



Forest dept to conduct tree & shrub survey in 6 Hry districts from today

06 October 2021

Gurgaon: The forest department will conduct a two-month survey of the flora of six districts in south Haryana on Wednesday. The result will be released in the first week of December. In the survey, information of trees and shrub species in the Aravalis will be gathered as there are many endangered and rare species of plants here which haven't been recorded so far, forest officials said. The decision was revealed in a meeting held in the city on Tuesday between the Haryana State Biodiversity Board (HSBB), the forest department and environmental experts for discussing the strategies for a 12-year action plan to conserve the state's biodiversity.

"We will pick a route for trekking in the Aravalis, during which we will record the plant species of that area. We will be starting the survey from Wednesday in Gurgaon," said Vasavi Tagyi, chief conservator of forests (south Haryana). This forest corridor also harbours the largest contiguous remnant of native dry deciduous forest and thorn scrub in Delhi-NCR.

The survey will be carried out in six districts — Gurgaon, Faridabad, Nuh, Palwal, Rewari and Mahendergarh. "We will carry out such an exercise till the end of November. We can't record shrubs in December since they generally die due to frost," Tyagi told TOI.

HSBB chairman Vineet Garg said the survey will be vital to the formulation of the biodiversity action plan. "The exercise is really important to identify the flora in the area so that a conservation plan can be developed accordingly," he said.

Members of the Wildlife Institute of India and Bombay Natural History Society were also present in Tuesday's discussions. It was decided that existing plant species, wildlife and crops found in the region will be identified and the pressures on biodiversity will be analysed. "This was the last and final workshop for the action plan strategies. We have already conducted workshops in districts in east, west and north Haryana. We will finalise the action plan by March 2022," he added. The focus was also on preservation of traditional and local knowledge of flora and fauna. Grassland ecosystems in southern parts of Haryana were also discussed, and experts emphasised on the need for their conservation.

Tyagi said some plant species not native to the region were spotted in the Rithoj area of the Aravali hills during a recent plantation drive in the area. "Thus, the forest department decided to carry out small surveys in the Aravalis to identify species which are rare in this region," she said.

The *Diospyros melanoxylon* (tendu) was among the species found. Native to India and Sri Lanka, the flowering tree has a hard, dry bark. *Sterculia urens* (Indian tragacanth), a small to medium-sized tree which is commonly found in northern and central India, was also spotted in the Aravalis. A natural gum, known as karaya gum, is exuded by the tree when the bark is damaged. The gum is mainly used as a thickener in cosmetics and medicines.

Other species which were spotted include *Premna serratifolia* (arani) and *Hymenodictyon orixense* (bhormal). The arani shrub mostly grows in moist sandy soil and scrub jungles along seacoasts and mangrove forests. Meanwhile, the bhormal tree is found in the Indian subcontinent and east Asia. The wood of this tree is soft and has limited use, mostly for boxes.

Source:<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/gurgaon/forest-dept-to-conduct-tree-shrub-survey-in-6-hry-districts-from-today/articleshow/86794422.cms>