

CENTRE PUTS NEELAKURINJI ON THE LIST OF PROTECTED PLANTS

Relevant for: Environment | Topic: Biodiversity, Ecology, and Wildlife Related Issues

To enjoy additional benefits

CONNECT WITH US

January 12, 2023 08:27 pm | Updated 10:55 pm IST - IDUKKI

COMMENTS

SHARE

READ LATER

Forest officials said Neelakurinji has been included on the list when the Centre expanded the earlier protected list of six plant species to 19. File | Photo Credit: The Hindu

The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF) has listed Neelakurinji (*Strobilanthes kunthiana*) under Schedule III of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972, including it on the list of protected plants.

Those who uproot or destroy the plant will invite a fine of 25,000 and three years' imprisonment. The cultivation of Neelakurinji and its possession is not allowed, according to the order.

Forest officials said Neelakurinji has been included on the list when the Centre expanded the earlier protected list of six plant species to 19.

A senior official said tourists in large numbers had flocked to the location in recent times when flowering of Neelakurinji was reported in a particular area.

"Destroying and uprooting of Neelakurinji plants is a major threat to the flowering areas. Normally, the Chief Wildlife Warden issues a statement to the effect that destroying Neelakurinji plants and flowers is a punishable offence under the Wildlife Protection Act and action will be taken accordingly. But it does not prevent the offence," he said.

"As per the new order, the department will take action against those who uproot or destroy Neelakurinji in forest areas, protected areas, and national parks. The department will strictly implement the government order," he said.

Jomy Augustine, Neelakurinji expert and former botany Professor at Pala St. Thomas College, said the plant was endemic to a small stretch in the Western Ghats from the Mangaladevi hills to the Nilgiris hills

"In the Western Ghats region, nearly 70 varieties of Neelakurinji plants have been identified. The most popular Neelakurinji is *Strobilanthes kunthiana* which blooms once in 12 years. However, some other rare varieties of Neelakurnji are also found in the Western Ghats region," he said.

Environmentalism M.N. Jayachandran said the Central government's decision would help protect

Neelakurinji plants. “The Forest department should ensure protection of the areas where it blooms, especially the Kallippara hills in Idukki where Neelakurinji was in bloom recently,” he said.

The most recent blooming of Neelakurinji was over a vast area on the Kallippara hills at Santhanpara in Idukki. An expert team had identified six varieties of the plant across the mountains.

The Eravikulam National Park, near Munnar, is known for widespread blooming of the kurinji, with the next flowering season expected in 2030.

COMMENTS

SHARE

BACK TO TOP

Comments have to be in English, and in full sentences. They cannot be abusive or personal. Please abide by our [community guidelines](#) for posting your comments.

We have migrated to a new commenting platform. If you are already a registered user of The Hindu and logged in, you may continue to engage with our articles. If you do not have an account please register and login to post comments. Users can access their older comments by logging into their accounts on Vuukle.

END

Downloaded from **crackIAS.com**

© **Zuccess App** by crackIAS.com