



Wildlife of Kanniyakumari district

An introduction to the **biodiversity** of Kanniyakumari district.



Global biodiversity hotspots

Biodiversity is all the different kinds of life you'll find in one area—the variety of animals, plants, fungi, and even microorganisms like bacteria that make up our natural world.



Kanniyakumari district



We are part of one of the world biodiversity hot spots



Within that hotspots we are in one of the hottest of hotspots



Within that we are in the region with highest endemism.

**Part of Agasthiyarmalai
biosphere reserve with high
level of endemism.**



Why Kanniyakumari is special ?

Altitude variations from sea level to more than 1600 meters.

Green cover is more with nearly 25 % protected area



Diverse terrain from extremely wet to scrublands.

Large coastline with Saltpans and mudflats

Southernmost tip of Western Ghats receiving both monsoons.

Some areas where one could explore this diversity



Ocean



Kanniyakumari wildlife sanctuary



Dams



Scrublands



Salt pans




Lakes



Beaches



Hill temples



Kanniyakumari wildlife sanctuary

Grasslands with immense beauty



KK green cover is the second highest in Tamil Nadu

Megafauna of Kanniyakumari district

The Kanniyakumari wildlife sanctuary plays host to all megafauna like Elephants, Gaurs, Sambars, Tigers, Leopards etc.

Elephants are the most iconic species of the Kanniyakumari district. As per last estimate there are 49 elephants inside the sanctuary.



A photograph of a reddish-brown wild dog sitting in a lush green forest. The dog is looking towards the camera. The background is filled with dense green foliage and trees.

Megafauna of Kanniyakumari district

Tiger sightings are random.

Leopards are the primary predators along with wild dogs.

Megafauna of Kanniyakumari district

Spotted deer are not present in the sanctuary

Sambar deer are the primary prey for the carnivores of Kanniyakumari wildlife sanctuary. They are found throughout the sanctuary.

Mouse deer and barking deer are widespread.



Kanniyakumari Bird diversity

382 species of birds
recorded

Balamore area is the best
birding spot inside the forest.

The dense forests offer
suitable habitat for several
rare birds.



Kanniyakumari Bird diversity

Migration destination

Kanniyakumari is the southernmost tip of the landmass in which Central Asian Flyway falls. Most birds that migrate from the artic use the southernmost tip as their final destination.



Kanniyakumari Bird diversity

Shores and Mudflats

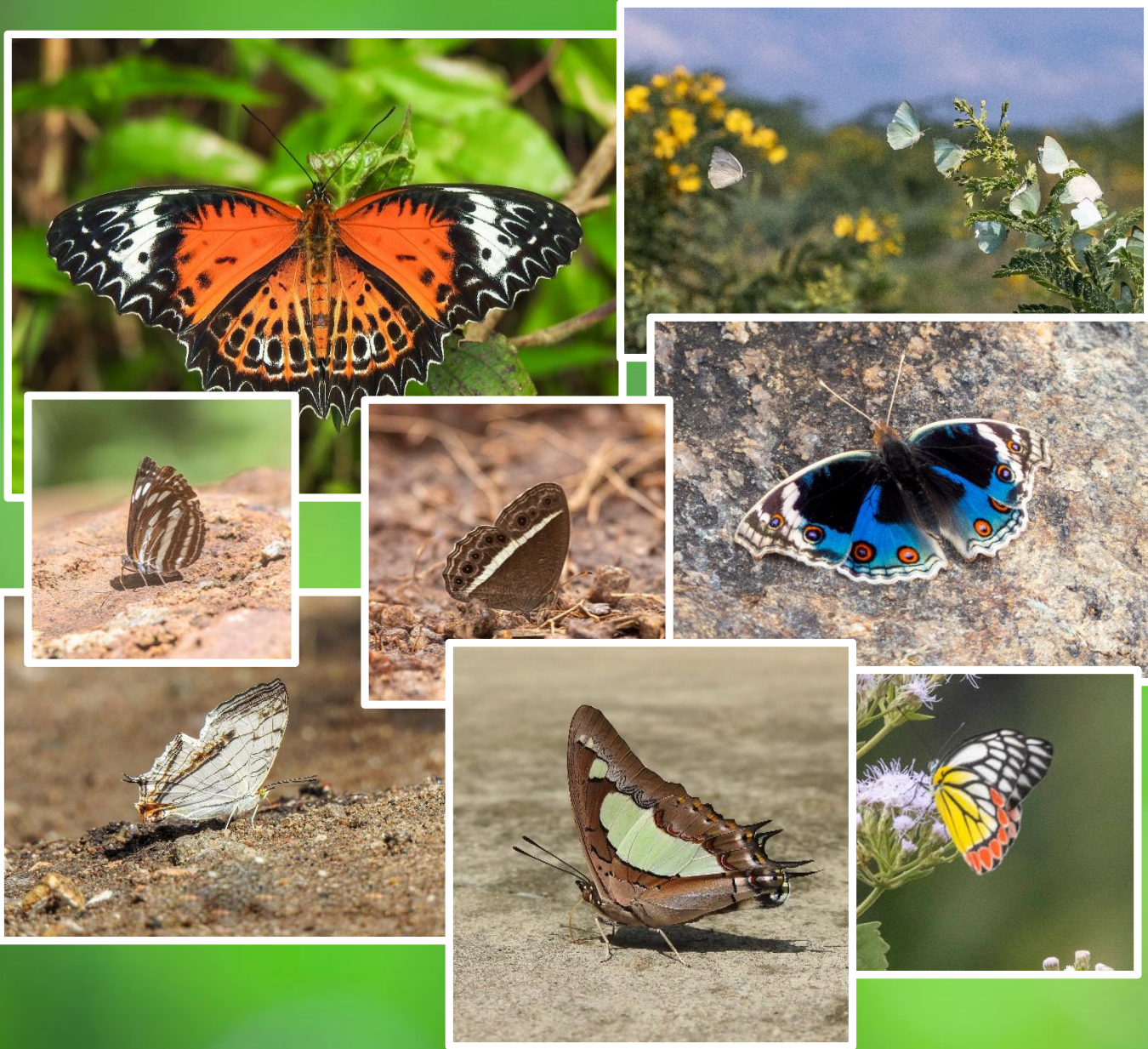
Migratory birds reach our shores from the arctic every year. The shore areas are excellent for monitoring terns and other Pelagic birds. Puthalam is the best birding spot for migratory birds



Butterfly paradise !

Out of the 330 species found in Tamil Nadu 260 have been recorded here.

The Kanniyakumari wildlife sanctuary will soon boast the maximum butterfly species in any one location in Tamil Nadu. Right now Siruvani hills area of Coimbatore has the number one spot with 268 species of butterflies.



Reptile diversity Is also high !

From the **king cobra** to
the tiny wood-snake ,
the range of species is
very high here. New
species of geckos are
found even today.



Dragonflies and Damselflies are very abundant

With mountain streams
and lakes everywhere,
the diversity of
Dragonflies and
Damselflies is quite high.



Tarantulas are here too..

The spider diversity
throws up new species
all the time. The
endangered “**Ghost
ornamental tarantula**” is
found inside the
sanctuary. They can be
spotted only during the
night.



Incomparable variety of Moths

Similar to the butterfly diversity, the diversity of moths is also high. Though no complete checklist is available, it can safely be assumed that there are at least a thousand moth species found inside the sanctuary.





The annual Olive ridley nesting

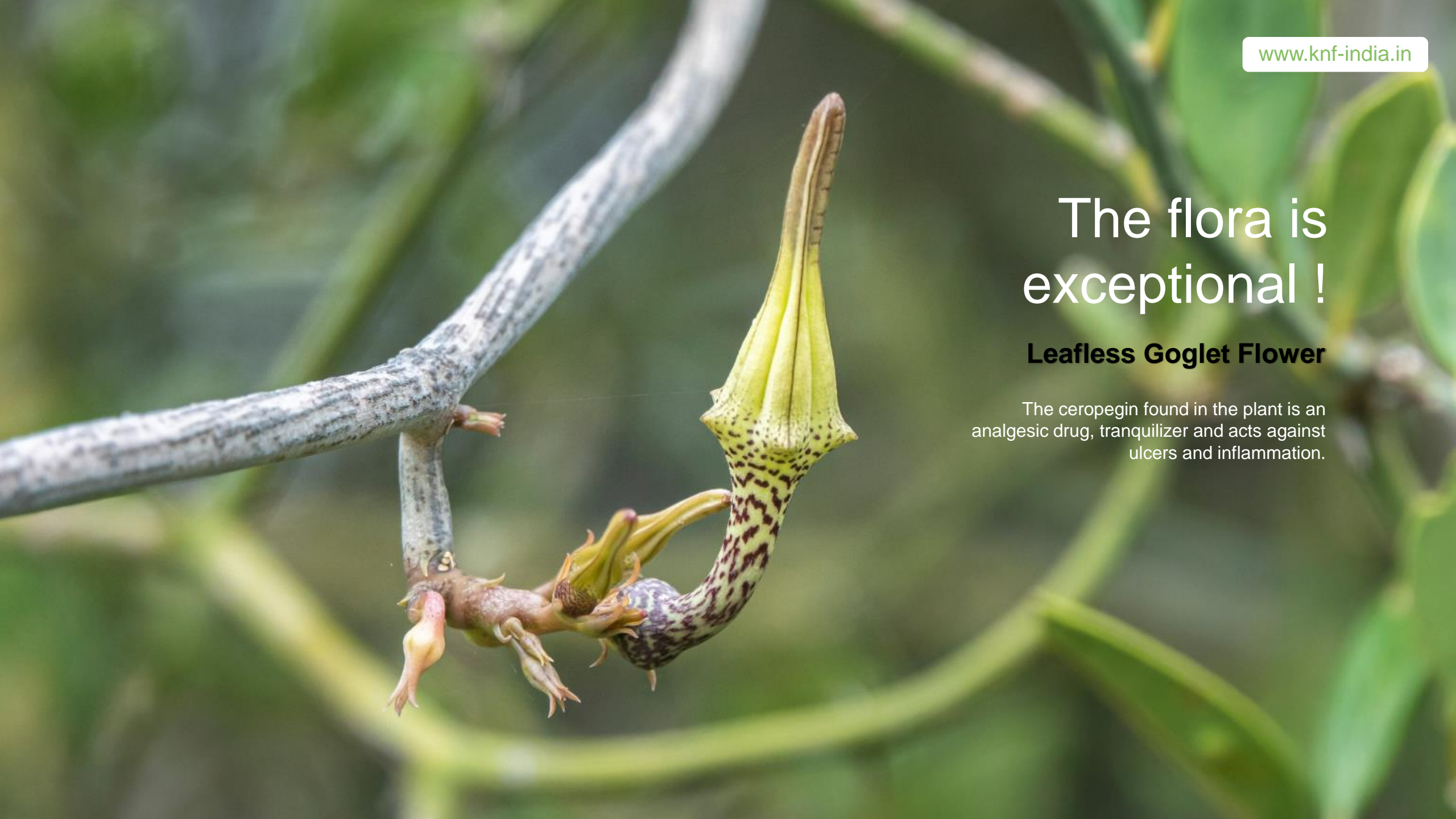
**Sea turtles nests in
Kanniyakumari district
coastlines.**

The nesting happens in the months starting from November to April. The eggs take around 45 – 50 days to hatch.

The flora is
exceptional !

Leafless Goglet Flower

The ceropegin found in the plant is an analgesic drug, tranquilizer and acts against ulcers and inflammation.



The state animal is here too.

The Nilgiri tahr is an ungulate that is endemic to the Nilgiri Hills and the southern portion of the Western and Eastern Ghats in the states of Tamil Nadu and Kerala in southern India.





The sad reality

The relentless destruction of biodiversity



Even waterbodies are farmed !



Sand is mined for bricks

Poaching is still
an issue !



Mountains do not grow back !!



Invasive plant *Mucuna bracteata*





Lakes are
garbage
dumps



The byproduct of fishing...



What do we do to protect this diversity?



To start with



Learn about the diversity



Make your home and place of work wildlife friendly



Teach others about the importance of same



Thank You !



<https://knf-india.in/>

Kanniyakumari Nature Foundation