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ILLUSTRATED KEYS TO THE MACROLICHENS OF KERALA

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Final Report of the Research Project No. KFRI 480/2005

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PROJECT PROPOSAL

Project code : KFRI 480/2005

Project Title : Preparation of Illustrated keys to the Macrolichens of Kerala

Investigator : M.S. Muktesh Kumar
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Forest Ecology and Biodiversity Conservation Division

Objectives

1. Stimulate lichenological research that is less studied from the Kerala part of the Western Ghats and give insights to the importance of lichens in biodiversity conservation.

2. Identification keys for selected lichens with emphasis on morphological characters over chemical and spores characters.

Project period : April 2005- June 2007

Funding agency : KFRI Plan Grants

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ABSTRACT

Lichens are one of the most widely distributed and dominant group of organisms in the world. These are the most successful symbiotic organisms on earth and can grow on anything and anywhere. The lichen flora of the Kerala part of the Western Ghats is inadequately known since only fragmentary work has been done in the past. In a study on the macrolichen flora of Kerala undertaken by KFRI during 1997-2000, 254 species of macrolichens under 43 genera belonging to 18 families were collected and enumerated. From among them commonly occurring macrolichens are included in the present report.

The present compilation of 105 species representing 32 genera belonging to 13 families is only to stimulate lichenological research and give insight into the knowledge of lichens for the naturalists, students and teachers of botany at college level and provide a knowhow to identify the macrolichens occurring in the Kerala part of the Western Ghats.

In this manual sequential dichotmous keys are provided for identifying any known lichen species occurring in Kerala part of the Western Ghats. Artificial Keys to the families and genera are given. The species keys are dealt with under the respective genera. The species included are arranged in an alphabetical order for easy reference. The line drawings accompanying the keys are intended to identify salient features of the species. They are only diagrammatic representation and are not to scale. The drawings illustrate the upper surface of the species.