

Institutional Distinctiveness – Biodiversity Conservation

Calicut University campus covering over five hundred acres of undulating land is rich in flora and fauna. The campus is predominantly lateritic, and supports a large number of algae, fungi, flowering plants, butterflies, odonates, birds, reptiles and so on. About 15 percent of its land occupies buildings and roads, and the remaining area mostly occupied with diverse grasses, woody climbers, trees and a number of herbs. The lateritic slopes of the campus turn green with the commencement of monsoon and gradually changes into brilliant hues with the flowering of many herbaceous plants in August-September. Due to anthropogenic activities and quarrying, the unique flora of lateritic plateau of North Malabar is under severe threat. Hence, the conservation of this peculiar flora and fauna in the University campus is of prime importance. The University has taken considerable attention in documenting and preserving the biodiversity of its campus.

Objectives

- Conservation of biodiversity.
- To create space for relaxation and recreation

The team of researchers from the Department of Botany have explored floristically different regions of the country to collect saplings of plants for growing in Calicut University Botanical Garden. Steps also have been taken for the vegetative propagation especially of the ferns, aroids, wild gingers and bananas. A separate section has been created for the maintenance of aquatic angiosperms in CUBG. The avian fauna has been documented by the Zoology Department. In view of familiarizing and to keep awareness on the flora and fauna among visiting folk, labels depicting scientific names have been provided.

The entire flora and fauna of the campus have been documented. Several native species of trees and shrubs were planted during the last few years. A separate Mango Orchard comprising different variety of mangoes were established in the northwest boundary of the campus. A bamboosetum with diverse collections such as Budda's belly bamboo (*Bambusa ventricosa*), Yellow Bamboo (*B. striata*), bush bamboo (*B. multiplex*), the giant bamboo (*B. gigantea*) has been established in the campus, adjacent to the botanical garden.

The University has taken care to provide space for the students and visitors with best place for academic interaction. The Calicut University Park is situated in the heart of the University Campus covering an area of 6.5 acres was established in 1968. Being located in the heart of the University Campus, 70-80 percent of the visitors to the park are from among the student community, and the remaining 20-30 percent from other academic circles. The Unit is also looking forward to providing a serene natural atmosphere with large open areas for useful discussion and social interaction, to provide students better facilities for study under trees during examinations in the hot summer months. Besides, to an outside visitor, it serves as a place to relax and also to enjoy. Several children's play equipment and a large lawn area also available in the park and parents can leave their children freely in the garden. The Park is now well maintained and is being used as a service facility both educational and recreational by the visiting students and public.
