



Neelakurinji Declared as a Threatened Species

[Source: TH](#)

[Neelakurinji](#) (*Strobilanthes kunthiana*), a flowering shrub that blooms once every 12 years, is now classified as **Vulnerable** (Criteria A2c) on the [IUCN Red List](#).

- The species was not previously evaluated under IUCN standards due to its unique blooming cycle and ecological challenges.
- *Strobilanthes kunthiana* is an **endemic shrub of three-metre height**, seen only in the **high-altitude [shola grassland ecosystems](#)** of five mountain landscapes of southwest **India at an elevation of 1,340-2,600 m**.
 - The scientific name of the Neelakurinji is named after the **Kunthi River in Kerala's Silent Valley National Park** where it is abundantly found.
 - They are **semelparous** (reproducing only once in a lifetime) with **showy synchronous blooming and fruiting** every 12 years at the end of the life cycle.
 - Known for their massive blooming, they impart **purplish-blue colours to the mountain grasslands** and are popularly known as **Neelakurinji (*Blue Strobilanthes*) blooms**.
 - The species has **34 subpopulations within 14 ecoregions of the high-altitude mountain ranges of southwest India**, with 33 subpopulations in the [Western Ghats](#) and **one in the [Eastern Ghats](#)** (Yercaud, Shevaroy Hills).
 - Most subpopulations are in the [Nilgiris of Tamil Nadu](#), followed by Munnar, Palani-Kodaikanal, and Anamalai mountains.
- **Main Threats:** Major threats include habitat loss from tea and softwood plantations, urbanisation, invasive species, and climate change. **Approximately 40% of its habitat has been lost.**



Read more: [New Varieties of Neelakurinji Flowers](#)

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