey, 2012; Patel and Patel, 2012) and it has been considered as *Sthalaviriksha* (Sacred tree) in most of the temples to worship Lord Shiva in India (Nirmal Kumar *et al.*, 2005; Sukumaran and Raj, 2008; Sharma and Joshi, 2010) for prosperity. Thus the present study indicated as the basic evidence to support the view that the sacred groves are the repository and home to several threatened flora (Gadgil and Vartak, 1976; Unnikrishnan, 1995; Chandrasekhara and Sankar, 1998).

From the present study, it is concluded that the Awareness programmes on sacred grove protection and conservation are suggested to be implemented at local levels to conserve the biodiversity of this sacred groves.

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