

## Exploration of plants used for religious belief in Ballari, district Karnataka

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### Abstract

The curent paper analyzed different plant species that are used in worshipping of a god and goddesses in Hindu tradition in a Ballari districts, Karnataka. Total 36 worshipping plants were collectedfrom Ballari district during January- July 2024& werebelongs to 35 genera 24 families and documented their vernacular name, habit, parts used and uses. Among collected species three dominant plant families were Poaceae with 5 species followed by Arecaceae with 4 species and Moreceae with 3 species. This paper explores the diverse ways of plants used for religious purposes, like worship, ceremonies and regarded explore the culture, spiritual, and that have practices in environments.

**Keywords:** Biodiversity & conservation, medicinal plants, worships, spiritual, ceremonies

### Introduction

The Hindu is one of the largest and oldest religions in the globe. Traditionally Hindu peoples use a large numbers of plant species for worshipping different gods and goddesses. The importance of plants for worshipping god and goddesses has been described in different vedas. in India amongst Hindu many plant species are associated with religious function, rituals and also in celebration of festival. Such useful plants have been recorded in the religious book and knowledge has been transmitted from generation to generation. (Jintu sarma and Ashalata devi.2015).

In many cultures and spiritual traditions, plants have been worshiped for their life giving properties, medicinal powers, and symbolic meanings. From the ancient Egyptians devotion to the lotus flower to the Hindu worship of the tulsi plant, plants have played a significant role in human spirituality and religiosity. This phenomenon, known as plant worship. highlights the deep connection between humans and the natural world. the present paper attempts to emphasis on the use of plants in some common Hindu traditional worship involved in different socio-religious practices such as, upanayana (traditional ritual ceremony of Hindus for wearing sacred thread), common worship of gods and goddesses like lord Vishnu, Laxmi, Kali, Durga, Saraswati, Ganesh, Krishna, Shiva, etc. Historically indigenous people with the inheritance of traditional and cultural legacy were protecting the sacred groves with the practice of nature worship.

### Materials and methods

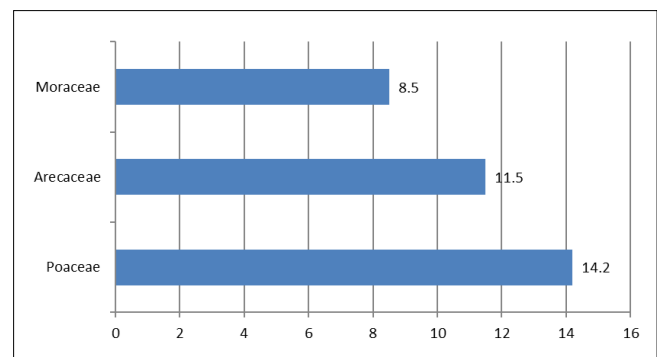
Plants species were collected from diverse geographical locations in a Ballari district, Karnatakaduring January- July 2024. It is situated in the eastern part of a Karnataka with geographical coordinates, 15<sup>o</sup>30' to 15<sup>o</sup> 50' North latitude and75<sup>o</sup> 40' to 77<sup>o</sup> 11' East longitude. The district has semi-arid to arid climate and hot summers with 600mm rainfall. Ballari's vegetation consists of dry deciduous forests, scrublands, and grasslands.



**Fig 1:** Location map of the study area.

### Result and discussion

This study of presents is a comprehensive documentation of 36 species of worshipping plants representing 35 genera and 24 families. Among the 24 families the top dominant three families are Poaceae (14.2%) with 5 species followed by arecaceae (11.5%) with 4 species and moraceae (8.5%). Fig 2



**Fig 2:** Top three families of worshipping plants

An evaluation of 36 worshipping species revealed that 1 species fell under Vulnerable category (2.8%), 1 species fell under Endangered category (2.8%), 9 species of concern category (25.7%), 4 species were from data deficient (11.5%), 2 species from not evaluated category (5.7%),19 species fell under not applicable to the red list category (54.2) (fig 3).

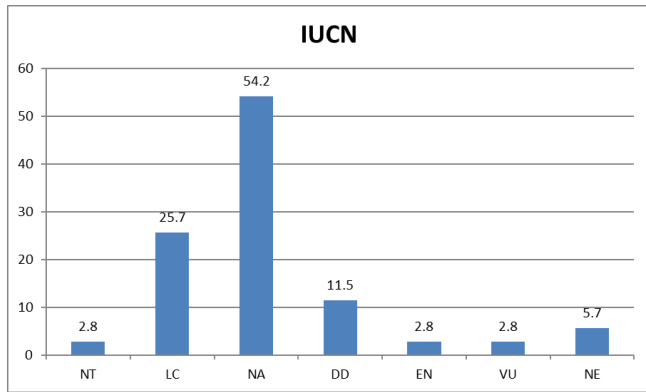


Fig 3: IUCN status of worshipping plants.

Habit of plants shows majority were trees 18 with (51.4%), 9 shrub (25.7%), 5 herb (14.2%), 3 grass (8.5%), 2 climbers (5.7%). Total 36 plant species were tabulated including botanical names, vernacular name, IUCN status, habit, Medicinal uses & part used.

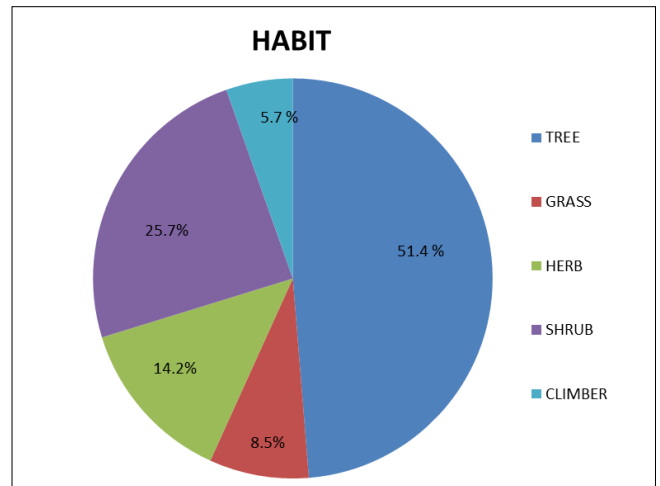


Fig 4: Habit of worshipping plants



Fig 5: A- *Prosopis cineraria* (L.) Druce, B- *Ficus religiosa* L., C- *Ocimum tenuiflorum* L., D- *Aegle marmelos* (L.) Correa, E- *Musa paradisiaca* L., F- *Rosa indica* L., G- *Piper betle* L., H- *Cynodon dactylon* (L.) Pers., I- *Oryza sativa* L., J- *Artocarpus heterophyllus* Lam, K- *Catharanthus roseus* (L.) G. Don., L- *Hibiscus rosa-sinensis* L.

**Table 1:** Enumeration of plants used for religious belief in Ballari, District Karnataka

SL.NO	Name Of species	Family	Vernacular name	IUCN	Habit	Part used	Uses	Medicinal uses
1	<i>Aegle marmelos</i> (L.) Correa	Rutaceae	Bilvapatre	NT	Tree	Whole plant	All worship	Cure inflammation
2	<i>Alocasia macrorrhiza</i> (L.) G. Don	Arecaceae	Marasanige	NA	Herb	Whole plant	Kali pooja	Pigmentation, wrinkles
3	<i>Areca catechu</i> L.	Arecaceae	Adike	LC	Tree	Fruit	All occasion	Diarrhea, urinary disorders
4	<i>Artocarpus heterophyllus</i> Lam.	Moraceae	Halasu	NA	Tree	Leaf twig and fruit	All worship	Antifungal, wound healing
5	<i>Arundo donax</i> L.	Poaceae	Baalada kadi	LC	Grass	Whole plant	Some specific occasion	Menstrual problems
6	<i>Azadirachta indica</i> A.Juss.	Meliaceae	Beevu	LC	Tree	Whole plant	Durga pooja	Fungal, increase immunity.
7	<i>Bambus vulgaris</i> Schrad. ex J.C. Wendl.	Poaceae	Bambooo	NA	Herb	whole plant	All worship	Prevent constipation
8	<i>Bixa orellana</i> L.	Bixaceae	Rangumaale	LC	Tree	Seeds	All worship	Sore throat, eye inflammation
9	<i>Boswellia serrata</i> Roxb.	Burseraceae	Asiatic leea	NA	Tree	Resin	All worship	Asthama
10	<i>Brassica rapa</i> L.	Brassicaceae	Turnip	DD	Shrub	Seeds	To remove devil spirit	Headaches, chest complaints
11	<i>Cannabis sativa</i> L.	Cannabaceae	Bhangi	NA	Shrub	Fruit	Worship of lord shiva	Asthama, skin burners
12	<i>Catharanthus roseus</i> (L.) G. Don	Apocynaceae	Nityapushpa	NA	Shrub	Flower	All worship	Cancer and diabetes
13	<i>Citrus indica</i> Yu. Tanaka	Rutaceae	Indian wild orange	NA	Shrub	Fruit	Durga pooja	Jandiceabd stomach pain
14	<i>Clitoria ternatea</i> L.	Leguminosae	Shankha pushpa	NA	climber	Flower and whole plant	Durga pooja	Antistress and memory enhancer
15	<i>Cocos nucifera</i> L.	Arecaceae	Coconut	NA	Tree	Fruit	All worship	Bladder stone and diabetes
16	<i>Curcuma longa</i> L.	Zingiberaceae	Arishina	DD	Herb	Rhizome	All worship	Cancer and diabetes
17	<i>Cynodactylon</i> (L.) Pers.	Poaceae	Garike	NA	Grass	Whole plant	All worship	Cancer, rubella, snakebite
18	<i>Desmodium aduncatum</i> (L.) Stapf	Poaceae	Dharbe	NA	Herb	Whole plant	All worship	Dysentry, menorrhagia
19	<i>Elaeocarpus serratus</i> L.	Elaeocarpaceae	Athakunge	EN	Tree	Fruit	Worship of lord shiva	Antidiarrhoeal, antidiabetic
20	<i>Ficus minahassae</i> (de Vriese & Teijsm.) Miq.	Moraceae	Cluster fig tree	NE	Tree	Leaf twig and fruit	Vishnu yagya	Anemia, diabetes
21	<i>Ficus religiosa</i> L.	Moraceae	Aralimara	LC	Tree	Leaf twig and fruit	Worship of lord agni	Infectious disorders,
22	<i>Gossypium hirsutum</i> L.	Malvaceae	Hatti	VU	Tree	Flower	Festival	Fungal, bacterial infections
23	<i>Hibiscus rosa-sinensis</i> L.	Malvaceae	Dasavala	NA	Tree	Flower	All worship	Heart and nerve disorder
24	<i>Mangifera indica</i> L.	Anacardiaceae	Maavu	DD	Tree	Leaf stem and fruit	All worship	Asthama
25	<i>Mimusops elengi</i> L.	Sapotaceae	Ranji	LC	Tree	Leaf twig and flower	Kali pooja	Tonic and wound cleanser,
26	<i>Musaparadisica</i> L.	Musaceae	Baale	NE	Shrub	Leaf and flower	Pooja and home décor	Dysentry, bronchitis
27	<i>Nelumbo nucifera</i> Gaertn.	Nelumbonaceae	Kamalada hoovu	DD	Herb	Leaf and flower	Durga pooja	Fever, bodyheat, gastrics
28	<i>Neolamarckia cadamba</i> (Roxb.) Bosser	Rubiaceae	Kadamba	NA	Tree	Whole plant	Worshiping of lord krishna	Skin diseases
29	<i>Ocimum tenuiflorum</i> L.	Lamiaceae	Tulasi	NA	Shrub	Whole plant	All worship	Cough, asthma, eye diseases
30	<i>Oryza sativa</i> L.	Poaceae	Akki	LC	Grass	Whole plant	Lakshmi pooja	Diabetes, skin diseases
31	<i>Phoenix dactylifera</i> L.	Arecaceae	Date palm	LC	Tree	Fruit	Pooja purpose	Antimicrobial, antioxidant,
32	<i>Piper betle</i> L.	Piperaceae	Veeleya	NA	Climber	Leaf	All worship	Cough and asthma
33	<i>Plumeria alba</i> L.	Apocynaceae	Deva kanagile	LC	Tree	Flower	All worship	Cancer and skin disorder
34	<i>Prosopis cineraria</i> (L.) Druce	Fabaceae	Kiru banni	NA	Tree	Leaf	Lord rama	Asthama, piles
35	<i>Rosa indica</i> L.	Rosaceae	Gulabihuvu	NA	Shrub	Flower	All worship	Depression, diabetes, depression.
36	<i>Tagetes patula</i> L.	Asteraceae	Chendu mallige	NA	Shrub	Flower	Festival	Digestive track, stomach pain

\*Note: IUCN Status – LC= Least concern; NA= Not applicable; NT= Near threatened; DD= Data deficient; EN= Endangered; NE= Not evaluated; VU= Vulnerable.

**Conclusion**

This study highlights the importance of plants used for conserving the religious belief in Ballari, District Karnataka. Study reveals the medicinal uses of plant and biodiversity, and recognizes various traditions related to these plants. The peoples depend on these groves for their day today needs of fuel-wood, small timber, fodder, medicines, food etc. Thus, the conservation strategies of plant diversity have to be followed by citizens of the country and strict measures should come to force by government. Thus, this study gives prime importance to the conservation of religious related plants for conserving the biodiversity of Ballari district.

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