

FLORISTIC DIVERSITY: A CASE STUDY OF THE FLORA AT GOVERNMENT SERCHHIP COLLEGE, SERCHHIP, MIZORAM, INDIA.

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KEYWORDS
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ABSTRACT

This study documents the floristic diversity associated with the flora of Government Serchhip College, Serchhip, Mizoram, India. The study aimed to document plant species within the campus. A total of 151 plant species belonging to 131 genera and 66 families were recorded. Euphorbiaceae and Moraceae emerged as the most dominant family, followed by Asteraceae. The study highlights the rich biodiversity present in the region, emphasizing the need for conservation efforts.

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INTRODUCTION

India is one of the most biodiversity-rich countries in the world. Species identification is a fundamental requirement for documenting biodiversity and understanding their relationships, comprehending ecological and evolutionary processes, and serving as basic input for conservation and management [1,2]. Diversity encompasses the range of variations or differences among a set of entities; thus, biological diversity pertains to the variety within the living world. However, the term 'biodiversity' is most commonly used to denote the 'variety of life.' [3,4]. The concept of biological diversity has been employed since at least 1980, with authors such as Lovejoy [5] defining it simply as the number of species, and Norse [6] incorporating both genetic diversity and species richness. Species of organisms are not uniformly distributed across the planet but in various spatial patterns. The level of ecological diversity is structured and characterized by the diversity of associations that species form through interactions with each other and their physical environment. Complex patterns of species aggregation may arise from the interplay of historical, physical, and functional factors.

Serchhip District, Mizoram is selected for the present study. Located in the part of Mizoram with 23°35'N and 23° N latitude and between 92°41 'E and 93°10' E longitude and altitude ranging from 912 meters to 1281 meter m.s.l, occupying an area of 1422 sq km. The predominant forest cover type in Serchhip district is classified mainly as Tropical Wet Evergreen Forests (34.1%), followed by Mixed Forests (32%), Bamboo Forests (20%), Montane Subtropical Forests (13.5%) and Temperate Forests (0.4%) of the total forest area [7]. The study focused on understanding the forest and biodiversity of the Government Serchhip College campus, through documentation on the floristic diversity of the campus, which will enhance their identification, conservation, and management, as well as contribute significantly to understanding their potential. STUDY AREA

The present study focuses on Government Serchip College, Serchhip District, located in Mizoram at a latitude of $23^{\circ}10'$ North and a

longitude of 92°65' East, with an elevation ranging from 912 meters to 1281 meters above sea level. Covering an area of 1422 square kilometres, Serchhip is situated approximately 120 kilometres east of the state capital, Aizawl. According to the 2011 census, Serchhip has a population of 64,938, with 32,861 males and 32,086 females, and boasts an average literacy rate of 97.91%. The forest of Serchhip falls under Tropical wet evergreen forest which comprises valuable species of timber and domestic resources. The forest is also interrupted by overlapping bamboo. The climate is humid tropical, characterized by short winters, and long summers with heavy rainfall. The temperature mainly ranges from 110 C to 310 C. It rains heavily from May to September with an average rainfall of 250 cm per annum.

Government Serchhip College has an eco-friendly campus, favoured by its topography, moderate rainfall, and climatic conditions, resulting in high species diversity. Over 75% of the campus is green, featuring a diverse range of trees, shrubs, and herbs. The college harbours rich floral diversity including plants with ethnomedicinal and medicinal significance. An extensive plantation drive has been added to the campus's lush green area with a full canopy, attracting a variety of fauna, including insects, birds, reptiles, and small mammals.

To obtain land use data for our institution, GPS points and Google Earth were employed for data geo-referencing. The creation of a land use map involved several steps: data acquisition, geo-coding, and geo-referencing of satellite imagery. Supervised classification was conducted using ground truth data collected during a field survey. The resulting GIS output, presented as a land use map, illustrates the various land uses within the institution's area. The total area of the college is 164167.26 square meters. Based on the data analysis, the land use categories for the Government Serchhip College campus are as follows:

SI. No.	LAND USE	AREA COVER (Square Meter)
1.	Built up Area	31042.26
2.	Dense Forest Cover	75048
3.	Open Forest Cover	50109
4.	Teak Plantation	7968
	Total Area Coverage	164167.26

Table 1: Land Use Area Coverage of Government Serchhip College.



Figure 1: Land Use Land Cover Map of Government Serchhip College.

MATERIALS AND METHOD

The study was carried out extensively for six months from June to December 2019, involving weekly observations to collect and identify plant species. The following data were recorded for each species: habit, botanical name, family, and habit, classified according to the Bentham and Hooker system. Herbariums were collected for further species identification and verification. Plant species were identified with the help of Regional Flora and Herbaria of Botanical Survey of India (BSI), Shillong, Meghalaya. The primary objective of this study is to document the wide distribution of plants within the institute campus. An effective analysis has been performed to identify the diversity of species with the available plants.

RESULTS Habit:

The study area consists of 151 species categorised under various habits, tree being dominant (82) followed by herb (31), shrub (23), climber (9), under shrub (3) and grass (3). The comparative account of the habits of plant species reported from the study is given in

Figure 2. 81 tree species have been identified which fall under three types mainly evergreen, which shows the most occurrence, deciduous and semi-evergreen (Figure 3).





Figure 3: Different tree types

Floristic Diversity

Floristic diversity identified from the study site comprises 151 species of plants under 131 genera belonging to 66 families (Table 2). The dominant families in the campus representing the maximum number of species were Euphorbiaceae (9 species) and Moraceae (9 species), Asteraceae (7 species), Lauraceae (6), Solanaceae (6), Verbanaceae (6), Rutaceae (5), Fabaceae (5), Rutaceae (6), Arecaceae (4), Ceasalpinaceae (4), Mimaceae (4), Poaceae (4), Zingiberaceae (3), Rutaceae (3), Fagaceae (3), Clusiaceae (3) and the remaining families were represented by 2 and 1 species each (Figure 4). The number of genera recorded ranges from 7 to 1, where the dominant genera are *Ficus* sp. (7 species) followed by *Solanum* sp. (4 species) and *Syzygium* sp. (3 species). The rest are within 2 or 1 genera (Figure 5).



Table 2: Floristic Diversity of the Campus







Figure 5: Dominant genera with number of species.

The institution's vegetation featured a multi-layered structure, with herbs, shrubs, and trees forming three to four distinct vertical strata, showcasing a diverse and heterogeneous mix of species. During the assessment, a complete list of the floristic diversity of the study site was identified and documented. Their scientific names, families, common names, local names, tree types and habits were listed. The list of flora on the campus is highlighted in the tables (Tables 3 & 4) given below.

SI No	Botanical Name	Family	Common Name	Local Name	Туре
1.	Albizia chinensis	Mimosaceae	Chinese Albizia	Vang	Deciduous
2.	Alstonia scholaris	Apocynaceae	Devil Tree	Thuamriat	Evergreen
3.	Anogeissus acuminata	Combretaceae	Yon	Zairum	Deciduous
4.	Aralia foliosa	Araliaceae		Chimchawk	Evergreen
5.	Araucaria cookii	Araucariaceae	Christmas Tree	Far zarmawi	Evergreen
6.	Areca catechu	Arecaceae	Betel nut palm	Kuhva kung	Evergreen
7.	Artocarpus heterophyl la	Moraceae	Jack fruit	Lamkhuang	Evergreen
8.	Artocarpus lakoocha	Moraceae	Monkey Jack	Theitat	Deciduous
9.	Averrhoa carambola	Oxilidaceae	Carambola - tree	Theiherawt	Evergreen
10.	Azaridacht a indica	Meliaceae	Neem tree	Neem	Semi- evergreen
11.	Baccaurea ramiflora	Euphorbiacea e	Bhooby Tree	Pangkai	Evergreen
12.	Balakata baccata	Euphorbiacea e	Mouse Deer Rubber Tree	Thingvawkpu i	Evergreen
13.	Bauhinia variegata	Caesalpinacea e	Mountain Ebony	Vaube	Deciduous
14.	Bischofia javanica	Euphorbiacea e	Bishop wood	Khuangthli	Evergreen
15.	Bombax insigne	Bombacaceae	Showy Silk Cotton Tree	Pang	Deciduous
16.	Callicarpa arborea	Verbanaceae		Hnahkiah	Evergreen
17.	Callophyll um polyanthu m	Clusiaceae	Spar Tree	Sentezel	Evergreen
18.	Canarium resiniferu m	Burseraceae	East Indian Copal	Beraw	Evergreen or Deciduous
19.	Carallia brachiata	Rhizophorace ae	Corkwood	Theiria	Evergreen
20.	Caryota mitis	Aracaceae	Burmese Fish tail Palm	Meihle	Evergreen
21.	Caryota urens	Arecaceae	Solitary Fishtail - palm	Tum	Evergreen
22.	Cassia nodosa	Caesalpiniace ae	Pink and White Shower	Makpazangka ng	Evergreen
23.	Castanopsi s tribuloides	Fagaceae	Chestnut	Thingsia	Evergreen
24.	Cerasus cerasoides	Rosaceae	Wild Himalayan Cherry	Tlaizawng	Deciduous
25.	Cinnamom um tamala	Lauraceae	Bay leaf	Tespatta	Evergreen

26.	Citrus grandis	Rutaceae	Pumelo	Sertawk	Evergreen
27.	Citrus macropter a	Rutaceae		Hatkora	Evergreen
28.	Cocos nucifera	Arecaceae	Coconut Palm	Coconut	Evergreen
29.	Cordia fragrantiss ima	Boraginaceae		Muk	Deciduous
30.	Cordyline indivisa	Asparagaceae	Blue Draceana		Evergreen
31.	Cycas pectinata	Cycadaceae	Cycad	Cycas	Evergreen
32.	Delonix regia	Caesalpiniace ae	May Flower	April par	Deciduous
33.	Derris robusta	Fabaceae		Thingkha	Deciduous
34.	Dimocarpu s longan	Sapindaceae	Eye Ball Tree	Theifeihmun g	Evergreen
35.	Duabanga grandiflor a	Sonneratiacea e	Duabanga	Zuang	Semi - evergreen
36.	Eleocarpus tectorius	Elaeocarpacea e		Umkhal	Evergreen
37.	Engelhardt ia spicata	Juglandaceae		Hnum	Deciduous
38.	Erythrina stricta	Fabaceae	Indian Coral Tree	Fartuah	Deciduous
39.	Eucalyptus globulus	Myrtaceae	Blue Gum	Nawhalh thingg	Evergreen
40.	Eurya acuminata	Theaceae		Sihneh	Evergreen
41.	Ficus benjanima	Moraceae	Sacred Fig	Rihnim	Evergreen
42.	Ficus curtipes	Moraceae	Blunt Leaf fig	Hnahhlun	Evergreen
43.	Ficus elastica	Moraceae	Indian Rubber	Hmawng	Evergreen
44.	Ficus hirta	Moraceae	Hairy fig	Sazutheipui	Deciduous
45.	Ficus retusa	Moraceae	Indian Laurel Fig	Bung	Deciduous
46.	Ficus semicordat a	Moraceae	Drooping fig	Theipui	Evergreen
47.	Ficus virens	Moraceae	White Fig	Zaihri	Deciduous
48.	Flueggea virosa	Euphorbiacea e	White Berry Bush	Saisiak	Evergreen
49.	Glochiodio n heyneanu m	Euphorbiacea e	Velvety melon Feather Foil	Thingpawnch hia	Evergreen
50.	Gmelina arborea	Verbenaceae	Beech wood	Thlanvawng	Deciduous
51.	Haldina cordifolia	Rubiaceae	Yellow Teak	Lungkhup	Deciduous
52.	Lagerstroe mia speciosa	Lythraceae	Queen's Flower	Chawnpui	Deciduous
53.	Ligustrum robustum	Oleaceae	Wild Privet	Chawmzil	Evergreen
54.	Lithocarpu s dealbatus	Fagaceae	Spike Oak	Fah	Evergreen
55.	Litsea cubeba	Lauraceae	Cubeba	Sernam	Deciduous
56.	Litsea monopelat a	Lauraceae	Common Grey Mango Laurel	Nauthak	Evergreen
57.	Macaranga indica	Euphorbiacea e	Papri	Hnahkhar	Evergreen

Machilus S8.Lauraceae angiferaBulbawrEvergreen59.Mangifera eAnacardiacea eMango treeTheihaiEvergreen60.Messua derreaClusiaceaeIron wood treeHerhseEvergreen61.Michelia bolongaMagnoliaceaeChampNgiauEvergreen62.Murraya koenigiiRutaceaeCurry leaf TreeKaripataDeciduous63.Olea salticifoliaOleaceaeWidow leaved olive treeThingthiangEvergreen64.Oroxylum mdicumBignoniaceaeTrumpet flower mArchangkawDeciduous65.Parkia roxburghiiAuraceaeAvocadoButter FruitEvergreen67.minutiflor ambitantLauraceaeNghalengluta rEvergreen68.Persea a caidusLauraceaeIndian GooseberrySunhuDeciduous69.Priyllanthu Phyllanthacea galdavaMyrtaceaeGuavaKawttheiEvergreen71.Psidium gualavaMyrtaceaeGuavaKawttheiEvergreen73.Schima anacardiacea a nacardiacea a nacardiaceaMarking Nut TreeHuaiEvergreen75.clavifuor curriniMyrtaceaeTrumpet SatinashLenhmuiEvergreen76.Syzygium rreaMyrtaceaeTrumpet SatinashLenhmuiEvergreen76.Syzygium rreaMyrtaceaeTrumpet SatinashLenhmuiEvergreen <trr< th=""><th></th><th></th><th></th><th></th><th></th><th></th></trr<>						
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71.Psidium guajavaMyrtaceaeGuavaKawltheiEvergreen72.Quercus helferianaFagaceaeIIIIIIIIIIEvergreen73.Schima wallichiTheaceaeNeedle woodKhiangEvergreen73.Schima wallichiTheaceaeNeedle woodKhiangEvergreen74.Semecarpu anacardiu mAnacardiacea eMarking TreeNut KawhtebelDeciduous75.Syzygium 	70.	Pinus kesiya	Pinaceae	Khasi pine	Far	Evergreen
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82. Wendlandi a budleioide s Rubiaceae Batling Evergreen	81.	Vitex glabrata	Verbenaceae		Thingkhawilu	Deciduous
	82.	Wendlandi a budleioide s	Rubiaceae		Batling	Evergreen

Table 4: List of climbers, shrubs, grass and herbs in the College Campus:

Sl. No.	Botanical Name	Family	Common Name	Local Name	Habit
1.	Amomum maximum	Zingeberaceae	Java cardamon	Aidu	Herb
2.	Ananas comosus	Bromeliaceae	Pineapple	Lakhuih	Herb
3.	Begonia dioica	Begoniaceae		Sekhupthur	Herb
4.	Bidens pilosa	Asteraceae	Spanish Needle	Vawkpuithal	Herb
5.	Bougainvillae spectabilis	Nyctaginaceae	Bougainvillea	Saron	Shrub
6.	Cajanas cajan	Fabaceae	Lentil	Behliang	Shrub
7.	Calocasia	Araceae	Taro	Dawl	Herb

	esculata				
8.	Canavalia ensiformis	Fabaceae	Broad Bean	Broad beans	Climber
9.	Capscicum annum	Solanaceae	Red Pepper	Hmarchate	Shrub
10.	Capscicum	Solanaceae	Chilli	Hmarchapui	Shrub
	frutesens			•	
11.	Celosia argentea	Amaranthaceae	Cock's Comb	Zamzo	Herb
12.	Centella asiatica	Apiaceae	Indian Pennywort	Hnahbial	Herb
13.	Cheilocostus speciosus	Zingiberaceae	Crepe Ginger	Sumbul	Herb
14.	Chromolaena odorata	Asteraceae	Christmas Bush	Tlangsam	Shrub
15.	Chrysopogon aciculatus	Poaceae	Love Grass	Phul	Grass
16.	Clerodendrum wallichi	Verbanaceae	Bridal Veil	Phuihnam	Shrub
17.	Conyza leucantha	Astertaceae	Fleabane	Buar	Herb
18.	Curcuma ceasia	Zingeberaceae	Black Turmeric	Ailaidum	Herb
19.	Dendrocnide sinuata	Urticaceae	Devil Nettle	Thakpui	Shrub
20.	Dioscorea alata	Dioscoreaceae	White Yam	Bachhim	Herb
21.	Diplazium esculentum	Athyriaceae	Vegetable Fern	Chakawk	Herb
22.	Drymaria cordata	Caryophyllaceae	Tropical Chickweed	Changkalrit	Herb
23.	Eleagnus pyriformis	Eleagnaceae		Sarzuk	Shrub
24.	Eleagnus pyriformis	Elaeagnaceae		Sarzuk	Shrub
25.	Elsholtzia communis	Lamiaceae		Lengser	Herb
26.	Enatda phaseoloides	Mimosaceae	Match Box Bean	Kawi hrui	Climber
27.	Eryngium foetidum	Apiaceae	Wild coriander	Bahkhawr	Herb
28.	Euphiorbia hirta	Euphorbiaceae	Asthma Plant	Zawhte hlo	Herb
29.	Euphorbia milii	Euphorbiaceae	Christ Plant	Hling lukhum	Shrub
30.	Garcinia lanceifolia	Clusiaceae		Chengkek	Shrub
31.	Girardinia diversioflora	Urticaceae	Himalayan Nettle	Kangthai	Under Shrub
32.	Gnetum gnemone	Verbanaceae	Joint Fir	Pelh	Under shrub
33.	Heliconia rostrata	Heliconiaceae	False Bird of Paradise	Changel pangpar	Herb
34.	Hibiscus rosa sinensis	Malvaceae	China Rose	Midum	Shrub
35.	Homalomena aromatica	Araceae	Homalomena	Anchiri	Herb
36.	Imperata cylindrica	Poaceae	Blady Grass	Di	Grass
37.	Ipomea batatas	Covulvulaceae	Sweet Potato	Kawlbahra	Herb
38.	Ipomoea quamoclit	Convulvulaceae	Cypree Vine	Rimenhawii	Climber
39.	Justica adhatoda	Acanthaceae	Malabar Nut	Kawldai	Shrub
40.	Lobelia angulata	Campanulaceae	Blue Star Creeper	Choakathi	Herb
41.	Manihot esculenta	Euphorbiaceae	Tapioca	Pangbal	Shurb
42.	Maranta arundinaceae	Marantaceae	Arrowroot	Hnahthial	Herb
43.	Melastoma	Melastomaceae	Malabar Blackmouth	Builukham	Shrub
44.	Mikania	Asteraceae	Bitter Vine	Japan hlo	Climber
45	Mimosa pudica	Mimosaceae	Touch- me -not	Hlonuar	Shrub
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46	Mucuna bracteata	Fabaceae	Elephant	Hruiduk	Climber
46.	Mucuna bracteata	Fabaceae	Elephant cowitch	Hruiduk	Climber

			Develop		
			Banana		
48.	Mussaendra	Rubiaceae	Tropical	Vakep	Shrub
	glabra		Dogwood		
49.	Ocimum	Lamiaceae	Wild Basil	Runhmui	Herb
	americanum				
50.	Paederia foetida	Rubiaceae	Skunk Vine	Vawihuih	Climber
= :				nrui	
51.	Piper betel	Piperaceae	Betel Vine	Panhnah	Climber
52.	Plantago major	Plantaginaceae	Broad Leaf Plantain	Kelbe an	Herb
53.	Renanthera	Orchidaceae	Red Vanda	Senhripar	Herb
	imschootiana	e cinducede		Derini ipa	
54.	Rubus birmanicus	Rosaceae		Sialinuchhu	Shrub
55.	Saccharum	Poaceae		Luang	Herb
	longisetosum			J J J	
56.	Schefflera	Araliaceae	Dwarf Umbrella		Shrub
	venulosa		Plant		
57.	Senna alata	Caesalpiniaceae	Ringworm	Tuihlo	Shrub
			Shrub		
58.	Solanum anguivi	Solanaceae	Indian Night	Tawkte	Shrub
	C C		shade		
59.	Solanum nigrum	Solanaceae	Black Night	Anhling	Herb
	Ū.		shade	, C	
60.	Solanum	Solanaceae	Turkey Berry	Tawkpui	Shrub
	rudepannum				
61.	Solanum viarum	Solanaceae		Athlo	Under
					shrub
62.	Spemacoce	Rubiaceae	Shaggy Button	Congres hlo	Herb
	hispida		weed	-	
63.	Stevia rebaudiana	Asteraceae	Candy leaf	Hnahthlum	Herb
64.	Tabernaemontana	Apocynaceae	Wax Flower	Kelte	Shrub
	divaricata			bengbeh	
65.	Tagetes erecta	Asteraceae	African	Derhken	Herb
	-		Marigold		
66.	Tinospora	Menispermaceae	Moonseed	Hruivankai	Climber
	cordifolia	-			
67.	Thunbergia alata	Acanthaceae	Blue Trumpet	Vako	Climber
	-		Vine		
68.	Thysanolaena	Poaceae	Broom Grass	Hmunphiah	Grass
	maxima			-	
69.	Xanthium	Asteraceae	Common	Chabet	Herb
	strumarium		Cocklebur		

CONCLUSION

The study site remains unexplored and species unidentified until the present study. The findings proved the presence of large variability in the floral diversity of the campus ecosystem. These findings suggest that the structure and composition of different forest strata are interconnected [8] and influence each other, with open canopies and diverse upper layers promoting greater diversity in lower layers [9]. The documentation provides valuable insights into the current state of plant diversity, highlighting the significant contribution to the understanding and management of the ecosystem.

In the past, campus development and construction projects have led to widespread tree felling, significantly impacting the floristic composition and resulting in the loss of numerous plant species. However, the institution has taken proactive measures to conserve and enhance the campus flora through collaborative efforts of the Eco Club, NSS Unit, Department of Botany, and Environmental Management Committee. These initiatives include the establishment of protected areas, planting of new species, and minimization of human interference, aiming to restore and enrich the natural floristic diversity. The study's findings emphasized the need to prioritize conservation and establishment of additional protected areas. Furthermore, the Indo-Burma biodiversity hotspot, the mountainous region of Mizoram has numerous unique and diverse flora and fauna, characterized by a rich cultural heritage and a deep connection between the native people and the natural environment [10] which underscores the importance of educating local communities within and adjacent to the institution to minimize stress and interference, thereby ensuring the long-term preservation of the campus's floristic diversity.

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