

CONSERVATION VALUES OF KALAKAD MUNDANTHURAI TIGER RESERVE

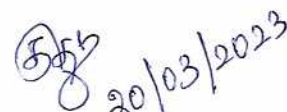
Kalakad Mundanthurai Tiger Reserve was constituted during April 1988 as the 1st Tiger Reserve of the Tamil Nadu State of 17th Tiger Reserve of the country. 895 Sq.km is the Core area of the Tiger Reserve consisting of 567.47 sq.km of Mundanthurai Tiger Sanctuary, 250.64 sq.km Kalakad Wildlife Sanctuary. 11 Major forest types are present in the reserve out of which the Tirunelveli semi evergreen forests are unique to the area. The reserve is also known as the River Sanctuary, as many as 14 rivers originate from the Tiger Reserve. The rivers flow into three major water sheds namely Upper Kodayar, Manimuthar and Tamirabarani receives around 5000 mm of rainfall which serves as the main water catchment area for the natural water sources for 4 districts namely, Tirunelveli, Tuticorin, Kanyakumari and Virudhunagar. Civilizations in the classic historical period were also said to be dependent on the perennial Tamirabharani River. Thus the reserve hosts 11 dams as its natural water catering resource namely Servalar, Papanasam Upper and lower dam, Manimuthar, Kadanathi, Ramanathi Netteriakal, Vedakku pachaiyar etc., Kalakad Mundanthurai Tiger Reserve is recognized as World Biosphere Reserve and World heritage site by the UNESCO.

As many as 448 endemic species of angiosperms have been identified from this region. 79 genera and 161 species of fern have been reported from this tiger reserve. 58 species of RED listed plants, 29 species of strict endemic are found in Kalakad Mundanthurai Tiger Reserve.

Kalakad Mundanthurai Tiger Reserve has got a high diversity of fauna. There are above 46 species of fishes, 45 species of amphibians, 88 species of reptiles, 337 species of avifauna and 79 species of mammals are present in Kalakad Mundanthurai Tiger Reserve. This diversity of habitat has got an assemblage of several species of rare plants, invertebrates, fishes, amphibians, reptiles and mammals which forms a good prey-predator relation. The abundance of mammals is higher in the high altitude wet ever green and semi ever green forest habitats.

Hence, Kalakad Mundanthurai Tiger Reserve is very significant in terms of Floral and Faunal Diversity and is an important protected area of the State of Tamil Nadu.


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