

Biodiversity in wild Fauna and Flora of Dang forest region in Nashik District, MS (India).

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Abstract

Forests play an important role in the life and economy of any country. The moist and dry tropical deciduous forests provide natural and variety of ecological habitats for the varied fauna and flora. Nashik district is one of the western part of dang forest in Maharashtra. On the basis of ecological aspects a scientific study has been carried out with respect to wild animal and plant diversity in dang forest of Nashik region. The present study was done to identify and number of different species of mammals, reptiles and Plants. The moist and dry deciduous forests of north dang forest lead to a better natural habitat for wild life.

Keywords: Biological diversity, Flora and Fauna, Dang forest, Nashik District.

Introduction

Forest play an important role in providing different types of habitats for the growth of biodiversity. The different types of vegetation patterns like trees, shrubs and herbs provide significant parameters for wild animal and plant diversity. The tropical moist and dry deciduous forest of dang region provides natural and varied ecological habitats for flora and fauna. Due to suitable natural habitats a number of mammals, reptiles and birds species are present in the forest. The floristic habitat provides nesting bed for birds in the form of tall trees, and thick grasslands and swampy areas for residence to different fauna. The study area is a habitat of rich biodiversity in Maharashtra. Hence, it is necessary to protect and maintain the biodiversity in the area. The present investigation was undertaken to enlist, identify and quantify different species of mammals, reptiles, birds and Plants.

Material and Methods.

Dang forest is a part of Nashik district covering areas of Surgana, Peth taluka. The district is located between latitudes 19°35' and 20°50' and longitudes 73°30' and 74°55' extending over an area of 15,582 sq. km. The forest cover shows hills, valleys and plains with large number of artificially planted trees of many species. The maximum temperature in the area remains 45°C, while minimum temperature 8.5°C. The average rainfall is about 1000 to 1200 mm, well distributed from June to October (Mali.P.R et al., 2012). The destruction of animal habitat in the

region, surrounding people, and grazing of agricultural crops by wild animals are routine phenomena causing man and animal conflict in this area. The observations on mammals, reptiles and plants also were taken from August 2018 to November 2019. Identification of the animals was made by standard texts (Deoras 1965, Shailaja 1978) and plant species identified using flora (Cooke, 1967(Rpr.): Sharma et al, 1996 Singh and Karthikeyan, 2000; Singh et al., 2001; Bhagat.

Result and Discussion

The district is reported to have abundant wildlife and birds a score of years ago (Anonymous 1975). Their disappearance from the area could be attributed mainly to the opening up of these forests, felling of forests for cultivation and poaching activities of the Adivasi's. Panther tigris (tiger), *Acinoyx jubatus* (chitta), *Axis axis* (spotted deer), *Boselaphustragocamelus* (Nilgai), *Melursus urisnus* (aswal) and various other animals, which were in considerable number prior to 1880, have now disappeared. The present position of game is precarious. The very existence of animals in the district forests is in danger unless serious remedial measures are taken to rectify the situation. During field visits a large number of Plants, animals were recorded belonging to mammals, reptiles and Plants. During field visit time 20 wild Varied plant species were identified in the Table no.1. Mammals: The common mammals found in the study area are given in Table 2. Reptiles: Reptiles are the cold blooded animals and highly developed creatures. During the present study following dominant common reptiles were observed in various places of district, i.e., valleys, grasslands and plains. The list of reptiles encountered in the study area are given in Table 3.

Table no 1. List of common wild Plant Species.

Sr.No	Botanical Name	Family	Local Name
1.	<i>Amaranthus spinosus</i>	Amaranthaceae	Katerimath
2.	<i>Amorphophallus commutatus</i> (Scoot)	Areaceae	Shevalkand
3.	<i>Argemone Mexicana</i>	Papaveraceae	Kardai
4.	<i>Colocasia esculenta</i>	Areaceae	Tera
5.	<i>Cordia dichotoma</i>	Boraginaceae	Bhokar
6.	<i>Dendrocalamus strictus</i> (Roxb)	Graminaceae/ Poaceae	Bamboo
7.	<i>Dioscorea bulbifera</i> L.	Dioscoreaceae	Kadukand
8.	<i>Cassia tora</i> L.	Cesalpiniaceae	Tarota
9.	<i>Dioscorea oppositifolia</i> L	Dioscoreaceae	Chaiken
10.	<i>Curcuma pseudomontana</i> Grah	Areaceae	Shilind

11.	Dioscorea oppositifoliaL	Dioscoreaceae	Chaiken
12.	Solenaam plexicaulis(Lam)	Cucurbitaceae	Gandhi Gomett
13.	Madhuka longifolia	Sapotaceae	Moha
14.	Momor dicadioica	Cucurbiteaceae	Kartol
15.	Lagenaria vulgaris	Cucurbiteaceae	Jangali dangar
16.	Luffaacutangula(L.)Roxb.var. amaraC. B. Cl.	Cucurbitaceae	Jangali Dodka
17.	MoringaoleiferaLam.	Moringaceae	Shevaga,
18.	Smithia confertaJ.E. Sm;	Papilionaceae	Kawali
19.	Hibiscus canabinus	Malvaceae	Ambadi
20.	Cappari szelanic	Capparidaceae	Waghati

Table No.2 List of common mammals in Dang forest.

Sr.No.	English Name	Latin name
1.	Taras	Hayena hyanea
2.	Khokad	Vulpes Bengalensis
3.	Dukaar	Sus scarofa
4.	Mongoose	Harpester edwardsi
5.	Monkey	Macaca mulatta
6.	Landaga	Canis lupus
7.	Khar	Funa mbulus
8.	Sasa	Lepus nigricollis
9.	Ranmanjar	Felis chaus
10.	Barking deer	Mmmtiacus acerus quadricorni

Table .no.3List of common Reptiles in Dang forest.

Sr.No.	English Name	Latin Name
1	Nag	Naja naja
2	Rat snake	Varanus inelicus
3	Ruseel viper	Vipera russeli
4	Garden lizard	Calroes versicolour
5	Ghorpad	Qtyas mueous.

The present study revealed that the Dang forest region is a good native habitat for all the species discussed here. The present investigation recorded the common fauna comprising of 10 mammal species, 5 reptile species and flora comprising of 20 Angiospermic plant species. In the Dang forest region of Nashik district, *Panthera tigris* was common in the area in the past but due to heavy deforestation this has become extinct in 2001. Hence, it is necessary to make protective measures to conserve the flora and fauna for further study.

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- Based in part on Map of talukas, Nashik district.