

# Documentation of Urban Trees in Chitradurga, Karnataka

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**Abstract:** Many of the world's major cities have implemented tree planting programs based on assumed environmental and social benefits of urban forests. Urban trees serve many useful functions such as climate change mitigation by carbon sequestration, air quality improvement by air pollution abatement, biodiversity conservation and source of ecosystem goods to urban inhabitants. They also have aesthetic, socio-religious and recreational value in urban contexts. In spite of the importance, they have not received much scientific attention. In this work, aimed to documentation and identification of trees. A survey was conducted during Dec-2022 to December-2023. This paper investigates the diversity of tree species growing both within the built environment as well as road-side avenues in the seaside town of Chitradurga which is the administrative headquarters of Chitradurga district of Karnataka. The preliminary study of tree flora of Chitradurga comprises of about 89 species in which majority are indigenous species and few others involve exotic and introduced species. The dominant genera are *Ficus*, *Terminalia*, *Artocarpus* and *Syzygium*. The dominant species are *Pongamia pinnata*, *Alstonia scholaris*, *Thespesia populnea*, *Terminalia catappa*, *Spathodia campanulata*, *Ficus religiosa* and *Bauhinia purpurea*. The tree diversity represents a good assemblage of different utility categories such as wild and cultivated fruit yielding trees, shade and ornamental trees, sacred and religious trees, etc. Besides the high proportion of older trees of Rain tree and *Ficus*, presence of wild fruit yielding trees like *Artocarpus incisos* and *Spondias pinnatis*, large sized sacred trees such as *Ficus religiosa* and *F. benghalensis*, rare medicinal species such as *Garcinia indica*, *Saraca asoca*, *Terminalia bellirica*, etc., are some of the notable features of the urban tree flora of Chitradurga.

**Keywords:** Survey, Documentation, Urban trees.

## 1. Introduction

Rapid urbanization is destroying natural ecosystems and degrading the environmental quality of towns and cities (Folke et al., 1997, Gregg et al., 2003, Alberti, 2004 and Marzluff, 2004). Many cities have been experiencing unprecedented growth, accompanied by severe environmental degradation (e.g. noise, carbon pollution, soil erosion, habitat loss, and species extirpation (Zipperer et al., 2011, Vesely, 2007, Young, 2010). Urban trees in parks, yards, streets, and remnant parcels have been features of urban design and landscape architecture for centuries (Arnold, 1980), and are still integral components of civic spaces that are well-recognized for their public value. Presently, 50% of total global population live in cities which occupy only 3% of the land area and it is expected that the

urban population will further rise to 67% in the next 50 years (Grimm et al., 2008). This kind of rapid urbanization is bringing complex changes to ecology, economy and society at local, regional, and global scales (De Fries and Pandey, 2010). Conservation and restoration of urban green spaces comprising of urban trees and forests are one important aspect of improving the environmental quality of urban areas. The term 'urban trees' generally includes trees growing both within the built environment as well as road-side avenues and public places in urban systems. In spite of their eco-sociological importance, urban trees have not received much scientific attention in India. There are only a few detailed studies on the urban trees of cities like Bangalore (Sudha and Ravindranath, 2000, Nagendra and Gopal, 2010), Karwar (Shivanand et al., 2012) Chandigarh (Kohli et al., 1994) and Nagpur (Gupta et al., 2008). We have initiated a study of the urban trees of Chitradurga, Karnataka and the preliminary data on the species diversity of urban trees of this town is presented in this paper.

## 2. Study Area and Methodology

### A. Study Area

We selected Chitradurga which is located almost in central part of Karnataka, Chitradurga is located between approximately 14.23° North latitude and 76.4° East longitude. This places it in the state of Karnataka, India.

12 of the major roads of Chitradurga town, which together cover the different locations of the town, were selected for tree enumeration. All plants having an approximate girth of more than 15 cm. were considered as trees. All such trees visible on either side of the entire length of the selected roads were noted and their numbers counted, while walking from one end of the road to the other. They included trees occurring on road sides, parks and also inside the compounds of both public and private buildings. Trees were identified with the help of local flora and other relevant literature (Cooke, 1967; Bhat, 2003; Swaminathan & Kochhar, 2003).

## 3. Results and Discussion

The preliminary data on the species diversity of urban trees of Chitradurga town comprises of 89 species. These species represent a total of 72 plant genera and 36 families. A list of all these trees with their family, and common name provided as

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table 1. A total of 1876 trees belonging to all the species were enumerated during the present study. The tree species diversity of Chitradurga town is high when compared to the smaller area of the town. A comprehensive study of urban forests of 360 km<sup>2</sup> area of Bangalore found 374 species in the different land-use categories (Sudha and Ravindranath, 2000). Urban forest in 43 ha of NEERI campus Nagpur, Maharashtra has only 46 tree species (Gupta *et al.*, 2008). The 114 km<sup>2</sup> area of Chandigarh which is considered to be the greenest city of India has about 200 species which includes about 66 multipurpose trees (Kohli *et al.*, 1994).

Majority of the recorded tree species of Chitradurga are indigenous while only few species are introduced or of exotic nature. Majority of the introduced tree species are observed in the roadside, parks and in front of government buildings as avenue and ornamentals whereas the trees grown and maintained within the compounds of residential buildings and private lands are predominantly the indigenous types with various beneficial properties. A few gigantic sized trees of *Pongamia pinnata*, *Alstonia scholaris*, *Thespesia populnea*, *Terminalia catappa*, *Spathodia campanulata*, *Ficus religiosa* and *Bauhinia purpurea* dominate the main roads of the town which represent the surviving older trees. Similarly, several large sized sacred and religious trees such as *Ficus religiosa*, *F. benghalensis*, *F. racemosa*, *Aegle marmelos*, *Mimusops elengi*, etc. are found at the vicinity of temples and other worship places.

When population density was considered, the top ten most common tree species are *Pongamia pinnata*, *Alstonia scholaris*, *Thespesia populnea*, *Terminalia catappa*, *Spathodia campanulata*, *Ficus religiosa* and *Bauhinia purpurea*. These 07 species together account for about 65% of the total trees of Chitradurga in which the share of the first five species is almost 50%. The other 82 species together account for only 35% of trees. Among them, about few species are represented by only five or less number of trees each. Notable among such rare species with five or less number of trees are *Artocarpus gomeziianus*, *Adenanthera pavonia*, *Averrhoa bilimbi*, *Dalbergia latifolia*, *Kigelia pinnata*, *Mimusops elengi*, *Santalum album* and *Strychnos nux-vomica*. In general, the tree diversity represents a good assemblage of different utility categories such as wild and cultivated fruit yielding trees, shade and ornamental trees, sacred and religious trees, medicinally useful trees etc. Besides the high proportion of older trees of wild mango and jackfruit, presence of other wild fruit yielding trees like *Artocarpus incises* and *Spondias pinnata*, large sized sacred trees such as *Ficus religiosa* and *F. benghalensis*, gigantic exotic avenue trees such as *Samanea saman* and *Peltophorum pterocarpum*, rare medicinal species such as *Garcinia indica*, *Saraca asoca*, *Terminalia bellirica*, etc., are some of the notable features of the urban tree flora of Chitradurga.

Table 1  
Tree species recorded from Chitradurga town

S.No	Name of the species	Family	Common name
1	<i>Acacia auriculiformis</i>	Fabaceae	Acacia
2	<i>Acacia nilotica</i>	Fabaceae	Acacia
3	<i>Adenanthera pavonia</i>	Fabaceae	Gulugunjimara
4	<i>Adina cordifolia</i>	Rubiaceae	Yethiga
5	<i>Aegle marmelos</i>	Rutaceae	Bilva
6	<i>Ailanthus triphysa</i>	Simoaroubaceae	Gugguladhoopa
7	<i>Albizia lebeck</i>	Fabaceae	Bage
8	<i>Alstonia scholaris</i>	Apocynaceae	Halemara
9	<i>Anacardium occidentale</i>	Anacardiaceae	Geru, Godambi
10	<i>Annona reticulata</i>	Annonaceae	Rama phala
11	<i>Annona squamosa</i>	Annonaceae	Seethapala
12	<i>Anthocephalus cadamba</i>	Rubiaceae	Kadamba
13	<i>Artocarpus gomeziianus</i>	Moraceae	Vaatehuli
14	<i>Artocarpus heterophyllus</i>	Moraceae	Halasu
15	<i>Artocarpus incisis</i>	Moraceae	Deevi/Neeru halasu
16	<i>Averrhoa bilimbi</i>	Oxalidaceae	Bimbuli
17	<i>Averrhoa carambola</i>	Oxalidaceae	Carabalu
18	<i>Azadirachta indica</i>	Meliaceae	Kahibevu
19	<i>Bauhinia purpurea</i>	Caesalpinaceae	Mandara
20	<i>Bauhinia tomentosa</i>	Fabaceae	Mani Mandara
21	<i>Borassus flabellifer</i>	Arecaeae	Talemara
22	<i>Butea monosperma</i>	Fabaceae	Muthaga
23	<i>Caesalpenia pulcherrima</i>	Fabaceae	Rathnagandhi
24	<i>Callistemon citrinus</i>	Myrtaceae	Bottlebrush
25	<i>Calophyllum inophyllum</i>	Clusiaceae	Sura Honnemara
26	<i>Cassia siamea</i>	Fabaceae	-
27	<i>Cassia fistula</i>	Fabaceae	Kakkemara
28	<i>Casuarina equisetifolia</i>	Casuarinaceae	Galimara
29	<i>Ceiba pentandra</i>	Bombacaceae	Biliburuga
30	<i>Cordia myxa</i>	Boraginaceae	Challehannu
31	<i>Couroupita guianensis</i>	Lecythidaceae	Nagalinga pushpa
32	<i>Croton roxburghii</i>	Euphorbiaceae	Somaru
33	<i>Dalbergia latifolia</i>	Fabaceae	Sissum
34	<i>Delonix regia</i>	Fabaceae	May flower/ Kempu torai
35	<i>Dichrostachys cinerea</i>	Fabaceae	Banni
36	<i>Eucalyptus globulus</i>	Myrtaceae	Neelagiri
37	<i>Ficus benghalensis</i>	Moraceae	Alada mara
38	<i>Ficus elastica</i>	Moraceae	Rubbermara
39	<i>Ficus hispida</i>	Moraceae	Geritalu
40	<i>Ficus microcarpa</i>	Moraceae	Kirugoli
41	<i>Ficus racemosa</i>	Moraceae	Atti mara
42	<i>Ficus religiosa</i>	Moraceae	Arali/Ashwatha
43	<i>Garcinia indica</i>	Clusiaceae	Murugalu
44	<i>Gliricidia sepium</i>	Fabaceae	Gobbaramara
45	<i>Grevillea robusta</i>	Proteaceae	Silveroak
46	<i>Haldina cordifolia</i>	Rubiaceae	Heddimara
47	<i>Kigelia pinnata</i>	Bignoniaceae	Cucumber Tree
48	<i>Lagerstroemia speciosa</i>	Lythraceae	Nandi, Hole
49	<i>Leucaena leucocephala</i>	Fabaceae	Wild Tamarind
50	<i>Macaranga peltata</i>	Anacardiaceae	---
51	<i>Mangifera indica</i>	Anacardiaceae	Mavu
52	<i>Manihot esculenta</i>	Euphorbiaceae	Maragenasu
53	<i>Melia azedarach</i>	Meliaceae	Hucchubevu
54	<i>Michelia champaca</i>	Magnoliaceae	Sampige
55	<i>Mimusops elegni</i>	Sapotaceae	Spanish cherry
56	<i>Moringa oleifera</i>	Moringaceae	Nuggemara
57	<i>Muntingia calabura</i>	Elaeocarpaceae	Singaporecherry
58	<i>Myristica fragrans</i>	Myristicaceae	Jayikayi
59	<i>Nyctan thus arbor- tristis occidentale</i>	Oleaceae	Parijata
60	<i>Peltophorum pterocarpum</i>	Fabaceae	Gulmohur
61	<i>Phyllanthus cidus</i>	Euphorbiaceae	Rajavale
62	<i>Phyllanthus emblica</i>	Euphorbiaceae	Nellikayi
63	<i>Pithecellobium dulce</i>	Fabaceae	Sihi hunese
64	<i>Plumeria obtusa</i>	Apocynaceae	Sampige

65	<i>Plumeria rubra</i>	Apocynaceae	Gosampige
66	<i>Polyalthia longifolia</i>	Annonaceae	Falls Ashoka
67	<i>Pongamia pinnata</i>	Fabaceae	Honge
68	<i>Samanea saman</i>	Fabaceae	Rain tree
69	<i>Santalum album</i>	Santalaceae	Gandha
70	<i>Sapindus trifoliatu</i>	Sapindaceae	Soapnut
71	<i>Saraca indica</i>	Fabaceae	Ashoka
72	<i>Simarouba glauca</i>	Simaroubaceae	Paradise tree
73	<i>Spathodia campanulata</i>	Bignoniaceae	Flametree
74	<i>Spondias pinnata</i>	Anacardiaceae	Amatekayi
75	<i>Strychnos nux-vomica</i>	Loganiaceae	Kasaraka
76	<i>Syzygium cumini</i>	Myrtaceae	Nerale
77	<i>Syzygium malaccensis</i>	Myrtaceae	Jambuneral
78	<i>Syzygium aromaticum</i>	Myrtaceae	Lavanga
79	<i>Tabebuia rosea</i>	Bignoniaceae	
80	<i>Tamarindus indica</i>	Caesalpinaceae	Hunese
81	<i>Tectona grandis</i>	Verbenaceae	Saguvani
82	<i>Terminalia catappa</i>	Combretaceae	Indian almond
83	<i>Terminalia paniculata</i>	Combretaceae	Hunalu
84	<i>Terminalia arjuna</i>	Combretaceae	Arjuna
85	<i>Terminalia bellirica</i>	Combretaceae	Shantimara
86	<i>Thespesia populnea</i>	Malvaceae	Huvarasi
87	<i>Alstonia scholaris</i>	Apocynaceae	Karaveera
88	<i>Trema orientalis</i>	Ulmaceae	Kiruhale
89	<i>Ziziphus mauritiana</i>	Rhamnaceae	Borehannu

#### 4. Conclusion

Urban trees serve many useful functions such as climate change mitigation by carbon sequestration, air quality improvement by air pollution abatement, biodiversity conservation and source of ecosystem goods to urban inhabitants. They also have aesthetic, socio-religious and recreational value in urban contexts. In spite of the importance, they have not received much scientific attention. In this work, aimed to documentation and identification of trees. The preliminary study of tree flora of Chitradurga comprises of about 89 species in which majority are indigenous species and few others involve exotic and introduced species. The tree diversity represents a good assemblage of different utility categories such as wild and cultivated fruit yielding trees, shade

and ornamental trees, sacred and religious trees.

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