

© Society for Promotion of Tropical Biodiversity, Jabalpur

FLORISTIC DIVERSITY AND ITS CONSERVATION STATUS IN THE SELECTED SACRED GROVES OF MADURAI DISTRICT, TAMIL NADU, INDIA

S. GANESAN¹, K. SARASWATHY² AND R. LATHA³

Centre for Research and PG Department of Botany

Thiagarajar College (Autonomous), Madurai – 625009, T.N., India.

³*Department of Botany, Sri Meenakshi Govt. Arts College for Women (A) Madurai-625 002 T.N.*

¹*Corresponding author: sganesan76@yahoo.com*

ABSTRACT: The Art of nature worship is an ancient Indian tradition. The Sacred Groves are example of this worship, where the batches of plant diversity protected by ethnic people under believe that to keep them in secrecy of relationship with the nature. It provides the information about the ancient life style and the myth about the nature. In the present study, the floristic composition and conservation status of selected sacred groves were analyzed, totally 150 species belonging to 65 families were recorded from the five selected sacred groves. The family Euphorbiaceae (14 species) was represented with maximum number of species followed by Caesalpiniaceae (9 species) and Fabaceae (8 species). Overall, the herbaceous species (53) were more dominant than trees (42), shrubs (36) and climber (19). The species composition of each grove was unique and 68 plant species were found in only one grove due to habitat variation. The two plants such as insectivorous plant *Drosera indica* L. and the partial plant parasite *Dendrophthoe falcata* (L.f.) Ettingsh. were recorded from grove one and four respectively. The selected groves were well conserved by local residents of those areas through myths, beliefs and folklores.

Keywords: *Sacred Groves, Biodiversity In-Situ Conservation, Ethnobotany, Tamil Nadu*

Citation: Ganesan S, Saraswathy K, Latha R (2014) Floristic diversity and conservation status in the selected sacred groves of Madurai district, Tamil Nadu. *Indian J. Trop. Biodiversity* 22(1) : 16-27