

Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve

April 6, 2021

About Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve

- The Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve was the first biosphere reserve in India established in the year 1986.
- It is located in the Western Ghats and includes 2 of the 10 biogeographical provinces of India.
- The total area of the Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve is 5,520 sq. km. It is located in the Western Ghats between 76°-77°15'E and 11°15' – 12°15'N.
- The annual rainfall of the reserve ranges from 500 mm to 7000 mm with temperature ranging from 0°C during winter to 41°C during summer.
- The Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve encompasses parts of Tamilnadu, Kerala and Karnataka.
- The Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve falls under the biogeographic region of the Malabar rain forest.
- The Mudumalai Wildlife Sanctuary, Wayanad Wildlife Sanctuary Bandipur National Park, Nagarhole National Park, Mukurthi National Park and Silent Valley are the protected areas present within this reserve.

| Vegetational Types of the Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve | | | |
|--|--------------------|--|---|
| S.No | Forest type | Nature of Vegetation | Area of occurrence |
| 1 | Moist evergreen | Dense, moist and multi storeyed forest with gigantic trees | In the narrow valleys of Silent Valley |
| 2 | Semi evergreen | Moist, deciduous | Nilambur and Palghat division |
| 3 | Thorn | Dense | North east part of the Nilgiri district |

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|---|---------------------|---|--|
| 4 | Savannah woodland | Trees scattered amid woodland | Mudumalai and Bandipur |
| 5 | Sholas & grasslands | High elevated evergreen with grasslands | South and western catchment area, Mukurthi national park |

Flora

- About 3,300 species of flowering plants can be seen out of species 132 are endemic to the Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve.
- The genus *Baeolepis* is exclusively endemic to the Nilgiris.
- Some of the plants entirely restricted to the Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve include species of *Adenoon*, *Calacanthus*, *Baeolepis*, *Frerea*, *Jarodina*, *Wagatea*, *Poeciloneuron*, etc.
- Of the 175 species of orchids found in the Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve, 8 are endemic to the Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve. These include endemic and endangered species of *Vanda*, *Liparis*, *Bulbophyllum*, *Spiranthes* and *Thrixspermum*.
- The solas of the Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve are a treasure house of rare plant species.

Fauna

- The fauna of the Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve includes over 100 species of mammals, 350 species of birds, 80 species of reptiles and amphibians, 300 species of butterflies and innumerable invertebrates.
- 39 species of fish, 31 amphibians and 60 species of reptiles endemic to the Western Ghats also occur in the Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve.
- Fresh water fish such as *Danio neilgherrensis*, *Hypselobarbus Dubius* and *Puntius bovanicus* are restricted to the Nilgiri

BiosphereReserve.

- The Nilgiri tahr, Nilgiri langur, slender loris, blackbuck, tiger, gaur, Indian elephant and martin are some of the animals found here.