

# JOURNAL OF BIODIVERSITY AND CONSERVATION

Editorial.....

## Mangroves of Odisha

Mangroves are among the most unique, productive and threatened ecosystems in Odisha. Mangroves are a special group of vascular plants have unique morphological, physiological and other adaptations to live in saline environment in low dissolved oxygen or sometimes anoxic fine sediments. They play a very significant role in protecting the hinterland against:

1. Cyclones
2. Ingress of sea water

India has a total area of 4628 Km<sup>2</sup> under mangroves and Odisha has 222 Km<sup>2</sup> as per India State of Forest Report 2013. The mangroves of the Odisha are distributed in the following three major zones:

- a. Mangroves of Mahanadi Delta
- b. Mangroves of Brahmani & Baitarani Delta
- c. Mangroves of the Balasore-Bhadrak Coast

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Bhitarkanika mangroves are most important due to its largest stretch and unique biodiversity. The most common plant species found in the mangrove ecosystems of Odisha are:

1. *Avicennia alba*
2. *Avicennia officinalis*
3. *Heritiera fomes*
4. *Sonneratia caseolaris*
5. *Xylocarpus grantum*
6. *Acanthus ilicifolius*
7. *Clerodendrum inerme*
8. *Cerbera odollam*
9. *Hibiscus tiliaceus*
10. *Mucuna gigantean*

The mangroves of Odisha are also home of saltwater crocodiles, jungle cat, spotted deer, water monitor, striped hyena, sambar deer etc. Hence, the mangroves of Odisha are very important wealth of the state and we have to conserve them for future generation.



Mangrove Ecosystem of Bhitarkanika, Odisha