



TAMILNADU FOREST DEPARTMENT



# வாரியாடு VARAIYAADU

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF PROJECT NILGIRI TAHR

**SAVE OUR STATE ANIMAL  
OUR NILGIRI TAHR, OUR PRIDE**

PROJECT NILGIRI TAHR





JANUARY 2024

## INAUGURATION OF PROJECT NILGIRI TAHR BY HONOURABLE CHIEF MINISTER



The Project Nilgiri Tahr, a conservation initiative by Environment, Forest and Climate Change Department, has been launched by Honorable Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu **Thiru. M.K.STALIN** on 12-10-2023, Thursday, at Secretariat to conserve the State animal, 'NILGIRI TAHR'. In this event, Respected Minister of Forest, Dr.M. Mathivendhan, Chief Secretary Thiru. Shivdas meena I.A.S., Additional Chief Secretary Tmt. Supriya sahu I.A.S., Principal Chief Conservator of Forests and Chief Wildlife Warden Thiru. Srinivas R Reddy I.F.S., Additional Principal Chief Conservator of Forests Thiru. V. Naganathan, I.F.S, Consevator of Forests and Field Director Thiru. S. Ramasubramanian I.F.S., and Coimbatore District Forest Officer Thiru. N. Jayaraj I.F.S., and with the august presence of other dignitaries "Project Nilgiri Tahr" was launched. The event lightened up by unveiling a statue of Nilgiri Tahr followed by screening of documentary movie about our state animal Nilgiri Tahr.

## DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

I am proud & delightful to share the first edition of 'Project Nilgiri Tahr' Newsletter, 'VARAIYAADU'. This issue reflects the intellectual progress of Project Nilgiri Tahr- country's first iconic project to conserve State animal of Tamil Nadu. The iconic project functions under the immense guidance of Tmt. Supriya Sahu, Additional Chief Secretary of Environment, Climate Change and Forests, Government of Tamil Nadu . Recently, Thiru. Srinivas R. Reddy, Principal Chief Conservator of Forests and Chief Wildlife Warden visited the Headquarters of Project Nilgiri Tahr, which functions with State-of -the-Art' administrative office at Coimbatore, and appreciated the research activities being carried out. This quarterly newsletter covers significant field observations of Researchers, communication and outreach activities.



**M.G. GANESAN**  
Project Director,  
Project Nilgiri Tahr

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### OUR VISION

Our vision is to be a hub for passionate individuals, conservationists, and communities united in their commitment to safeguarding the Nilgiri Tahr and its unique ecosystem.

### OUR MISSION

Our mission is to excel in the conservation and protection of Nilgiri tahr, an iconic species endemic to the Western Ghats

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# சங்க இலக்கியத்தில் வரையாடுகள்

பாகம் I

நீலகர் வரையாடுகள் மேற்குத் தொடர்ச்சி மலைத்தொடர்களுக்கே உரிய சிறப்பினங்களில் ஒன்றாகும். மகவும் தொன்மை வாய்ந்த சங்க இலக்கியங்களில் வரையாடுகளை பற்றிய குறிப்புகள் காணப்படுகின்றன. இத்தகைய சிறப்பு வாய்ந்த நீலகர் வரையாடுகள் பொதுவாக “உருடை” என சங்க நூல்களில் வர்ணிக்கப்பட்டுள்ளன. மேலும் தனித்துவமாக ஆண் வரையாடுகளை “தகர்” என்றும் பெண் வரையாடுகளை “புகைவ” என்றும் பழங்கால நூல்கள் குறிப்பிடுகின்றன.

தமிழ் மொழியின் மகவும் சிறப்பு வாய்ந்த ஐம்பெருங்காப்பியங்களான சலப்பத்காரம், சீவகச் சந்தாமணி போன்ற நூல்களிலும், நற்றிணை, ஐங்குறுநூறு, குறுந்தொகை, பதிற்றுப்பத்து, பர்ப்பாடல், மலைபடுகடாம், பட்டினப்பாலை, அகநானூறு, புறநானூறு போன்ற நூல் தொகுப்புகளிலும் குற்றாலக் குறவஞ்சி போன்ற சிற்றலக்கியங்களிலும் வரையாடுகள் பற்றும் அதன் வாழ்நிலங்களை பற்றிய குறிப்புகள் காணப்படுகின்றன.

பெருங்காப்பியங்களில் ஒன்றான சலப்பத்காரத்தில்

“வரையாடு உருடையும் மடமான் மறியும்”

சலப்பு, அஞ்சு காட்சிக்கதை : 51

என்ற வரிகளில் “உயர்ந்த மலைகளில் பாய்ந்து ஊளையாடுகின்ற வரையாடு என்று இளங்கோவழிகள் வரையாடுகளின் வாழ்நிலை கூறுகின்றார்.

மேலும் திருதக்க தேவர் இயற்றிய காசிய நூலான சீவக சந்தாமணியில், உயர்ந்த மலைச் சகரங்களில் உள்ள வரையாடு உலாவிப் போது, அங்குள்ள தேங்குகளில் தேன் சிந்தும் என்பதை,

“ஓங்குமால் வரையாடுகி க்ஷயுடைந்துகு பெருந்தேன்.....”

[சீவக.1559:1]

மேலும் சேரன் செங்குட்டுவனுக்கும் எழில் மலை நன்னுனுக்கும் மலையாடுகாரான வரையாடுகளை வேட்டுவர்கள் அரிதவில் முயன்று பிடித்துக்கொண்டு வந்து காண்கை பொருளாக தந்ததாக சங்க நூல்கள் குறிப்பிடுகின்றன. இதற்கு சான்றாக, அன்றைய சேர நாட்டு மலைகளில் இன்றும் வரையாடுகள் வாழ்வதை அறியலாம்.

மேலும் சேர மன்னொருவன் தண்டகாரணியத்திலிருந்து வருகையைப் பிடித்துக் கொண்டு வந்து மேற்கு கடற்கரை நாடான தொண்டியல் ஷ்ணத்தான் எனவும், இதனால் “ஆடு கோட்பாட்டுச் சேரலாதன்” என வழங்கப்பட்டதாகவும், பதற்றப்பட்டு நூலில் ஆறாம் பக்கத்தில் குறிப்பிடப்பட்டுள்ளது. இதற்கு சான்றாக அங்கறைய சேர நாட்டு மலைகளில் கீற்றுல் வரையாடுகள் வாழ்வதை அறியலாம்.

வரையாடுகள் மந்தைகளாக வாழ்வதையும் கருங்குரங்கோடு வருகை தாழ்க் குத்க்கும் என்பதையும், “கடும்பாட்டு வருகை” என நற்றிணை 119 ஆம் பாடல் குறிப்பிட்டுள்ளது. மேலும் வரையாடுகள் பாய்ந்து தாக்கும் போர்க்குணம் உடையது என்பதனை,

“..... அவன் மலைப் போருகை வருகையும் பாயாச் சுருகை  
அடுக்கத்த கொயற் கருந் தகையே”

[நற்: 359]

என்ற நற்றிணையின் 359 ஆம் பாடல் கூறுகிறது. இதன் பொருள், “தலைவன் தலைவர்க்கு கொணர்ந்த தகை, போர்க்குணம் கொண்ட வருகை கூட அகைய முடியாத மலை உச்சியிலிருந்து எடுக்கப்பட்டது” என்பதாகும்.

சங்க காலத் தமிழர்கள் மலையாட்டின் குட்டிகளைக் கொணர்ந்து தன் குடிந்தைகளைப் போல வீடுகளில் வளர்த்தனர் என்பதனை,

“ வகை வளர் சாரல் வருகை நன்மான் குடி வளர்ப்பவர் போல  
பாராட்டி”

என்ற கலித்தொகையின் பாடல் வர்கள் மூலம் அறியலாம். இதன் மூலம், நமது மாநில ஷ்லங்கான வரையாடுகள், படிந்தமிழர் வாழ்விடலோடு நெருங்கிய தொடர்புடையவை என்பதை உணரலாம்.

# வருடை

வார்டுகோட்டு வயத்தகர்  
வளைக்கொம்புகள் வல்கைக்கு  
சான்றுகள்!

மாலருஷ்கூழ் குருமயர்  
புருவை வருடை  
மந்தைகள்!

உயர்நீதாங்கிய மலைச்சகரங்களை  
தனதுகைமையாக்கிய தன்னகர்ல்லா  
மலைமன்னர்கள்!

மேற்குத்தொடர்ச்சி மலைகளின்  
மேகத்தீவுகளை ஆக்கிரமித்த  
மலைமகுடங்கள்!

பசுமைபொர்த்திய புல்லலை  
குன்றுகளைக் காக்கும்  
அரண்கள்!

வனப்பரப்பின் வளம்சேர்க்கும்  
புனியிர்ப்பின் புலன்மாறிய  
வருடைகள்!

வற்றாநத ஜீவந்தகர்  
உயர்நீதமும் மலைகளின்  
நீர்மலாளர்கள்!

மலைகளின் வளம்  
பேணும் மண்ணின்  
மைந்தர்கள்!

நீலவானின் நீர்துள்களை  
நிலத்தல் சேம்கும்  
வந்தைகள்!

வண்ணேறு முடிங்கும்  
மலைப் புல்வளங்களின்  
துக்னங்கள்!

இயற்கையின் இன்றியமையா  
இயற்றமீதின் இக்காசு  
கொடைகள்!

கவியருக். Dr. சீ.பிரியங்கா.  
முதுநிலை வஞ்சூர்.

வார்டுகோட்டு - வளையங்களை உடைய  
புருவை - பெண் வரையாடு  
தகர் - ஆண் வரையாடு  
வருடை - வரையாடு

வருடம் - மழை  
வண்ணேறு - இடி  
துக்னங்கள் - பனத்துள்கள்



# FIELD OBSERVATIONS

## FIELD SURVEY IN ANAMALAI TIGER RESERVE

### SAVING THE MOUNTAIN MONARCHS

The Research team of Project Nilgiri Tahr conducted the field survey in Grass Hills National park (ATR) to identify the plants species and food habits of Nilgiri Tahr. Nilgiri Tahr are primarily herbivores, which feeds on various types of grasses, herbs, and shrubs. The Nilgiri Tahr is a state animal of Tamil Nadu, which inhabits the high altitude open grassland at elevation from 1200 to 2600 msl of the South Western Ghats. (Map enclosed page No.11) Grass Hills National Park is a great potential habitat of Nilgiri Tahr. which harbors rock cliffs, perennial water streams and rich floral diversity. especially many fodder species of Nilgiri Tahr. During the field survey, the team documented Nilgiri Tahr herds in different regions of Grass hills such as Koramparai Sarivu, Siluvai medu, Kallar hills and Varaiattu kuruku.

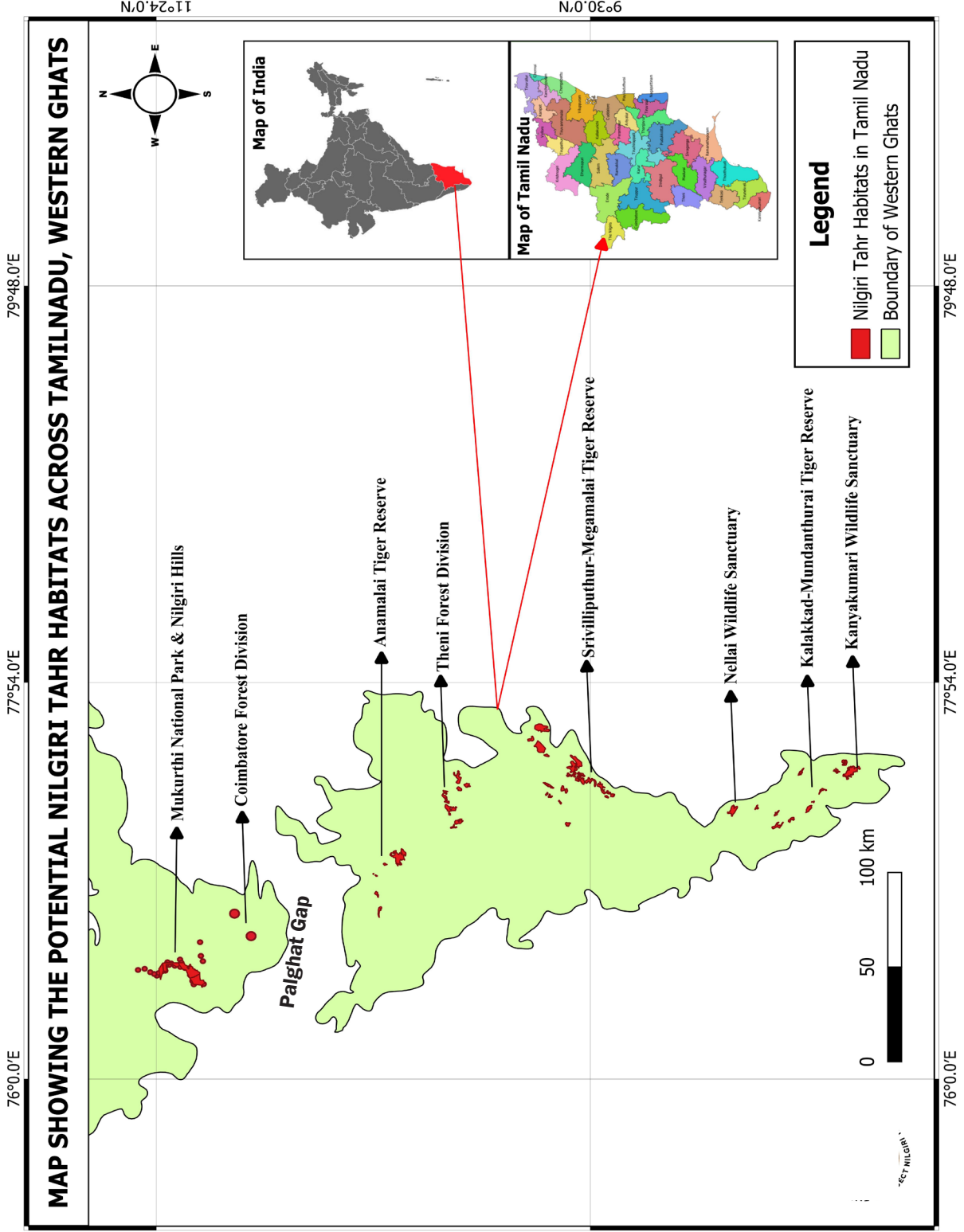
During the field survey, 85 individuals of Nilgiri Tahr were directly sighted in Koramparai sarivu, 52 individuals in Siluvamalai and 8 Nilgiri tahr in edges of Attuparai kuruku. Fresh and Dry tahr pellets were spotted in different locations of Nilgiri tahr habitat in Grass hills. A rich epitome of plant species diversity was observed in Koramparai sarivu top, Siluva malai and also presence of fresh pellets, which was comparatively more than in other regions.

During the field visit, Team identified several associated fauna species in Tahr habitats namely Indian Gaur, Asiatic Elephant and Hare. The team noticed abundance of grass species and

their diversity in various places of Grass hills, which indicates the ecological conditions of Tahr habitats. Many interesting species were identified in high altitude open grasslands of ATR such as *Themeda tremula*, *Arundinella purpurea*, *Melinis repens*, *Tripogon anathaswamianus*, *Chyrsopogon zeylanicus*, *Ischaemum indicum*, *Arundinella mesophylla*, *Eulalia phaeothrix*, *Iseilema prostratum* and *Eragrostis uniolooides*. These are dominant grass species which are found in different places of high altitude open grasslands.

During the field survey the team observed many fodder species of Nilgiri Tahr in Grass Hills National park, which is a UNESCO world Heritage. The team identified 12 grass species as a fodder species of Tahr in open grasslands, which includes *Themeda tremula*, *Arundinella purpurea*, *Melinis repens*, *Iselima prostrata*, *Tripogon anathaswamianus*, *Chyrsopogon zeylanicus*, *Ischaemum indicum*, *Arundinella sp.* etc. Among them, *Tripogon anathaswamianus*, *Chyrsopogon zeylanicus* and *Ischaemum indicum* are highly preferable fodder species by Tahr. This field survey clearly indicated that the ATR is potential habitat of Nilgiri Tahr and upon observing this remarkable diversification, it is evident that Anamalai Tiger Reserve is an epitome for Nilgiri Tahr population.





## OBSERVATIONAL SNIPPET OF *INDRELLA AMPULLA*

*Snail tales*

S. Gokul Prasath, SRF



As I criss - crossed the creek boulders of the picturesque pandaravarai, nestled among the verdant rolling hills of Karian shola National Park at Topslip, Anamalais. The astounding avifaunal diversity that flew over lush green canopy lured my sense of wonder. Moving at a snail's pace, the psithurism sounded melodramatic and all of a sudden my eyes were treated with a snail gliding over a drenched log. The Tweaking tentacles sensed throughout its ambience and I sat there for close observation, it was identified as *Indrella ampulla* (Benson, 1850). It belongs to Ariophantidae family and is a terrestrial snail inhabiting the regions at moderate elevations in the tropics. a monotype endemic snail sparsely spread across evergreen

forests of the Western Ghats biome which holds a vast array of gastropod molluscan diversity. These species can be seen with the more foam like slimy secretions sticking to all its way forward with which it is also found to deter predators with an acoustic mechanism. The olive brown proteinaceous shell is globose in shape with intricate convex spire exhibiting the golden ratio of nature and the polymorphic soft body being glossy-red. These creatures are generalist omnivores and are opportunistic feeders on vegetation with their feeding guild primarily comprises of fungal forms mushrooming over detritus. Feeding is aided by the incredibly placed 100 rows of radular teeth. Though there might be several other predators preying upon this species hitherto, *Vijayachelys silvatica* (forest cane turtle) is only documented. Population ecology of *I. ampulla* is concerning the conservation of this charismatic species should be instigated as revealed by the personally observed tentative ethogram of *I. ampulla*. The immeasurable ecosystem services that they provide should be fostered and in turn, giving advocacy for acquiring keystone status for this land snail. Crisp golden rays of sunshine sparkled from the foliar fractals ever since, I thought of wrapping up the session and it was truly a triumphant moment indeed.

JANUARY 2024

# FLORA CORNER

## **HABENARIA PERROTTETIANA A RICH AN ENDEMIC ORCHID OF WESTERN GHATS**

**Dr. B. Subbaiyan, SRF**



*Habenaria perrottetiana*



**Guerrard Samuel Perrottet**  
**23 February 1790 - 13 January 1870**

The Orchidaceae family is the 2nd largest flowering plant species in the world. In India, more than 1270 species belonging to 155 genera with 305 species being endemic (Singh et al., 2020). In Tamil Nadu, 251 species belong to 71 genera recorded (Karuppusamy et al., 2022). The intensive field survey by Ganesan (2019) and his team reported 145 species in Anamalai Hills. Genus *Habenaria* is derived from latin word 'habena' (rein or strap) referring to its spur. *Habenaria perrottetiana* is a terrestrial herb and endemic to Western Ghats, which are found in high altitude open grassland among the short grass at elevations around 2000msl.

The species perrottetiana is named after the Swiss botanist Guerrard Samuel Perrottet. The botanical collection and experiments made his travel and stay in Nilgiris. He collected, documented and identified several hundreds of plants species including Orchids. After expeditions in Africa and Southeast Asia, where he collected plant and animal specimens, he worked in French Pondicherry, India, where he established a botanical garden. *Habenaria perrottetiana* commonly known as Perrotteti's *Habenaria*. It is a terrestrial orchid with 20-50 cm tall stem. The whole plant is green in color. They possess 6-8 stalks with greenish

yellow in color, cup-like flowers facing one side. Flowering time of this species is mostly between September to November. Grows in high altitude open grasslands among the short grass species. It is a rare orchid species, which are found in Nilgiri Tahr habitat. During the field survey, the team documented this interesting endemic

species in Nilgiri Tahr habitat of Anamalai hills. *Habenaria perrottetiana* is closely associated with *Fimbristylis kingii*, *Arundinella purpurea*, *Tripogon anantaswamianus* and *Themeda tremula*. These grass species are among the important fodder species of Nilgiri tahr in Anamalai Tiger Reserve.

### **CROTALARIA GRAHAMIANA WIGHT & ARN. - AN ENDEMIC SPECIES IN WESTERN GHATS**

Genus *Crotalaria* belongs to the family Fabaceae and is commonly known as a Rattlepod. There are over 700 species of herbaceous plants and shrubs in the world. *Crotalaria grahamiana* is a very unique species of the genus *Crotalaria*. This species is commonly known as the bushy rattlepod. It is a native species in South India and is a well known Nitrogen-fixer. It is an important species, which are found in the Nilgiri Tahr habitat. It grows on shola margins and rocky grasslands of the Anamalai Tiger Reserve at altitude of 1000-1700 msl. ATR has more than 15 *Crotalaria* species so far recorded, of which 8 *Crotalaria* species could be seen in Tahr habitat. The mass flowering of *Crotalaria grahamiana* occurs between May and August. It is a perennial erect plant, robust, more or less woody, has hollow stems, angular, tomentose.



*Crotalaria grahamiana*



The leaves are alternate, compound with 5-7 digitate leaflets, smoothly tomentose below. The inflorescences are multiflorous racemes and many lemon-yellow in color. The fruits are oblong-clavate pods glabrous containing ten small seeds. The team conducted the field survey in different places of ATR. During the field survey team noticed abundance distribution of this species in different Tahr habitat.

This species could be seen in Variattumalai, Vengoli, Pandaravarai, Pachapal malai, Kovilpillai malai, Pampan malai, Pasumalai, Attumalai and Pichuchi malai. *Crotalaria grahamiana* could be commonly seen along the fringe areas of Nilgiri Tahr habitats of ATR. This plant is an excellent indicator species found at elevations ranging from 900 – 1500 MSL. This species is endemic and facing several anthropogenic pressures to sustain. It should be conserved for well sustenance of grassland ecosystems.

# SPECIAL COLUMN

## NILGIRI TAHR DAY 2023

### “A HOLISTIC APPROACH TOWARDS COMMUNITY BASED CONSERVATION OF NILGIRI TAHR”

Dr. S. Priyanka, Senior Scientist cum Research Coordinator



As a part of Nilgiri Tahr day-2023 events, a workshop themed “A holistic approach towards community based conservation of Nilgiri Tahr” was organized on 17th October 2023 at Centenary building, Tamil Nadu Forest Academy, Coimbatore. Research experts, eminent Scientists, Tribal community representatives and students have enthusiastically participated in the workshop and gained insights on Nilgiri Tahr conservation.





## FELICITATION OF DR. PRIYA DAVIDAR

October 7th was declared as 'Nilgiri Tahr day' in honour of Dr. E. R. C. Davidar, who pioneered the study on Nilgiri tahr as early as 1970's. As Tamil Nadu celebrates its first Nilgiri Tahr day in 2023, Dr. E. R. C. Davidar's daughter Dr. Priya Davidar, who was the Chief guest of the program, was honored and felicitated by Thiru. S. Ramasubramanian, IFS., Conservator of Forests and Field Director, Anamalai Tiger Reserve. The Inaugural address was delivered by Project Director, Project Nilgiri Tahr.

## EXPERTS TALK

Mr. N. Mohanraj, Advisor, Western Ghats landscape, delivered a talk on "Nilgiri Tahr and Mukurthi National Park". Similarly, "Nilgiri Tahr survey in Nilgiri landscape in 2019" was presented by Mr. D. Boominathan, Landscape coordinator, WWF -India. Similarly, a lecture on "Saving our Biological glaciers" was delivered by Mr. Vasanth, Upstream Ecology, Nilgiris. "Status and distribution of Nilgiri Tahr from the recent surveys by WWF-India" was addressed by Mr. M. A. Paul Peter Predit, Associate co-coordinator, WWF-India. "Status and distribution of Nilgiri Tahr -Frontline Fieldstaffs Perspectives" was lectured by Mr. J. Peter Prem Chakravarthi, biologist, ATR, and the workshop concluded with a valedictory note by Dr. S. Priyanka, Senior Scientist cum research coordinator, Project Nilgiri Tahr.



## **POSTER RELEASE AND DOCUMENTARY VIDEO:**

The poster “Perspectives of Project Nilgiri Tahr” depicting the significance of Nilgiri tahr and the objectives of the iconic project to conserve State animal, was released by Thiru. S. Ramasubramanian, IFS., Conservator of Forests and Field Director, Anamalai Tiger Reserve. Similarly, another poster, “Flora of Tahr habitat”, documenting 15 floral species was released by Dr. T.R. Sankar Raman, as a part of Nilgiri Tahr day. A documentary video was also telecasted to create awareness about the community based conservation of Nilgiri Tahr.

## **FELICITATION OF MUDHUVAN COMMUNITY COUNCIL MEMBERS:**

Felicitation of Mudhuvan Community Council member: As a part of Nilgiri Tahr day events, 25 Mudhuvan community representatives from 7 settlements from Anamalai Tiger Reserve were honored and efforts to involve Mudhuvan community tribes during Nilgiri Tahr survey and habitat assessment studies were discussed.

## **SCHOOL STUDENTS COMPETITION “OUR NILGIRI TAHR, OUR PRIDE”**

Felicitation of Mudhuvan Community Council member: As a part of Nilgiri Tahr day events, 25 Mudhuvan community representatives from 7 settlements from Anamalai Tiger Reserve were honored and efforts to involve Mudhuvan community tribes during Nilgiri Tahr survey and habitat assessment studies were discussed.



# EDITOR'S CHOICE

## AN AROMATIC WAY OF LIFE AT VELLIMUDI SETTLEMENT

Dr. S. Priyanka, Senior Scientist cum Research Coordinator

### TRIBALS OF ANAMALAI TIGER RESERVE

Anamalais is worth to be designated as 'Anthropological Reserve' as it supports 6 indigenous people viz. Malasar, Malai malasars, Kadars, Eravallars, Pulayars and Muduvans. This is very unique in the entire Tamil Nadu and probably the only Tiger Reserve with diverse groups of indigenous people. There are 10 Mudhuvan Tribal hamlets at Anamalai Tiger Reserve, whereas 8 hamlets are very near to Tahr habitats, like Sankarangudi, Poochikattamparai etc. As Mudhuvan community and Nilgiri Tahr share the same habitat, more focus has been paid on Mudhuvan Tribes. They may also be engaged in Eco-tourism activities and Eco-development initiatives to establish a community based conservation of Nilgiri Tahr.

### VISIT TO MUDHUVAN TRIBAL SETTLEMENT AT VELLIMUDI

The Research team of Project Nilgiri Tahr visited Mudhuvan Tribal settlement at Vellimudi, Vaalparai Range on 27.07.23, for collecting data to create a Microplan. Velli Mudi is situated nearby Vandal and Kadamparai with an elevation of 1,329 metres and a distinct tribal settlement of Mudhuvans, located in Anamalai Tiger Reserve. The Research team of

Project Nilgiri Tahr interacted with the Head of the Tribal hamlet, Mr Archunan, and met the tribes individually to know about their livelihood status. The Vellimudi tribal hamlet consisted of 118 people (50 males, 55 females and 13 children). They have 47 families and 34 Ration cards issued. The Tribal people were given Forest Rights and Titles and 1.5 cents of land for each house. The team had a long discussion with 6 tribal people (3 male and 3 female) namely Krishnan (45), Elappan (75), Paramasivan (42), Thangammal (63), Subbammal (45) and Dhanalakshmi (65).

### MFP'S AND FIREWOOD COLLECTION

The Mudhuvan people at Vellimudi settlement rely on firewood for cooking purposes. Hence, it is proposed that alternate fuel like LPG facilities can be implemented, which would drastically reduce the dependency of forest for firewood collection. Apart from firewood, they also collect Minor Forest Produce's (MFP's) like honey, lac etc. They also collect broom grass near Mayil Sholai. Seasonal honey collection is also carried out during April and May months, annually.

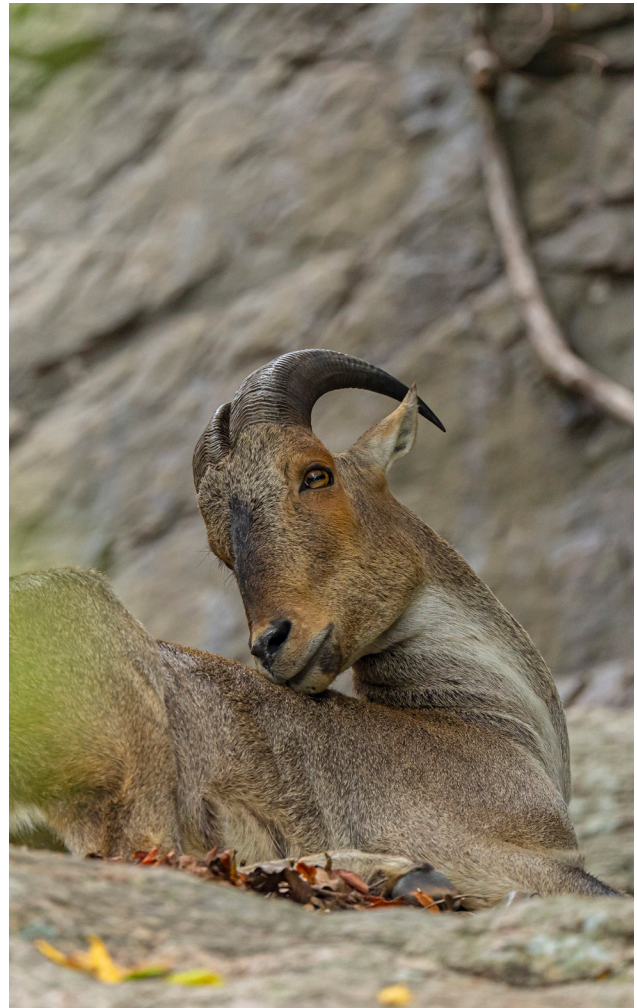


## COMMUNITY BASED CONSERVATION

The Tribal people are also engaged in controlling of forest fires, making of firelines, weed removal activities especially *Lantana camara* and land restoration activities, at a daily wages of Collectorate wages rate. They have been provided with two cellular phones, through which they immediately communicate to the Forest department about any anti-social elements. Hence, a strong community based conservation has been achieved with the help of Vellimudi Mudhuvan hamlet.

## CULTURAL HERITAGE AND FOLKLORE:

Lord Murugan, being their main Deity, they also worship Goddess 'Dhavasiammal', a form of Sita. 'Thaipongal', is their primary festival and they have a distinct Folklore named, 'Kannenchi attam', performed by Mr. Mayilsamy (72). They highly conserve their age old heritage and practices, with strong relationship bonding.



## EXOTIC FLAVORS OF ESSENTIAL OIL

Their main profession is agriculture and manufacturing of lemon grass oil. They have cultivated mainly Lemon grass followed by Coffee, Lemon, Pepper and Turmeric. 'Krishna' variety of lemon grass is predominantly cultivated which yields 3 tonnes of biomass per harvest per acre. As the farmers have two harvest per year, they get an yield of 6 tonnes per acre annually. One tonne of this Krishna variety of lemongrass yields 12 kg of this exotic flavouring ingredient with 80-85% citral concentration. They have two functioning distillers for manufacturing Lemon Grass Oil, donated by CSIR-Central Institute of Medicinal and Aromatic Plants, Bangaluru, under Project 'Aroma Mission'. The two stainless steel distillers uses earlier distilled grass waste to burn, thus significantly reducing the requirements for firewood. Thus an increase in revenue will keep Tribals away from illegal activities like timber felling and poaching, thus promoting a sustained livelihood. Hence, as we walk down the lane in Vellimudi hamlet, the exotic fragrance of lemon grass oil nurtures the heart and refreshes our mind and anyone could feel this aroma filling our souls deeply as pure as the endearment of Mudhuvan tribes towards Nature.



LEMONGRASS OIL



# PHOTO GALLERY



JANUARY 2024



# POSTER VLOG



## HABITAT OF NILGIRI TAHR IN THE SOUTHERN WESTERN GHATS



**ROCKY CLIFFS**



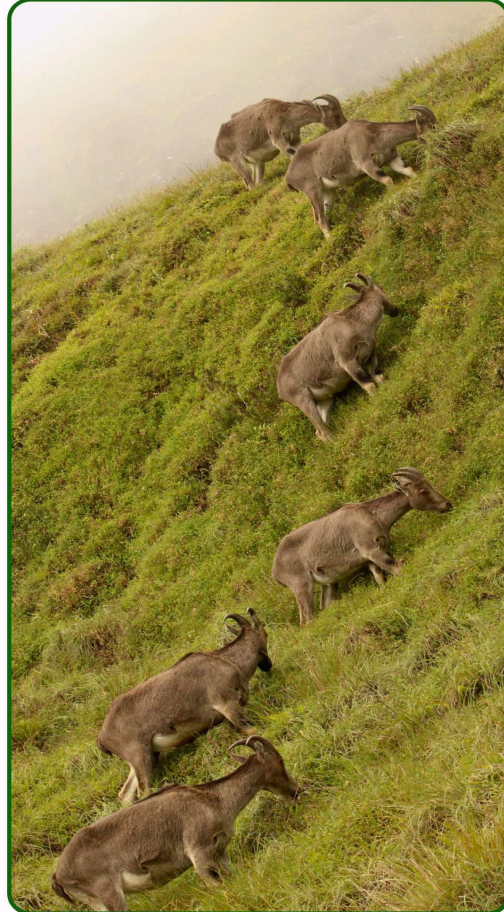
**MOUNTAIN MEADOWS**



**ROCKY CRAGS**



**ROCKY SLOPES**



**MONTANE GRASSLANDS**

### Habitat :

- The endemic Nilgiri tahr occupies pockets of Southern Western Ghats (Tamil Nadu and Kerala).
- Habitat Elevation (MSL) 500 – 2400 m.
- Currently habitat existing in and around 123 fragments ranging from 0.04 km<sup>2</sup> to 161.69 km<sup>2</sup> totaling an area of 798.60 km<sup>2</sup> with confirmed occurrence of Nilgiri tahr.

**PROJECT NILGIRI TAHR,  
TAMILNADU FOREST DEPARTMENT**





*Strobilanthes neasper*  
**Endemic**



*Strobilanthes virendrakumariana*  
**Endemic**



*Strobilanthes wightiana*  
**Endemic**

## STROBILANTHES DIVERSITY IN TAHR HABITAT



*Strobilanthes urceolaris*  
**Endemic**



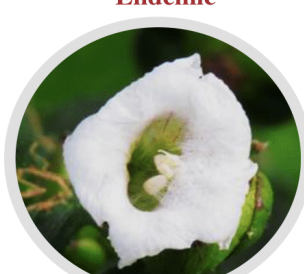
*Strobilanthes luridus*  
**Endemic**



*Strobilanthes kunthiana*  
**Endemic**



*Strobilanthes consanguineous*  
**Endemic**



*Strobilanthes heyneanus*  
**Endemic**



*Strobilanthes pulneyensis*  
**Endemic**



*Strobilanthes micranthus*  
**Endemic**

- Acanthaceae family
- 148 Species found in India
- 72 species endemic to India
- (Singh and Diwakar 2007, Karthikeyan *et al*, 2009).
- 38 species found in Tamil Nadu.

Photos: Dr. B. Subbaiyan



**PROJECT NILGIRI TAHR**



## **FACTS ABOUT TAHR**

- **TAHRS ARE CREPESULAR - ACTIVE DURING DAWN & DUSK**
- **TAHRS ARE MOSTLY NOMADIC CREATURES**
- **RUTTING SEASON- JUNE TO AUGUST**
- **CALVING SEASON- JANUARY TO MARCH**
- **TAHRS FEED ON MORE THAN 150 PLANT SPECIES.**
- **TAHRS ARE THE ONLY MOUNTAIN UNGULATES OCCURING IN SOUTH INDIA**

**“OUR *Milgiri Tahr*,  
OUR PRIDE”**





A Publication by  
**Project Nilgiri Tahr**



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