



## A Study Faunal Conservation In Undwel Hanuman Sacred Grove Of Ghatol Range Of Banswara Forest Division Of Southern Rajasthan.

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### ABSTRACT

Banswara, Ghatol, Garhi, Kushalgarh, Bagidora are five main forest ranges in Banswara district. Most of the forests exist in Ghatol and Kushalgarh ranges. Undwel Hanuman Ji is a famous sacred grove of this district. This district is chiefly inhabited by an ethnic population (Bhil, Garasia, and Meena). The hills and forests form the natural abode of ethnic people. They are children of nature, and their lifestyle being conditioned by the ecosystem. They show the symbiotic relationship with the forest ecosystem. Banswara district is quadrangular with several hills, tanks, rivers, and undulating plans. The hills are mainly scattered in the northeast and southern part of the district, which belongs to the Aravali range. SGs work as a part of the ecological tradition and good laboratory models in open lands. These socially managed labs help the cooling atmosphere, biodiversity conservation, pollution control, maintenance of microclimates, and gene pool in habitat corridors.

**KEYWORDS** –Faunal diversity, conservation, Undwel Hanuman, Forest Division.

### I. INTRODUCTION

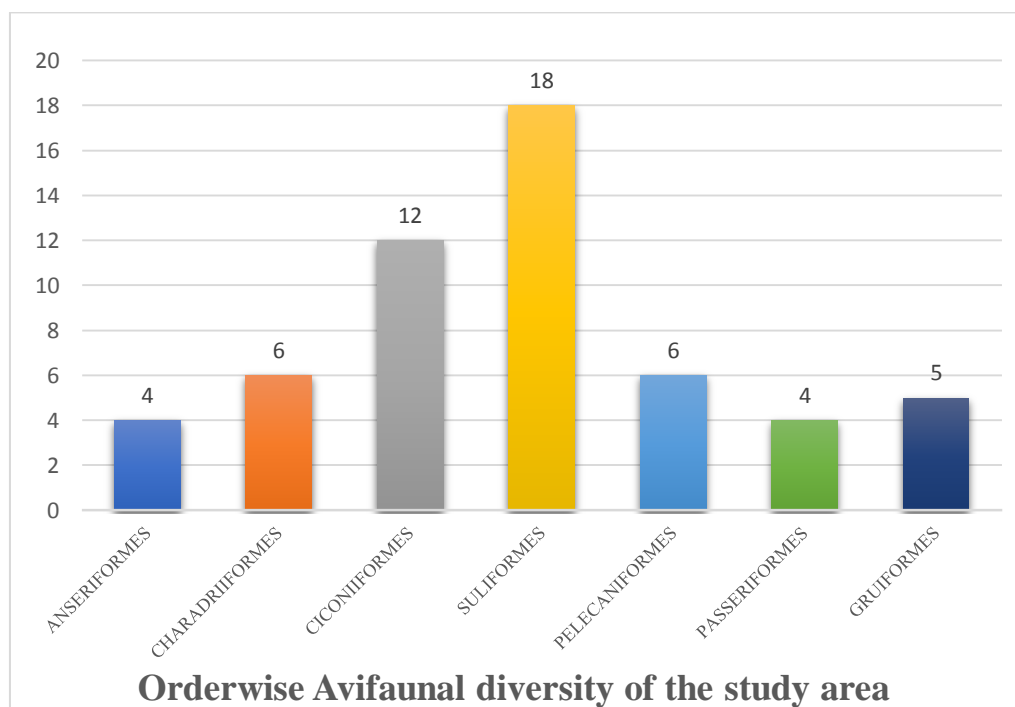
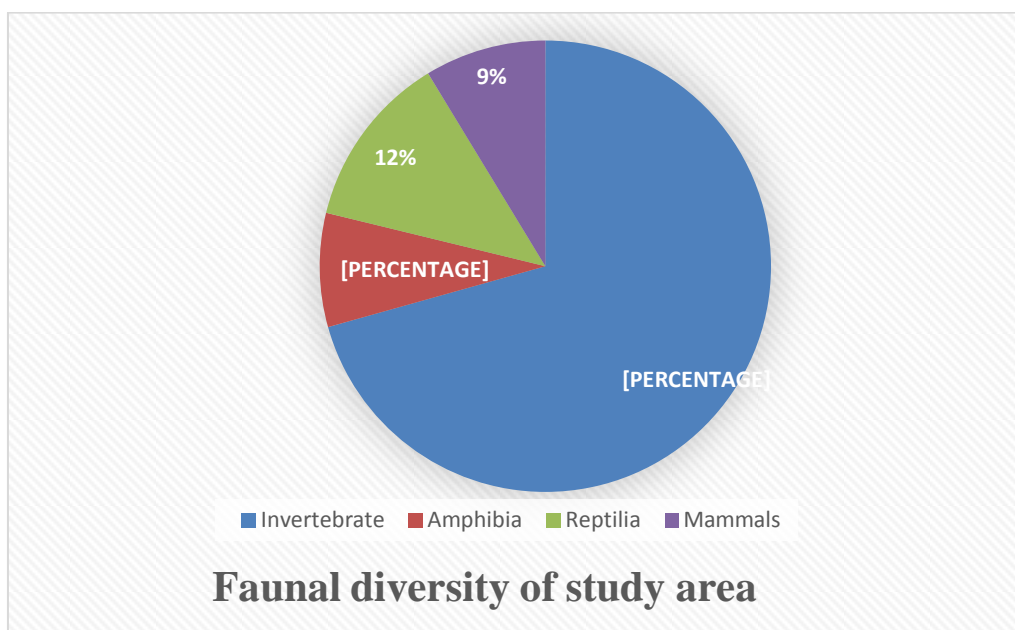
Sacred groves bridge the natural and social sciences, and sometimes even the humanities, ecological and environment. SGs help explore, explain and manage the connections among cultures, religions, biodiversity, and in-situ conservation. Sacred groves are small patches of land that vary in size from a few hectares to a few kilometers. Inhabitants protect these groves as religious residences of local deities. SGs are valuable storehouses of local biodiversity. They are miniature of natural heritages that helped in the preservation of genetic pools of genetic resources. In these places, biodiversity is preserved in mostly controlled conditions because of social and religious beliefs. SGs are significant tracts of virgin forest with rich diversity. The local people have been protected for centuries for their cultural and religious beliefs and taboos that the deities reside in and protect the villagers from different calamities. SGs carry their legends, lore, and myths, which form an integral part of the sacred grove [1]. Sacred groves are the symbols of a sacred ecosystem that function as a rich repository of nature's biodiversity and a scenario of the socioecological balanced equation of philosophy [2]. Sacred places are a new frontier for interdisciplinary research on their own merits and their relevance to biodiversity conservation. The religious or cultural designation of an area as sacred, especially those which are relatively natural, may either intentionally or coincidentally promote the preservation of its associated biodiversity. Such sacred places can complement national parks and other protected areas established by governments.

Collaboration among religious, governmental, scientific, and conservation agencies may be desirable for protecting sacred sites and landscapes [3]. Sacred groves are dynamic systems, each with a historical ecology. A sacred grove may persist through centuries or more as a relict of a natural and anthropogenic ecosystem, be revived with the renewal of some cultural or religious traditions, or be newly established explicitly for conservation [3]. Identifying and protecting "keystone structures" is essential to maintain biodiversity in an increasingly human-dominated world. Sacred forests, i.e., natural areas covered by local people for cultural or religious regions, maybe keystone structures for forest birds in the Greater Himalayas, but there is limited understanding of bird communities' use [4].

### II. METHODOLOGY

This study is based on field study, villager's interviews and reviews, site observations. The information and data for this study were collected through primary, secondary sources. Primary sources are group discussion with Village Forest Protection Management Committees (VFPMCs), Self Help Groups (SHG), Forest Department, and Watershed project. Some data are also collected through secondary sources.

### III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION



Findings of the present study show similarities with the results of [1], [2], [3], [4], [5], [6], [7] and [8].

#### 3.1 IMPORTANCE OF SGS

- Sacred groves are essential sources for fulfilling inhabitants' water requirements, livestock, and other bioagents.
- Soil stability of grove area due to the floral component of sacred grove is good in this way SGs prevent soil erosion.
- The floral cover of SGs helps in recharging of aquifer.
- SGs maintain microclimate.
- SGs provide floral cover to avifauna and other faunal agents for feeding and breeding.

### **3.2 SUGGESTIONS**

- In the age of nanotechnology, SGs have become biodiversity hotspots that provide habitat for endangered and valuable faunal and floral species; therefore, sacred groves should be protected.
- SGs should be protected from rapid modernization and over-exploitation of natural resources.
- SGs have been acted as an incarnation of the exophilic philosophical outlook of inhabitants, which protect biodiversity; therefore, SGs should be conserved.

### **IV. CONCLUSION**

Sacred groves have emerged as an important new frontier for the interdisciplinary approach of environmental science and research on their own merits and potential relevance of in – situ biodiversity conservation. SGs reflect the vital role of religion and spirituality in environmentalism.

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