

A Case Study of Sai Temple SGs & Sursame Balaji SGs, Tehsil Jhalarapatan, District Jhalawar, Rajasthan

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Abstract - The sacred groves are those pieces of protected forests that have spiritual and religious significance. Tehsil Jhalarapatan is a typical example of the Hadoti region characterized by natural beauty and specific cultural heritage. Numerous sacred grove areas are found in Jhalarapatan tehsil of Jhalawar district. These sacred groves are shelter for many animals, plant species, and tribal, nomadic communities. All these sacred forests have been protected by tribal and nomadic groups as well as local residents living in tehsil Jhalarapatan since long time. The present study highlights the main sacred groves located in Jhalarapatan tehsil known for their spiritual, religious, and cultural significance.

Keywords - Sacred Groves, Tribal, Plant Species.

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INTRODUCTION

The sacred groves are found all over the India, manages by local community in different size, composition, including burial grounds (Mgumia and Oba 2003; Wadley and Colfer 2004) and sites of ancestral or deity worship with different forms of gesture (Ramakrishnan et al., 1998). These are the storehouse of rare and endemic species and can be regarded as the remnant of the primary forest left untouched by the local communities and protected by them with thinking that the deities reside in these places. The credit goes to Prof.MadhavGadgil's group for reviving interest in the dormant field from the Indian institute in Bangalore were encouraged by the discovery of an ancient grove in the Western Ghats (Gadgil and Vartak 1976)

Rajasthan Sacred groves are found all over Rajasthan and are called by various names such as Vani in Mewar, Kenkri in Ajmer, Oran in Jodhpur, Bikaner and Jaisalmer, Shamlatdeh and Devbani in Alwar. A total of 560 sacred groves have been documented so far in Rajasthan. Garvaji, Bharthariji, Naraini Mata, Peerbaba, Hanumanji and Naharsakti Mata are the deities to whom these groves are dedicated. The commonly found plant species are Cutch tree, Indian mesquite, mukul myrrh tree, salvia leaved cross berry, Indian tree of heaven, neem, Indian plum, banyan and pipal. The tradition in Rajasthan is an ideal example of support of the tradition for ecosystem services. The resources in the groves are used in a controlled

fashion or only in case of emergency. The Gurjar people of Rajasthan have a unique practice of neem (Azadirachtaindica) planting and worshipping it as the abode of God Devnarayan (Aman Singh, 2014)

STUDY AREA

The district Jhalawar lies in the South-East corner of Rajasthan at the edge of the Malwa plateau between 23°45'20" N to 24°52'17" N latitudes and 75°27'35" E to 76°56'48" Elongitudes (Fig. 1). Nearly 87% forest area is under subsidiary edaphic type of dry tropical forest and Northern tropical dry deciduous mixed forests. It is one of the rainiest parts of the Rajasthan state where the average annual rainfall is 35" which keeps it cool and gentle breezes ward off the stifling humidity.

Preliminary surveys were made for collection of the primary information. Sacred groves or CCAs were intensively surveyed for the tree composition. Information like species of the plants, age of the tree or any monument, diameter, height and their ethnobotanical use which were used by local communities. Questionnaire surveys were followed for the collection of the sociological information. The information recorded from the field were compiled and arranged for further study. So, to know the nature of the community conserved areas or forest, 32 sacred groves were recorded from the Jhalawar district. Trees species were identified based on the available literature (Hooker, 1872-1897). The

information on historical background, traditions, rituals, cultures, taboos, possible threats were collected from tribal communities through personal communication and community interaction through semi-structured questionnaire(Manna et al., 2017).

Sites of much diversification were selected for the study. In this work author chose two study area side First is SursamBalaji SGs & Second side is Sai Temple SGs.

The study area is SursamBalaji temple at Kalmandi Kalan village is located in Jhalrapatan Tehsil of Jhalawar district in Rajasthan, India (Joshi, 1985). It is situated 11km away from sub-district headquarter Jhalrapatan and 12km away from district headquarter Jhalawar. And other study area is Sai Baba Temple, Jhalawar which is situated at 5 K.m from Jhalawarcity.located in Jhalrapatan Tehsil of Jhalawar district in Rajasthan.

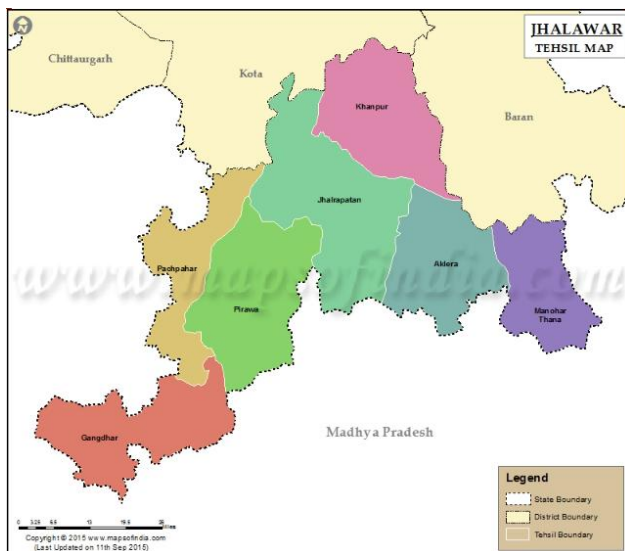


Fig: JhalawarTehsil MAP Courtesy By Maps Of india.com (Website)

MATERIAL & METHODS

The sacred groves of Rajasthan are known with the names Oran, Jogmaya, Deora, Thanak etc. All these sacred forests have been protected by tribals, nomadic groups, and local residents living in Rajasthan since long time. Most of the sacred groves of Rajasthan are found in the Aravalli Mountain range. Apart from this, sacred groves are found in some form in every village of the Rajasthan. Jhalawardistrict is a gift place of nature. Jhalrapatan tehsil is full of natural and geographical beauty. Numerous areas of the Jhalrapatan tehsil are surrounded by many residual hills, folding, faulting, waterfalls, and many more sacred groves. Many sacred groves are found in this area. The observation is based on a field survey of the someJhalrapatan tehsil region during different seasons which is as follows

Sursame Balaji SGs:

SursamBalaji temple at Kalmandi Kalan village is located in Jhalrapatan Tehsil of Jhalawar district in Rajasthan, India (Joshi, 1985). It is situated 11km away from sub-district headquarter Jhalrapatan and 12km away from district headquarter Jhalawar. In an average the climate is fairly dry and healthy. The year may be divided into four seasons -- the hot season from March to middle of the June, the monsoon season from mid-June to September, post monsoon season from October to November and the cold season from December to February. The western portion of the district gets fewer rains than the eastern portion. The south-west monsoon advances into the area in the latter half of the June and as much as 93 percent of the annual rainfall is recorded during the season. This place is full of natural beauty like several plants, animals & there is ancient shiv temple also.

It has better growing conditions harbor rich natural plants along with old tree species (more than 200 years old) mainly *Pandanus odoratissimus*, *Mangifera indica*, *Mimusops elengi*, *Ficus benghalensis*, *Ficus racemosa*, *Ficus religiosa*, *Azadirachta indica*, *Tamarindus indica*, *Syzygium cumini* etc. some other plants like *Adansonia digitata*, *Adhatoda zeylamica*, *Alangium salvifolium*, *Argemone mexicana*, *Lawsonia inermis*, *Linn*, *Neolamarckia cadamba*, *Phyllanthus emblica*, *Tamarindus indica* etc. also found in this area.



ig: SursameBalaji SGs

Sai Temple SGs:

Sai Baba Temple, Jhalawar which is situated at 5 K.m from Jhalawarcity. located in Jhalrapatan Tehsil of Jhalawar district in Rajasthan. This place also known as thandijhiri. Mostly plants in this site is so old or some plant species is developed by temple committee. Bamboo (*Dendrocalamus strictus*) plant is a key plant from this site. Also found some plants like *Azadirachta indica*, *Alangium salvifolium*, *Holoptelia integrifolia* Planch, *Syzygium cumini* (Linn.) Skeets, *Diospyros melanoxylon* Roxb., *Citrus medica*, *Acacia nilotica* (L) Willd., *Tectonagrandis* Linn, *Ocimum sanctum*, *Datura metal* Linn, *Cynodon dactylon* Pers etc.



Fig: Sai Temple SGs

RESULT & DISCUSSION

The present study is an attempt to bring the light to the knowledge of different sacred groves protected by the tribal, nomadic, and local residents of the various locality of Jhalarapatan tehsil. The result of this survey of sacred trees has been described with medicinal, Spiritual and religious significance in Table-1

S.No	Botanical Name	Vernacular Name	Family	Spirituals Religious Significance	Medicinal Uses
1.	<i>Adansoniadigitata</i>	Kalpvrnksh	Malvaceae	A digitata is a divine tree that fulfills desire. Kalpvrkshis a wish-fulfilling divine tree in Indian-origin religions	It is used in Diarrhea and dysentery, treat painful swellings
2.	<i>Adhatodazeylamica</i>	Vasaka	Acanthaceae	used in religious rituals and prayers as it is considered auspicious	Its used as a Antitussive, antibacterial, abortifacient, anti-inflammatory and antiulcer.
3.	<i>Alangiumsalvifolium</i>	Akol	Comaceae	Alangiumsalvifolium . Spikenard was important for religious ceremony amongst the Greeks, Romans and Egyptians	Diabetes, wound healing, dog bite, and as a poultice in rheumatism.
4.	<i>Argemonemaxicana</i>	Satyanashi	Papaveraceae	during the colorful festival HolikaDahan, adults and children worship by offering flowers	Tumors, warts, skin diseases, inflammations, rheumatism, jaundice, leprosy, microbial infections,
5.	<i>Bahunia variegata</i>	Kachnar	Fabaceae	They're the perfect bloom to celebrate all of life's precious moments.	It is used in Treatment of ulcers
6.	<i>Butea monosperma</i>	Palash/ Flame of The Forest.	Fabaceae.	Palashmeans possessing sacred leaves. The trifoliate formation of the leaf is supposed to represent Lord Vishnu in the middle, Lord Brahma on the left and Lord Siva on the right. Palash is also referred to as treasurer of the gods and symbolises the moon	Palash flowers and leaves are diuretic, aphrodisiac, astringent and increase the flow of blood in the pelvic region
7.	<i>Citrus limon</i>	Lemon	Rutaceae	Lemons symbolize light, love, heart, and soul . They also attract good fortune and help people embrace changes	It is used in High blood pressure, the common cold, and irregular menstruation

8.	<i>Convolvulus microphyllus</i>	Sankhpushpi	Convolvulaceae	In Reiki, it is said, "Say no to Negative energy" with this spiritual plant as the Shankhpushpi energizes and cleanses the space.	It is used in Epilepsy, vomiting, diabetes, sun stroke and bleeding
9.	<i>Cynodondactylon</i>	Bermuda grass	Poaceae	According to Nepalese Hindus, the grass symbolises long life. The grass is an essential item for the Naga Panchami festival as well as the Gaura festival .	It is used in Hystena, measles, rubella, snakebite, sores, stones

10.	<i>Hemidesmus</i>	Indian sarsaparilla	Apocynaceae	Its fruits and leaves are considered sacred and used as offerings to the Hindu Gods	It is used in venereal diseases, herpes, skin diseases, arthritis, rheumatism, gout, epilepsy.
11.	<i>Mangiferaindica</i>	Mango	Anacardiaceae	Twig use for worshipping of goddess Durga	Anti-oxidant, anti-viral, cardiotoxic, hypotensive, anti-inflammatory properties.
12.	<i>Neolamarckiacadamba</i>	burflower-tree, Kadam	Rubiaceae	This tree is mentioned in the BhagavataPurana. In North India N. cadamba is associated with Krishna, and in South India it is known as the Parvati tree.	It is used in Tumour, anaemia, eye inflammation and diarrhoea
13.	<i>Phyllanthus emblica</i>	Amla	Phyllanthaceae	This tree is worshipped on the 11th day of every month and is considered sacred as the deity Vishnu.	It is used in Diarrhea, jaundice, and inflammation.

14.	<i>Tamandusindica</i>	Imli	Fabaceae	The tree personifies the God of Rain. It is worshipped for people to have a good season during Pasarpanduga holiday (Verma, Singh, 2017).	Parasitic infestation, fever, malaria and respiratory problems
15.	<i>Tectonagrandis</i>	Teak	Verbenaceae	Jainism was the earliest religion to focus on ahimsa with the highest amount of plants being used for religious purposes (Jain, 2016; Verma, Singh, 2017).	Treat typhoid fever and several other diseases.
16.	<i>Ficus religiosa</i>	Pipal	Moraceae	It is one of the most sacred tree among all the trees. People have belief that Lord Vishnu lives in this tree	It is used in cough, asthma, diarrhoea, ear pain, toothache, haematuria (Blood in urine), migraine, scabies, eye troubles, and gastric problems.

17.	<i>Elaeocarpsganitrus</i>	Rudraksha	Elaeocarpaceae	Associated with Lord Rudra	Rudraksha tree have been extensively used in the treatment of stress, anxiety, depression, palpitation, nerve pain, epilepsy, migraine, asthma, hypertension, arthritis and liver diseases (Khare, 2004; Dasgupta et al., 1984).
18.	<i>Emblica officinalis</i>	Amla	Phyllanthaceae	It is believed that the deity of Vishnu, Krishna and Radha reside near this tree. the tree is worshipped to get the grace of the deity	Amla benefits include antibacterial & astringent properties which help improve the body's immunity system
19.	<i>Ocimum sanctum</i>	Tulsi	Acanthaceae	It is a very religious, spiritual and sacred plant in Hindu belief. They believe that goddess Tulsi lives in this plant, goddess Tulsi is known as the avatar of Laxmi.	Antimicrobial (including antibacterial, antiviral, antifungal, antiprotozoal, antimalarial, anthelmintic), mosquito repellent, anti-diarrheal, anti-oxidant, anti-cataract

20	<i>Thevetia peruviana</i>	Pili kaner	Apocynaceae	The flowers of this plant are very toxic and immensely liked by Lord Shiva therefore used as offering to lord Shiva during worship	It is used in Skin disease, Fever, Asthama.
21	<i>Terminalia arjuna</i>	Arjun	Combretaceae	Arjuna tree is Associated with Kishkinda Kanda in Ramayan.	used as a cardiotoxic in heart failure, ischemic, cardiomyopathy, atherosclerosis, myocardium necrosis
22	<i>Santalum album</i>	Chandan	Santalaceae	This plant has strong spiritual properties. It is believed that it brings people closer to the divine and provides calmness and clears the mind.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is used in urinary tract infections, liver and gallbladder problems, scabies.
23	<i>Saraca indica</i>	Ashok	Fabaceae	It has a strong religious association with Hinduism and Buddhism. It is said that goddess Sita sat under this tree in Lanka and Gautambuddha was born under this tree.	It is used in managing skin related problems and maintain clearer skin by removing toxins from the body due to its antioxidant property.
24	<i>Calotropis gigantea</i>	Safed Akada	Asclepiadaceae	Lord Shiva is worshipped with leaves of Safed Akada.	It improves appetite thereby fighting anorexia and disinterest in consuming food.
25	<i>Ficus benghalensis</i>	Bargad	Moraceae	It has a religious significance in the three major religions (Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism). It is believed that the tree is the source for achieving enlightenment. It is the tree where the lord Adinatha (the first Jain) achieved spiritual enlightenment. commonly used for prayers and offerings	The bark of the Banyan tree is considered useful in burning sensation, ulcers, and painful skin diseases

CONCLUSION

The religious importance of the sacred groves of tehsil Jhalrapatan has been emphasized in this study. These SGs have been protected by the tribals and the local community considering them as sacred. These ancient Sites play an important role in freeing the environment from pollution and producing oxygen. Due to modern developmental activities, sacred groves are reduced considerably. At present, the existence of these sites is being threatened due to the exploitation of forests and increasing encroachment in these areas. At present, there is a need that guidelines should be made to protect these sacred groves. These areas should be recognized by the local government. With all these efforts, we will be able to save these holy forests.

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