

WAYANAD WILDLIFE SANCTUARY

Wayanad Wildlife Sanctuary also known as Muthanga Wild life Sanctuary, is the second largest wildlife sanctuary in Kerala which was Established in 1973. Rich in biodiversity, the sanctuary is an integral part of the Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve, Interestingly, it was from here that Pazhassi Raja fought valiantly against the British. The sanctuary is separated into two disconnected parts known as the Upper Wayanad Wildlife Sanctuary in the north and Lower Wayanad Wildlife Sanctuary in the south.

Location and extent: The Wayanad Wildlife Sanctuary is located 16 km east of Sulthan Bathery in the state of Kerala. Wayanad wildlife sanctuary is contiguous to the protected areas of Nagarhole and Bandipur of Karnataka on the north-east and Mudumalai of Tamilnadu on the south –east. It covers an area of 344.44 sq. km which extends 76° 02’ and 76° 27’ East Longitude and 11° 35 ‘ and 11°51’ North Latitude.

Topography: Altitude ranging from 650 to 1150m . The highest peak is Karottimala (1158m)

Temperature : Temperature varies from 13°C to 32°C

Rainfall : Average annual rainfall is 2322mm. Annual rain fall in these high rain fall areas ranges from 3,000 to 4,000m.m. High velocity winds are common during the south west monsoon and dry winds blow in March-April.

Humidity : High altitude regions experience severe cold. This place experiences a high relative humidity which goes even up to 95 per cent during the south west monsoon period.

Drainage and rivers : The drainages of the sanctuary are Cherupuzha, Bavali puzha, Kabani river, Kannaram puzha, Kurichiat puzha, Chedalathu puzha etc

Flora : The forest types include South Indian Moist Deciduous forests, West coast semi-evergreen forests and plantations of teak, eucalyptus and Grewelia. Moist deciduous forest consists of maruthi, karimaruthi, rosewood, venteak, vengal, chadachi, mazhukanjiram, bamboos, more, while the semi-evergreen patches comprises veteria indica., lagerstroemia,

lanceolata, terminalia paniculata. The major tree species are Tectona grandis, Terminalia sp, Dalbergia latifolia, Anogeissus latifolia, Grewia tiliaefolia, Adina cordifolia Cirmamum zeylanicum, Pterocarpus marsupium, Vateria indica, Lagerstroemia lanceolata, Artocarpus hirsute, Macranga peltata etc.

Fauna : 45 species of mammals, 203 Species of birds, 45 species of reptiles, 30 species of amphibians and 59 species of fishes are reported from the sanctuary. Indian Bison, Elephant, Gaur, Tiger, Panther, Sambar, Spotted deer, Barking deer, Wild boar, Sloth bear, Nilgiri langur, Bonnet macaque, Common langur, Wild dog, common otter, Malabar giant squirrel etc are the major mammals. The wildlife sanctuary comes under Protect Elephant and one can spot herd of elephants roaming in the area. Avian Fauna includes Peacocks, babblers, cuckoos, owls, woodpeckers, jungle fowls .