



## ESTIMATING THE MALCOFAUNA DIVERSITY IN GANDHISAGAR WILDLIFE SANCTUARY, MADHYA PRADESH, INDIA

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**ABSTRACT:** The present study has been conducted to assess the Freshwater Molluscs diversity of Gandhisagar Wildlife Sanctuary, Mandsoor and Neemuch district of Madhya Pradesh. The surveys were conducted in the different localities of the study areas during September 2022 to January 2024. The results of present investigation revealed the occurrence of 18 species belonging to 6 orders 9 families and 16 genera. The results of this study are promising; it sheds light on the Malcofaunal diversity of Gandhisagar Wildlife Sanctuary, which needs to be strengthened through comprehensive future surveys.

**Keywords:** *Molluscs, Gastropod, Bivalve, Gandhisagar WLS, Malcofauna Diversity, Madhya Pradesh.*

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### INTRODUCTION

Freshwater Molluscs are integral part of aquatic ecosystem and plays an important role in the biogeochemical cycle (Tripathy and Mukhopadhyay, 2015). Phylum Mollusca is the second largest phylum followed by Arthropods, with around 85,000 extant species (Tripathy *et al*, 2024). It is the most diverse group which inhabits various habitats ranging from deepest ocean trenches to intertidal zones and freshwater to land. Molluscs are one of the diverse group and reliable bio indicator. Freshwater molluscs are essential to the maintainance of wetland ecosystems, primarily due to their control of water quality and nutrient

balance through filter feeding and algae grazing and to a lesser degree, as a food source for predators including a number of fish species, and in some part of the world, they compose a significant food resources, especially for the rural poor and tribal (Tripathy and Mukhopadhyay, 2015). The Indian freshwater molluscs fauna represented by Class Gastropoda and class Bivalvia harbour a rich diversity in India, which comprising 214 species of freshwater molluscs (Gastropod and Bivalve) and 1138 species of Land Snails (Tripathy *et al*, 2024). Based on the recent study and relevant publications on Molluscs diversity of Madhya Pradesh. The no. of