



Dicliptera Polymorpha

[Source: PIB](#)

Why in News?

Recently, Scientists from the **Agharkar Research Institute (ARI)**, an autonomous institute under the Department of Science & Technology (DST), have discovered a new species of **Dicliptera**, named **Dicliptera Polymorpha** in the Northern Western Ghats of India.

What are the Key Findings Related to Species?

- **Unique Traits of *Dicliptera Polymorpha*:**
 - **Fire Resilience:** It can survive summer droughts and adapt to grassland fires.
 - **Dual Blooming Pattern:** Blooms post-monsoon (November–April) and again in May–June after fires.
 - **Morphological Distinction:** It has inflorescence flower structures that are uncommon in Indian species but similar to those found in African species.
 - **Adaptations to Harsh Conditions:**
 - Thrives on open grassland slopes in the Western Ghats.
 - Woody rootstocks produce dwarf flowering shoots during the second flowering phase.
- **Threats to Species:**
 - **Human-Induced Fires:** While fires can help the species bloom again, too many or poorly controlled fires could harm its habitat.
 - **Habitat Overuse:** Overgrazing and land-use changes threaten grassland biodiversity.

//

Dicliptera polymorpha Dharap, Shigwan & Datar



What are Key Facts About the Western Ghats?

▪ About:

- The [Western Ghats](#), also known as the **Sahyadri Hills**, are well known for their rich and unique assemblage of flora and fauna.
- The range is called Sahyadri in northern Maharashtra, Nilgiri hills in Karnataka and Tamil Nadu and **Anaimalai hills and Cardamom hills in Kerala**.
- It is recognized as a [UNESCO World Heritage Site](#).
- Western Ghats is home to India's two biosphere reserves, [13 National parks](#), several wildlife sanctuaries and many Reserve Forests.
 - It comprised the evergreen forests of [Nagarahole](#), deciduous forests of [Bandipur National Park](#) and Nugu in Karnataka and adjoining regions of [Wayanad and Mudumalai National Park](#) in the states of Kerala and Tamil Nadu.

▪ Global Biodiversity Hotspot:

- One of India's four recognized biodiversity hotspots, it is home to many endemic and yet-to-be-discovered species.

▪ Conservation Efforts for Western Ghats:

◦ **Gadgil Committee (2011):**

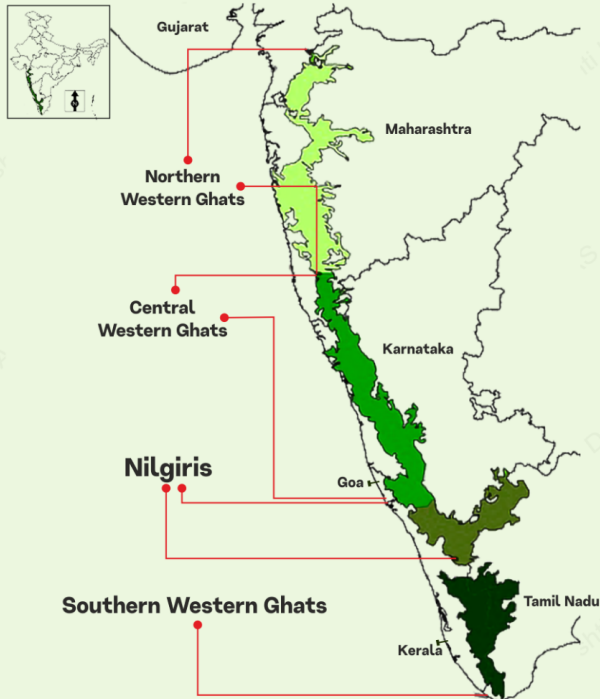
- It is also known as the [Western Ghats Ecology Expert Panel \(WGEEP\)](#).
- The committee recommended that all of the Western Ghats be declared as the [Ecological Sensitive Areas \(ESA\)](#) with only limited development allowed in graded zones.

◦ **Kasturirangan Committee (2013):** It sought to balance the development and environment protection in contrast to the system proposed by the Gadgil report.

- The [Kasturirangan committee](#) recommended that instead of the total area of Western Ghats, **only 37%** of the total area should be brought under ESA and a complete ban on mining, quarrying and sand mining be imposed in ESA.

Western Ghats

One of the four biodiversity hotspots of India; recognised as a UNESCO WHS (2012)



Names

- » Sahyadri - northern Maharashtra; Sahya Parvatham - Kerala

Diverted views about Mt. type

- » View 1: Block Mt. formed due to down warping of a part of land into Arabian Sea
- » View 2: Not true mt. rather the faulted edge of Deccan Plateau

Major Rocks

- » Basalt, granite gneiss, khondalites, metamorphic gneisses, crystalline limestone, iron ore

Geographical Extent

- » Satpura (in north) to the end of TN at Kanyakumari (in south)

Mt. Ranges

- » Nilgiri ranges, Shevaroy and Tirumala range
- » Highest peak - Anamudi (Kerala)

Rivers (originating)

- » West-flowing: Periyar, Bharathappuzha, Netravati, Sharavathi, Mandovi
- » East-flowing: Godavari, Krishna, Kaveri, Tunga, Bhadra, Bhima, Malaprabha, Ghataprabha, Hemavathi, Kabini

Endemic Species

- » Nilgiri tahr (IUCN Status - EN)
- » Lion-tailed macaque (IUCN Status - EN)

Imp Protected Areas

- » Biosphere Reserves - Agasthyamala and Nilgiri
- » NP - Silent Valley, Bandipur, Eravikulam, Wayanad-Mudumalai, Nagarhole
- » TR - Kalakad-Mundanthurai, Periyar

Imp Passes

- » Thal Ghat Pass (Kasara Ghat)
- » Bhor Ghat Pass
- » Palakkad Gap (Pal Ghat)
- » Amba Ghat Pass
- » Naneghat Pass
- » Amboli Ghat Pass

Significance

- » Hydroelectricity production
- » Influences Indian monsoon weather patterns
- » Carbon sequestration (neutralise ~4 MT of carbon every year)
- » One of the 8 global hottest hotspots of biodiversity (due to richness in species and endemism)
- » Rich in iron, manganese and bauxite ores, timber, pepper, cardamom, oil palm and rubber
- » Sizeable indigenous population (including PVTGs)
- » Important tourism/pilgrimage centres

Major Threats

- » Mining, Industrialisation
- » Massive extraction of forest produce
- » Human-wildlife conflict, encroachment, illegal hunting
- » Livestock grazing, deforestation
- » Large hydropower projects
- » Climate change

Imp Committees

- » Gadgil Committee (2011) (Western Ghats Ecology Expert Panel)
 - » Recommendation: All of WG be declared as Ecological Sensitive Area (ESA) with only limited development allowed in graded zones.
- » Kasturirangan Committee (2013)
 - » Recommendation: Instead of whole, only 37% of the total area of WG be brought under ESA + complete ban on mining, quarrying and sand mining be imposed in ESA.



UPSC Civil Services Examination, Previous Year Questions (PYQs)

Prelims:

Q. Recently, our scientists have discovered a new and distinct species of banana plant which attains a height of about 11 meters and has orange coloured fruit pulp. In which part of India has it been discovered? (2016)

- (a) Andaman Islands
- (b) Anaimalai Forests
- (c) Maikala Hills

(d) Tropical rain forests of northeast

Ans: (a)

PDF Refernece URL: <https://www.drishtias.com/printpdf/dicliptera-polymorpha>

