

A Study on Sacred Groves Of Thiruvannamalai District Of Tamil Nadu with Special Reference to Five Temples

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Abstract

From our long journey of 6 months within 5 sacred groves from 1 Villages kilpalur of Thiruvannamalai district, the scared groves are well maintained by the elderly Village People, the youngsters are not showing much interest to protect and maintain them. we have also observed that nowadays, sacred groves are slowly vanishing due to urbanization and modernization of villages and due to lack of knowledge on traditional practices. So to maintain the sacred groves with their nature beauty in the modern society, there is an urgent need to create awareness on the importance of sacred groves in bio-diversity conservation, among the students and local people through Eco Camps and other such initiatives. The sacred groves are therefore of central importance as far as the ecological conservation and policy regarding conservation and management of forest at state and national levels are concerned. Sacred groves serve as a home for birds and mammals, and hence they indirectly help in the conservation of biodiversity. The sacred grove serve as important worship centres for the Village People. It is the need of the hour to enlighten the younger generation about the importance of Sacred groves and their part in the cultural, ethical and religious values of the groves. The educated People should insist the importance of the groves and their role in *in-situ* conservation of biodiversity. More number of plant species should be planted and existing flora should be maintained well for the well- being of the future generation.

Key word : plant medicinal, human diseases, Sacred groves forest koveil

INTRODUCTION

They Sacred groves are defined as “segments of landscape containing vegetation, life forms and geographical features delimited and protected by human societies under the belief that to keep them in a relatively undisturbed state is expression of an important relationship of humans with the divine or with nature.” These groves are mostly associated with temples and are also culturally important. They manifest the spiritual and ecological ethos of rural indigenous

communities. Various cultural and religious festivals are often arranged by local people within these patches, which they call “Mela.” As a way of conservation of nature, the SGs play an important role in ensuring smooth ecosystem services such as clean environment, that is, air, soil, and water conservation, flora and fauna conservation, carbon sequestration, temperature control, and conservation of traditional knowledge.

Sacred groves are patches of primal forest that some rural communities protect as abodes of deities. Such “eco system people” drawn their livelihood from nearby resources and value nature for the ecological services it provide. A legacy of prehistoric tradition of nature conservation, sacred groves are patches of forest that rural communities in the developing world protect and rivers as sacrosanct over 13,720 sacred groves have been documented in India, spanning different topography and climatic condition from South to north.

India has long tradition of prudent use and wise wish reservation of all resources that are useful to people one method for conservation of nature’s green resource was the creation of sacred groves usually dedicated to local deity. No one is permitted to cut any tree or plant or harm any form of life in this area ancient Indians text have many reference to sacred groves for example Kalidasa “ vikramorvasiyam” today there are only about 1000 square kilometer of undisturbed sacred groves patches all over the country only they only the groves in the remote and in assessable areas remains untouched while religious taboo protected the groves near town earlier, there are protected with the mean off barbed wire fencing hard edge according to the World Health Organization their regional medicine is used by more than 80% world population.

The largest known sacred groves in the Hariyali, near Ganchar in Chamoli district. In Bihar sacred groves known as Sarnas, are found mainly in the Chotanagpur region. The larger groves are a naturalist’s dream come true, as they support many of the endangered species, which are on the verge of extinction due to extraction.

Kerala has about 240 sacred groves, known as kaires where more than 3000 rare species of plants are found. The largest grove, spread over more than 20 hectares, is in Ernakulam district. In the “Golden Bough” author (“James Frazer”) says that people have worshipped forests right from the Palaeolithic age, thereby preserving them. Usually these areas are designated as holy and dedicated to a god or a goddess. Ethno-botanical studies in the implementation of strategies that integrate native medicinal plant uses with sustainable

natural resource management in areas where forest conversion to agriculture land and exotic species reforestation have destroyed large areas of natural forest, such as high plateau, upland as well as montane forest. The preservation of these groves is a pressing need in the present era.

Religion has always been utilized to achieve the society's intended goals because it is a potent tool for persuasion. They say that in some sacred groves even the locals and visitors alike enter these sacred Zones without eating, since they are considered to have pre-vedic origins in India. It is thought to have existed for several thousand years, when human society was still in the pre-agrarian stage.

Medicinal plants are the foundation of human life, they have played a part in human evolution since the dawn of time only 60% of the plants in the world are medicinal but only about 28% of those are used as folk medicines. In most underdeveloped nations, indigenous herbal medication is a part of the culture and the primary way of treatment. More than three quarters of the world's population is still served by the plant based traditional medicinal systems. These sacred groves can be as a few trees or as large as a forest.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Medicinal plants present in sacred groves of Kanyakumari District, southern Western Ghats was studied by Sukumaran and Raj 2010. A total of 34 therapeutic plants were identified which were categorized into 33 genera and 29 families. The majority of the herbs are used to treat ear pains, skin issues, fever, cold, headache, cough, urinary disorder, ulcer and other ailments. Rutaceae plants were the most numerous (4 species), followed by Euphorbiaceae and Sapindaceae. Sanjay *et al.*, 2010 reported on the sacred groves in conservation of plant Biodiversity.

Munisamy *et al.*, 2011 surveyed the sacred groves in Pudukottai District. 89 medicinal plant species belonging to 51 families were documented in this survey. Among with 5 species, the Fabaceae by the most prevalent followed by the Mimosaceae, Apocynaceae, Lamiaceae, Cactaceae and Solanaceae families each with 4 species. Geographical assessment of sacred groves in Bolpur sub division was documented by Tapas Pal 2011.

Floral diversity conservation through sacred groves in Koraput District, Odisha was studied by Panda *et al.*, 2014. The floral variety and usage of 94 sacred plant species spread in 63 genera belonging to 43 different groups from 6 different sacred groves were documented

in a systematic manner in this study. The cacalpiniaceae family contains the most plant species, followed by Asteraceae and combretaceae. There are 48 trees, 26 shrubs and 21 herbs among the plant species. The tribals employ many of the plant species as herbal treatments (39%), followed by religious significance (23%) and food (13%). Only 1 plant species, pterocarpus santalinus is listed as endangered by the IUCN. 3 plant species Shorea robusta, Buchanania larzan and woodfordia fruticosa are listed as low risk are least concern and 6 species are listed as least concern. Ageratum conyzoidis, Dalbergia latifolia. Delomic regia, Pterocarpus marsupium, Santalum album and sacred asoca are among the plants classified as vulnerable. Savithramma *et al.*, 2014 reported on the Indigenous knowledge of vanadi tribe and local villagers of veyilingalakona.

Deepa *et al.*, 2016 reported on the floral diversity and medicinal importance of chosen sacred trees in Kerala's Thrissur area. Revathy *et al.*, 2016 reached the ethnobotanical studies of Draupathi amman sacred groves in Melapalur Village, Ariyalur District. During field trips, a total of 46 plant species were identified as being utilized by human to treat various diseases.

Floral diversity of Thevaramala sacred grove in Western Ghats, Kerala was surveyed by Anoop *et al.*, 2017. A total of 152 flowering plant species from 136 genere and 50 families were identified throughout the research. The grove has plants of all types including shrubs (64 species), herbs (56 species) and trees (32 species). Babu *et al.*, 2017 conducted a survey of potent folkore medicinal plants used by ethnic people in Thuthipattu and Karuvatchi villages in Tamilnadu's Villupuram District. It yield approximately 50 medicinal plants that are used to cure a variety of ailments, either alone or in combination with other components. According to the survey, the informants in two villages had extensive knowledge of the medicinal plants used to treat a variety of diseases.

Utilitarian aspects of Durgawadi sacred grove in Tahasil Junner District, Pune, Maharastra was documented by Salman and Mulay, 2019. Several plants are used by indigenous peoples for medicinal, food, house contruction and other purposes. Their existence is inextricably linked to the plants that flourish in the surrounding region. Ferehiurot *et al.*, 2020 studied the biodiversity conservation in the sacred groves of North-west Ethiopia along with its diversity and community structure of woody species. Jeeshra, 2021 conducted a phytosociological and floral investigation of the sacred groves. plant parts and forms of the medicine are used by ethnic groups and local residents. The leaf part and powder form as well as the oral form of delivery account for the majority of the total.

Narasimha and Venu, 2015 documented the Medicinal Plants of Ramagiri-Khilla Forests of Karimnagar district, Telangana. A total of 150 medicinal plant taxa have been identified, representing 55 angiosperm families. Papilionaceae is the most numerous family with 10 species, followed by Caesalpiniaceae (8), Apocynaceae, Combretaceae, Cucurbitaceae and Mimosaceae (7 each), Euphorbiaceae, Malvaceae and Rubiaceae (5 each). Herbs are the most common type of plants (57 species), followed by trees (50), shrubs (36), climbers (6) and parasites (1).

Sathyavathi *et al.*, 2021 researched on tree diversity in the Borra Sacred Groves of Anathagiri, Visakhapatnam District, Andhra Pradesh. The sacred grove was found to have 31 plant species belonging to 28 genera and 20 families. Jeeshna, 2021 conducted a phytosociological and floral investigation of the Sacred Grove Thekkumbhad Thazhe Kavu in Kannur District, Kerala.

In the study report of Raman and Palavaryan 1997 says that the ancient Tamil civilization worshipped trees, a trait that exists even today. This practice originated for the following reasons – trees represented God and the worship of trees would enable the people to invoke God's blessings, evil spirits living in trees were believed to be pleased by worshipping the trees and good health was the grace of Goddesses Amman who resides in trees.

Based on the study of sacred groves of Kodagu (Coorg), Boraiah *et al.*, 2002 identified that 'well-conserved' sacred groves had higher densities of the threatened flora than the 'disturbed sacred groves' as well as 'reserved forests'. In terms of species richness, conserved sacred groves were comparable to that of reserved forests. The results of the study further reinforce the notation that sacred groves, though small in size, are important repositories of rare and endangered flora.

According the rural and tribal people played an active role in the conservation and they considered environmental protection as a sacred duty. The study of Ramachandran and Mohanan (1991) showed the presence of sixty five sacred groves in Alappuzha District of Kerala.

As a result of the study the collected data suggested that the status of sacred groves as an institution are still quite strong in both study localities in Meghalaya and Assam, although for a section of the respondents based on Urban Areas the essence of the sacred

groves seemed to be lost. Only in one case was a sacred grove virtually decimated in Karbi Anglonge, but this instance that of the Long chap sarpo sacred grove was an abbreviation rather than the norm and reflected how loss of community control and the settling of migrants from elsewhere with differing value system and believes can adversely affect common resources that are no longer perceived as sacred.

The sacred groves along the forest belts of South India, which are traditionally managed by village communities, are gradually disappearing. The analysis of how this community based resource management institutions has revolved overtime and what socio economic factors have caused its gradual disintegration had done by Chandrakanth *et al.*, 2004. Detailed study of rare and endemic plants in the sacred groves of Thiruvannamalai District in Tamil Nadu.

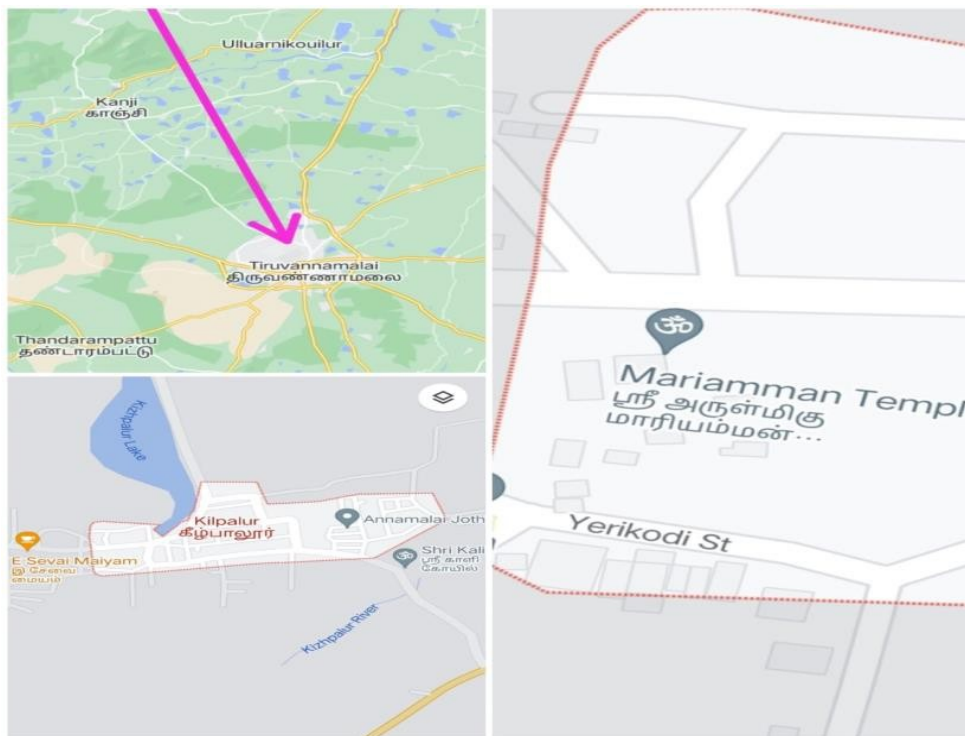
MATERIALS AND METHODS STUDY AREA

The main study area selected for the study in Thiruvannamalai district are sacred groves from Kilpalur village of Kalasapakkam Taluk. It is between Polur - Chengam and Kilpalur is also one of the border towns of Tamil Nadu -Andhra Pradesh. The main study area selected for ethnobotanical survey Thiruvannamalai district are sacred groves from Kilpalur village of Kalasapakkam Taluk. The selected sacred groves for survey are Mariamman Kovil Kilpalur, Kamatchiamman Kovil Kilpalur, Eulupadaiyan Kovil Kilpalur, Muneshwaran Koviland Kaliamman Kovil Kilpalur The valuable information of the flora in the Sacred groves are documented. The Present survey of the sacred groves and medicinal plants in selected Sacred groves was executed by collection, identification, Questionnaire and direct interview method. The surveyed data are recorded in the field note book and the plant specimen were collected for identification. The specimens collected was identified by referring books "**Flora of The Presidency OF Madras**" (Gamble 1916). Plant specifics like Habit, Botanical name, Common Name and Family were documented using Gamble. Further information about the God of worship, history and the ethics followed in the sacred grove along with the plant uses and therapeutic properties were studied and conservation status of the Sacred groves by the local people residing in the study area were also recorded.

Insert map of Tamil nadu showing Thiruvannamalai District.



Plate 1 showing the map of the study area



SURVEY METHODS

INTERVIEW METHOD

For the study of sacred groves, the village namely Kilpalur of Thiruvannamalai district was surveyed. Five Sacred groves of the area were selected namely, Maariamman kovil kilpalur, Kamatchiamman Kovil Kilpalur, Elupadaiyan kovil kilpalur, and Muneshwaran kovil kilpalur, and Kalamman kovil kilpalur, The selected villages were dominated by tribal

communities, In, most of the villages, generally the females cooperated well during the interview. Through direct interview method, the information was collected about the Sacred groves and documented. Customs related to sacred groves, its locality, size, occurrence of plants in the sacred groves, deities worshipped, history or folklores and gender issues associated with such groves were also recorded.

Local people were encouraged to give their views and perceptions on the sacred groves with respect to the cultural, ecological, economical and conservation perspectives, during the field work, the sacred groves sites were also visited with the local knowledgeable people for preparing the list of species and associated knowledge with such sacred groves. Participant observation was also employed and information was collected by participating in various cultural activities of the local tribal people. Direct survey of the sacred groves and plants associated with them were also recorded during the study period,

RESULTS

1. MARIAMMAN KOVIL

Mariamman, this tambel is Thiruvannamalai Dt Kalasapakam Tk Kilpalur villege is show for tembel often abbreviated to **Amman**, is a Hindu goddess of rain, predominantly venerated in the rural areas of South India. Her festivals are held during the late summer/early autumn season of Ādi throughout Tamil Nadu and the Deccan region, the largest being the *Ādi Thiruvīḷa*. Her worship mainly focuses on bringing rains and curing diseases like cholera, smallpox, and chicken pox. Mariamman is worshipped in accordance with local traditions such as *Pidari* or the *Gramadevatai*. She is considered as a guardian deity (kaval deivam) by many South Indian village-dwellers.

Mariamman is usually pictured as a beautiful young woman with a red-hued face, wearing red dress. Sometimes she is portrayed with many arms representing her many powers but in most representations she has only two or four. Mariamman is generally portrayed in the sitting or standing position, often holding a trident (trisula) in one hand and a bowl (kapala) in the other. One of her hands may display mudra, usually the abhaya mudra, to ward off fear. She may be represented with two demeanours one displaying her pleasant nature, and the other her terrifying aspect, with fangs and a wild mane of hair. this tempel festival is big 11 ays in funcation time. 7 day thiruther thiruvizha celebrated.

1. MARIAMMAN TEMPLE

District	:	Thiruvannamalai
Taluk	:	Kalaspakkam
Locality	:	Kilpalur
Landmark	:	1 km away from Karapattu Petrol bunk.
Geographical Position	:	13. 15°N 79.24°E
Area	:	1 Acre
Management	:	Poosari
Vegetation type	:	Tropical Dry Evergreen
Worshipping Deity	:	Mariamman
Associated Deities	:	Vinayagar, Murugar,
Animals	:	Dogs, Monkeys, Goat, Garden Lizard, Snakes.
Birds kuruvi	:	Crow, Hen, Myna, Sparrow, Thookkanam
Water Reservoir	:	Pond
Offerings	:	Dresses, Pongal, Flowers and Non- veg foods.
Festival Season	:	Tuesday, Friday, Amavasai, pournami,
Terracotta	:	Statues of Pigs, Horses and Elephants.
	:	Considered to be powerful Amman and prayed by Pregnant Women and Unmarried girls
Animal Sacrifice	:	Goat, Hen.
Conservation status	:	Moderate

Plate 1:1 Showing the pictures of Mariamman kovil

S.NO	Botanical Name	Family	Tamil Name	Medical Uses
1	<i>Acalypha indica</i> L.	Euphorbiaceae	Kuppaimeni	Scabies, Ring worm,
2	<i>Achranthes aspera</i> L	Amaranthaceae	Nayuruvi	Tooth ache, Abortion
3	<i>Aloe vera</i>	Liliaceae	Kattrazhai	Skinproblems, Menstrual disorders,
4	<i>Amaranthes spinosus</i>	Amaranthaceae	Mullukeerai	ked eaten asgreens,
5	<i>Anisomeles malabarical</i> (L.)Br	Lamiaceae	Pei thumbai	Piles,Infertility,cancer.
6	<i>Barleria prionotis</i> L,	Acanthaceae	Sulli poo	Jointpains,
7	<i>Cassia auriculata</i> L,	Caesalpiniaceae	Avaram poo	Diabetes, Refrigerant,

Table- 1:3, Shrubs And Climbers Plants associated with the Mariamman Temple

S.No	Botanical Name	Family	Tamil Name	Medical Uses
1	<i>Abutilon indicum</i> linn.	Malvaceae	Thuthi	Piles,Cancer, Wound Healing.
2	<i>Adgatodavasica</i> linn.	Acanthaceae	Adathodai	Cough,Cold,Asthma
3	<i>Calotropis gigantea</i> L.	Asclepiadaceae	Erukku	Woundhealing, Vericose Pain,
4	<i>Cassia alata</i> L.	Caesalpiniaceae	Vandukolli	Skin diseases.
5	<i>Clerodendrum phlomidis</i> L.	Verbenaceae	Thazhuthazhai	Fever,Body pain.
6	<i>Dodonaea viscosa</i> jacq.	Sapindaceae	Virali	Tooth ache,Goitre.

7	<i>Ervatamia coronaria</i>	Apocynaceae	Nandhiavattam	Eye diseases, Skin diseases.
[8	<i>Ipomoea carnea jace</i>	Convovulaceae	Neyveli kattamanakku	Wound healing, Cancer.
9	<i>Ixora cocinea</i>	Rubiaceae	Eetli poo	Variousnaliments in indian medicine.
10	<i>Aristolochia indica L.</i>	Aristolochiaceae	Perumarundhu	Uterine disorders.
11	<i>Cassytha filiformis L.</i>	Lauraeae	Kothanveli	Hair tonic.
12	<i>Cissampelos pareira.</i>	Menispermaceae	Sirukattukodi	Menstural disorders,
13	<i>Caesalpinia filiformis L.</i>	Caesalpinaceae	Kazharchikkai	Hydrocele.
14	<i>Momordia charantia L.</i>	Cucurbitaceae	Pakarkai	Leaves,used topiels totally and blood purifier.
15	<i>Cephalandra indica R.</i>	Cucurbitaceae	Kovai	Oral ulcers, Diabetes,
16	<i>Hemidesmu sindicus L.</i>	Asclepiadaceae	Nannari	Refrigerant.
17	<i>Ichnocapus frutescens (L.)</i>	Apocynaceae	Oodharkodi	Cholera, Fever,
18	<i>Ipomoea sepiaria Roxb.</i>	Convovulaceae	Thhalikeerai	Cold,Cough, Asthma.

KAMATCHI AMMAN KOVIL

This temple is situated in Kilpalur Panchayat on the way to Kalasapakam. It is covering around 0.5 Acres of land area. There is no water reservoir near this Temple. The Goddess is Ellai Amman. Here Milk, Tender coconut, Mixed fruits, Sandal, Turmeric are offered by the People during Pooja. Tuesday, Friday, Amnavasai are considered for pooja and there is a Special poojai in Chitthirai month every year, which is celebrated in a grand manner. Pig, Goat, Hen are sacrificed during Pooja. Married couple pray this Amman for getting Child. They tie a cloth cradle on the Neem tree present inside the Temple Premises. Foreigners also visit this temple very often.

There are around 37 plants of herbs, shrubs, climbers and trees belonging to 27 families are

found associated with this Sacred grove. People maintain this temple with great interest. People around this place collect medicinal plants around from the temple for curing basic ailments. The Binomial, Tamil name, family and the habit of the plants are listed out in the The pictures of few plants are given. This temple yearly one vanniya nadagam celebrated.

2.1. KAMATCHI AMMAN TEMPLE

District	:	Thiruvannamalai
Taluk	:	Kalasapakam
Locality	:	Kilpalur
Landmark	:	Near govt school kilpaur
Geographical Position	:	13. 28°N 79.48°E
Area	:	0.5 Acre
Management	:	Poosari
Vegetation type	:	Tropical bellow Evergreen
Worshipping Deity	:	Kamatchi amman
Associated Deities	:	Nandhivarman
Animals	:	Dogs, Monkeys, Goat, Garden Lizard, Snakes.
Birds	:	Crow, Hen, Myna, Sparrow, Thookkanam .
Water Reservoir	:	Pond
		Milk, Tender coconut, Mixed fruits, Sandal, Turmeric
		Tuesday, Friday, Amavasai, Special poojai in Chitthirai month.
Terracotta	:	Nil
Religious Beliefs	:	Considered to be powerful Amman and pray for happ
Animal Sacrifice	:	Pig, cow, Goat, Hen.
Conservation status	:	Low

Plate 2:2 Showing the pictures of Kamatchi amman kovil

S.No	Botanical Name	Family	Tamil Name	Medical Uses
1	Aleo barbadensis	Liliaceae	Katralai	Helps in curing wounds,boosts system.
2	Aegle marmelos	Rutaceae	Vilvam	Control constipation, Purify blood.
3	Arahis hypogacea	Fabaceae	Nilakadalai	Blood sugar regulator, Facilitated fertility.
4	ardiospermum halicacabum	Sapindaceae	Mudakathan	Curing all cold cough Symptoms.
5	Commelina benghalesis	Commelinaceae	Kanavayai	The flowers in brochits and dysentery On ulcers.
6	Cyperus rotundus	Verbenaceae	Korai	For diarrhea, Indigestion.
7	Ficus retigiosa	Moraceae	Arasamaram	Cough,asthma, Diarrhoea,migraine.
8	Ocimumte nuiflorum	Lamiaceae	Thulasi	Blood pressure lipid Levels.
9	Solanum procumbens	Solanaceae	Thuthuvalai	Cure various diseases like lung cancer.

Plate 2:4, Pictures of six plants of the Sacred grove

2:5 Shrubs And Climbers Plants associated with theKamatchiamman Temple

S.No	Botanical Name	Family	Tamil Name	Medical Uses
1	Grewia villosa	Malvaceae	Unnu	Bark is said to be crushed infused.
2	Adgatodavasica linn.	Acanthaceae	Adathodai	Cough,Cold,Asthma

3	Calotropis gigantea L.	Asclepiadaceae	Erukku	Woundhealing, Vericose Pain,
4	Hibiscus rosa	Malvaceae	Sembaruthi	Prevents liver damage.
5	Clerodendrum phlomidis L.	Verbenaceae	Thazhuthazhai	Fever,Body pain.
6	Dodonaea viscosa jacq.	Sapindaceae	Virali	Tooth ache,Goitre.
7	Ervatamia coronaria	Apocynaceae	Nandhiavattam	Eye diseases, Skin diseases.
8	Ipomoea carnea jace	Convolvulaceae	Neyveli kattamanakku	Wound healing, Cancer.
9	Ixora cocinea	Rubiaceae	Eetli poo	Variousnaliments in indian medicine.
10	Tecoma stans	Bignoniaceae	Naga senbagam	Cancer,diabetes and arthritis.
11	Cassytha filiformis L.	Lauraeae	Kothanveli	Hair tonic.
12	Cissampelos pareira.	Menispermaceae	Sirukattukodi	Menstrual disorders,
13	Vitex negundo	Lamiaceae	Nochi	Highly effective
14	Momordia charantia L.	Cucurbitaceae	Pakarkai	Leaves,used to piels totally.
15	Cephalandra indica R.	Cucurbitaceae	Kovai	Oral ulcers, Diabetes,
16	Wrightia tinctoria	Apocynaceae	Neem	Analgesic,antiulcer.

a. ELLUPPAIDAN KOVIL

This temple is situated in Kilpalur to Padasalai Street, opposite to Karuppu malai. . It is covering around 2 Acres of land area. There is no water reservoir near this Temple. The Goddess is Amman. Here Oil, Milk, Ghee, Banana, Mixed fruits, Sandal, Turmeric are offered by the People during Pooja. Tuesday, Friday, Ammavasai and Kiruthigai are considered for pooja and there is a Special poojai in Chitthirai month every year, which is celebrated in a grand manner. Pig, cow, Goat, Hen are sacrificed during Pooja. People visit this temple to get rid of Mangalya dhosham. Tonsuring and Ear piercing are done for kids in this grove.

Foreigners also visit this temple very often. Goat is sacrificed during this occasion.

There are around 41 plants of herbs, shrubs, climbers and trees belonging to 29 families are found associated with this Sacred grove. People maintain this temple with great interest. People around this place collect medicinal plants around from the temple for curing basic ailments.

3.1. ELLUPPAIDAN TEMPLE

District	:	Thiruvannamalai
Taluk	:	Kalasapakam
Locality	:	Police station
Landmark	:	On the way to Padasalai street.
Geographical Position	:	13. 38°N 89.48°E
Area	:	2 Acres
Management	:	Poosari
Vegetation type	:	Tropical Dry Evergreen
Worshipping Deity	:	Kaval Deivam
Associated Deities	:	Kuthirai.
Animals	:	Dogs, Frogs, Goat, Garden Lizard, Snakes.
Birds	:	Crow, Hen, Sparrow,
Water Reservoir	:	Nil
Offerings	:	Milk, ghee, Mixed fruits, Sandal,
Festival Season	:	Tuesday, Friday, Kiruthigai,
Terracotta	:	Nil
Religious Beliefs	:	To get rid of Maangalya dhosham.
Animal Sacrifice	:	Goat, Hen.
Conservation status	:	Low

S.No	Botanical Name	Family	Tamil Name	Medical Uses
1	Aegle marmelos	Rutaceae	Vilvam	Anti cancer activit
2	OcimumteNuiflorum	Lamiaceae	Thulasi	Blood pressure lipid Levels.
3	Arahis hypogacea	Fabaceae	Nilakadalai	Decrease Cardiovascular.
4	Azadirachta indica	Meliaceae	Vembu	Skin Problems.
5	Bauhinia acuminata	Fabaceae	Kattathi	Anti cancer Activity
6	tunaregamspinose	Rubiaceae	Kadunaregam	Gastrointestinal hepatic
7	Eucalyptus globulus	Myrtaceae	Nilageri	Heals wounds, Eases joint pain
8	ardiospermum halicacabum	Sapindaceae	Mudagathan	Abdominal pain, Orchitis,dropsy.
9	Catharanthus roseus	Apocynaceae	Nithiya kalyani	Cancer and diabetes root paste.
10	tunaregamspinose	Rubiaceae	Kadunkoram	Hepatic peoblems
11	Clinderella nodiflora	Asteraceae	Mudiyan pachahai	Helps in curing.

Table- 3:5, Shrubs And Climbers Plants associated with the Llpadaiyan Kovil

S.No	Botanical Name	Family	Tamil Name	Medical Uses
1	Ervatamia coronaria	Apocynaceae	Nandhiavattam	Eye diseases, Skin diseases.
2	Adgatodavasica linn.	Acanthaceae	Adathodai	Cough,Cold,Asthma
3	Calotropis gigantea L.	Asclepiadaceae	Erukku	Woundhealing, Vericose Pain,

4	Hibiscus rosa	Malvaceae	Sembaruthi	Prevents liver damage.
5	Clerodendrum phlomidis L.	Verbenaceae	Thazhuthazhai	Fever,Body pain.
6	Dodonaea viscosa jacq.	Sapindaceae	Virali	Tooth ache,Goitre.
7	Ixora cocinea	Rubiaceae	Eetli poo	Variousnaliments in indian medicine.
8	Ipomoea carnea jace	Convovulaceae	Neyveli kattamanakku	Wound healing, Cancer.
9	Momordia charantia L.	Cucurbitaceae	Pakarkai	Leaves,used to piels totally.
10	Tecoma stans	Bignoniaceae	Naga senbagam	Cancer,diabetes and arthritis.
11	Cassytha filiformis L.	Lauraeae	Kothanveli	Hair tonic.
12	Cissampelos pareira.	Menispermaceae	Sirukattukodi	Menstural disorders,
13	Vitex negundo	Lamiaceae	Nochi	Highly effective
14	Grewia villosa	Malvaceae	Unnu	Bark is said to be crushed infused.
15	Cephalandra indica R.	Cucurbitaceae	Kovai	Oral ulcers, Diabetes,

b. uneeshwaran Kovil

This temple is situated 2 km away from Kilpalur Bus stop. It is covering around 0.2 Acres of land area. There is no water reservoir near this Temple. The is Muneshwaran. Here Oil, ,Milk, Ghee, Banana, Mixed fruits, Sandal, Turmeric are offered by the People during Pooja. There is a special pooja yearly once which is celebrated in a grand manner, during August month, which happens for 7 days. The common public of the village take part in this festival. Hen are Muneshwaran during Pooja. Vegetarian prasadam like Sweet Pongal, sundal, vadai and Payasam are to People visit this temple to get rain and good yield in Agriculture.

There are around 35 plants of herbs, shrubs, climbers and trees belonging to 19 families are found associated with this Sacred grove People maintain this temple with great interest. People around this place collect medicinal plants around from the temple for curing basic ailments. The Binomial, Tamil name , family and the habit of the plants are listed out in the (Table- 4:2).

4.1. MUNESHWARAN TEMPLE

District	:	Thiruvannamalai
Taluk	:	Kalaspakam
Locality	:	Kilpalur
Landmark	:	Near Arikarai kilpaur
Geographical Position	:	23. 48°N 79.58°E
Area	:	0.2 Acre
Management	:	Poosari
Vegetation type	:	Tropical bellow Evergreen
Worshipping Deity	:	Muneshwaran
Associated Deities	:	Ellaikal
Animals	:	Dogs, Monkeys, Goat, Garden Lizard, Snakes.
Birds	:	Crow, Hen, Myna, Sparrow, Thookkanam .
Water Reservoir	:	Pond
	:	Milk, Tender coconut, Mixed fruits, Sandal, Turmeric
	:	Tuesday, Friday, Ammavasai, Special poojai in Chitthirai month.
Terracotta	:	Nil
Religious Beliefs for happ	:	Considered to be powerful Amman and pray
Animal Sacrifice	:	Pig, cow, Goat, Hen.
Conservation status	:	Low

Plate 4:2 Showing the pictures of Muneshwaran kovil

TableS .No	Botanical Name	Family	Tamil Name	Medical Uses
1	Bauhinia acuminata	Fabaceae	Kattathi	Anti cancer Activity
2	OcimumteNuiflorum	Lamiaceae	Thulasi	Blood pressure lipid Levels.
3	Arahis hypogacea	Fabaceae	Nilakadalai	Decrease Cardiovascular.
4	Azadirachta indica	Meliaceae	Vembu	Skin Problems.
5	tunaregamspinose	Rubiaceae	Kadunkoram	Hepatic peoblems
6	Solanum procumbens	Solanaceae	Maruthani	Skin conditions Like itching.
7	Eucalyptus globulus	Myrtaceae	Nilageri	Heals wounds, Eases joint pain
8	ardiospermum halicacabum	Sapindaceae	Mudagathan	Abdominal pain, Orchitis,dropsy.
9	Catharanthus roseus	Apocynaceae	Nithiya kalyani	Cancer and diabetes root paste.

Table- 4:5, Shrubs And Climbers Plants associated with the Muneshwaran Kovil

S.No	Botanical Name	Family	Tamil Name	Medical Uses
1	Datura metal	Solanaceae	Umathai	Alleviating pain.
2	Adgatodavasica linn.	Acanthaceae	Adathodai	Cough,Cold,Asthma
3	Calotropis gigantea L.	Asclepiadaceae	Erukku	Woundhealing, Vericose Pain,
4	Hibiscus rosa	Malvaceae	Sembaruthi	Prevents liver damage.
5	Clerodendrum phlomidis L.	Verbenaceae	Thazhuthazhai	Fever,Body pain.

6	Dodonaea viscosa Jacq.	Sapindaceae	Virali	Tooth ache, Goitre.
7	Ixora coccinea	Rubiaceae	Eetli poo	Various ailments in Indian medicine.
8	Ipomoea carnea Jacq.	Convolvulaceae	Neyveli kattamanakku	Wound healing, Cancer.
9	Momordica charantia L.	Cucurbitaceae	Pakarkai	Leaves, used to cure diabetes totally.
10	Tecoma stans	Bignoniaceae	Naga senbagam	Cancer, diabetes and arthritis.
11	Eclipta prostrata	Asteraceae	Karisalankanni	Skin, hepatic problems.
12	Cissampelos pareira.	Menispermaceae	Sirukattukodi	Menstrual disorders,
13	Vitex negundo	Lamiaceae	Nochi	Highly effective
14	Grewia villosa	Malvaceae	Unnu	Bark is said to be crushed and infused.
15	Cephalandra indica R.	Cucurbitaceae	Kovai	Oral ulcers, Diabetes,

c. Kaliyamman Kovil

This temple is situated in Kilpalur Panchayat on the way to Kalasapakkam. It is covering around 0.4 Acres of land area. Kali's earliest appearance is when she emerged from Durga. She is regarded as the ultimate manifestation of Shakti, the primordial cosmic energy, and the mother of all living beings. The goddess is stated to destroy evil in order to defend the innocent. Over time, Kali has been worshipped by devotional movements and Tantric sects variously as the Divine Mother, Mother of the Universe, Principal energy Adi Shakti. Shakta Hindu and Tantric sects additionally worship her as the ultimate reality or *Brahman*.^[5] She is also seen as the divine protector and the one who bestows *moksha*, or liberation. Kālī is the feminine form of Kāla (an epithet of Shiva) and thus the consort of Shiva.^[6] The homonym *kāla* (appointed time) is distinct from *kāla* (black), but these became associated through popular etymology. She is called Kali Mata ("the dark mother").

5.1. KALIAMMAN TEMPLE

District	:	Thiruvannamalai
Taluk	:	Kalasapakam
Locality	:	Kilpalur
Landmark	:	Near Arikarai kilpaur
Geographical Position	:	17. 34°N 69.78°E
Area	:	0.4 Acre
Management	:	Poosari
Vegetation type	:	Tropical Dry Evergreen
Worshipping Deity	:	Kaliamman
Associated Deities	:	Singam
Animals	:	Dogs, Monkeys, Goat, Garden Lizard, Snakes.
Birds	:	Crow, Hen, Myna, Sparrow, Thookkanam
Water Reservoir	:	Pond
Turmeric	:	Milk, Tender coconut, Mixed fruits, Sandal,
Chitthirai month.	:	Tuesday, Friday, Ammavasai, Special poojai in
Terracotta	:	Nil
Religious Beliefs for happ	:	Considered to be powerful Amman and pray
Animal Sacrifice	:	Pig, cow, Goat, Hen.
Conservation status	:	Low

Plate 5:2 Showing the pictures of Kaliamman kovil

5:3, Herbs Plants associated with the Kaliamman Kovil

S.No	Botanical Name	Family	Tamil Name	Medical Uses
1	Bauhinia acuminata	Fabaceae	Kattathi	Anti cancer Activity
2	Phyllanthus niruri	Phyllanthaceae	Keezhanelli	Good for diabetes, Liver health.
3	Arahis hypogacea	Fabaceae	Nilakadalai	Decrease Cardiovascular.
4	Azadirachta indica	Meliaceae	Vembu	Skin Problems.
5	Ocimumtenuiflorum	Lamiaceae	Thulasi	Lower blood glucose
6	Solanum procumbens	Solanaceae	Maruthani	Skin conditions Like itching.
7	Eucalyptus globulus	Myrtaceae	Nilageri	Heals wounds, Eases joint pain
8	ardiospermum halicacabum	Sapindaceae	Mudagathan	Abdominal pain, Orchitis,dropsy.
9	Catharanthus roseus	Apocynaceae	Nithiya kalyani	Cancer and diabetes root paste.

Table- 5:5, Shrubs And Climbers Plants associated with the Kaliamman Temple

S.No	Botanical Name	Family	Tamil Name	Medical Uses
1	Ervatamia coronaria	Apocynaceae	Nandhiavattam	Eye diseases, Skin diseases.
2	Adgatodavasica linn.	Acanthaceae	Adathodai	Cough, Cold, Asthma

3	Calotropis gigantea L.	Asclepiadaceae	Erukku	Woundhealing, Vericose Pain,
4	Cassia alata L.	Caesalpiniaceae	Vandukolli	Skin diseases.
5	Clerodendrum phlomis L.	Verbenaceae	Thazhuthazhai	Fever, Body pain.
6	Dodonaea viscosa Jacq.	Sapindaceae	Virali	Tooth ache, Goitre.
7	Vitex negundo	Lamiaceae	Nochi	Sinusitis, headache, Muscle aches.
8	Ipomoea carnea Jacq.	Convolvulaceae	Neyveli kattamanakku	Wound healing, Cancer.
9	Ixora coccinea	Rubiaceae	Eetli poo	Various ailments in Indian medicine.
10	Aristolochia indica L.	Aristolochiaceae	Perumarundhu	Uterine disorders.
11	Cassytha filiformis L.	Lauraceae	Kothaveli	Hair tonic.
12	Cissampelos pareira.	Menispermaceae	Sirukattukodi	Menstrual disorders,

TOTAL NUMBER OF FAMILIES

S,NO	FAMILY	NUMBER OF FAMILY
1	Amaranthaceae	12
2	Acanthaceae	4
3	Asclepiadaceae	7
4	Apocynaceae	7
5	Aristolochiaceae	3
6	Acanthaceae	2
7	Apocynaceae	4
8	Asteraceae	2
9	Bignoniaceae	3
10	Caesalpiniaceae	4
11	Convolvulaceae	5
12	Cucurbitaceae	4
13	Commelinaceae	2
14	Convolvulaceae	2

15	Euphorbiaceae	5
16	Fabaceae	5
17	Liliaceae	2
18	Lamiaceae	8
19	Lauraeae	4
20	Malvaceae	6
21	Menispermaceae	4
22	Mortaceae	2
23	Meliaceae	3
24	Phyllanthaceae	2
25	Papaveraceae	5
26	Rubiaceae	2
27	Rutaceae	3
28	Sapindaceae	8
29	Solanaceae	4
30	Verbenaceae	6

DISCUSSION

Villages in this study are much known for local community. The plants studied in this area were known to have medicinal values for major and minor ailments and diseases such as cancer, heart disease, kidney-stones, skin diseases, abortion inducing drugs, respiratory disease etc. The present study could come out with the some notion about the culture and traditional knowledge of local people. It was found that the local communities with limited knowledge on medicinal plants use sacred groves areas for collecting plants and preparing folk medicines.

They are culturally enriched and traditionally trained to explore the uses of different medicinal plants as well as protecting the biodiversity richness and sacredness of these small patches of forests better known as sacred groves. They use different parts of plants for preparing medicines for different ailments. Generally, leaves of different medicinal plants are used for preparing medicines for a number of diseases. Besides leaves, other plant parts like barks, fruits, stems and roots of different plants are also being used by the local Vaidya's or herbal practitioners to treat a myriad of diseases. Medicinal plants such as *Cardiospermum halicacabum*, *Scopis dulcis*, *Scopis dulcis Tridax procumbens*, *Calotropis gigantea*, *Syzygium cumini* and *Solanum procumbens* have common presence and maximum use by locals in almost all sacred groves studied.

During our study of sacred groves for 6 months (From December- 20021- April 2022) we have observed. The rituals and ethics vary from one temple to another. Podaturpet village of Pallipattu Taluk. It is between Tiruttani-Pallipattu and Sholinghur. Nagani is also one of the

border towns of Tamil Nadu -Andhra Pradesh. The main study area selected for ethnobotanical survey Tiruvallur district are sacred groves from Podaturpet village of Pallipattu Taluk. The selected sacred groves for survey are Kanni Kovil Podaturpet , Ellai Amman Kovil Podaturpet , Aayiram kan Padaitha Akilandeshwari Kovil Podaturpet, Aarattam Thiru Kovil and Thoppai Amman Kovil Pandaravedu. The Goddess and associated deity were different. In all the 5 sacred groves, Non vegetarian and vegetarian prasadam are offered to God during Pooja.

Tonsuring, ear piercing, Marriages, and special pooja by unmarried girls and pregnant women are done here. The common Village People pray God for getting more spells of rain and good yield in Agriculture. Kanni koil, is considered more ferocious as the saphakanni of the temple are protecting the village and punish if anyone is making a sin. So, people are much afraid of this Grove.

Around 50 plants were recorded from all the 5 sacred groves. The vegetation and diversity of the grove is maintained by the Local people. Fire woods are collected for making prasadam from the trees of the temple. Medicinal plants are collected from the groves for curing simple ailments.

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