

SACRED SITES IN SUBURBAN BENGALURU: SHOWING CULTURAL HERITAGE ON ROADSIDE TERMITE MOUNDS AND PEEPAL TREES

N. C. Nandi* and Rina Nandi

Social Environmental and Biological Association, Kolkata; *Email:

nepalchandra.nandi@gmail.com

While staying at Ambalipura of suburban Bengaluru- 560 102, plenty of termite mounds and Peepal trees (*Ficus religiosa*) were seen in and around this area on the roadside, vacant brick-walled lands, and inside the Kasavanhalli lake (Nandi, 2023). Termite mounds are mostly of chest height to more than man height level. Some small lesser known roadside shrines of termite mounds (Website 1) were found. Several iconic peepal trees were also noticed in the area (Website 2). An enormous termite mound was found adorned with garlands, sacred threads, photos of spiritual masters, deities, offerings of flowers and 'prasads', and even six eggs on the 1st Avenue road side shrine of Shubh Enclave (Fig. 1). Such sacred sites of termite mounds and peepal trees are local cultural heritages of immense socio-cultural significance as well as of biodiversity conservation values. However, on enquiry it is revealed that the reason for offering of eggs seems to be associated with the appeasement of Serpent God as informed us by a middle-aged local working women walking through this avenue on foot.



Fig. 1 Termite mound at Shubh Enclave

Fig. 2 Termite mound at Kasavanhalli lake

Reference

Nandi, N. C. 2023. Wetland Watch. 16. Kasavanhalli lake – A paradise of marsh birds and coots in the suburban Bengaluru, Karnataka. *J. Environ. & Sociobiol.*, **20**(1): 100.

Websites

1. <https://www.bridgemanimages.com/en/chinch-gryniewicz/small-roadside-hindu-shrine-built-around-a-sacred-termite-mound-on-a-suburban-street-in/photograph/asset/616968>
2. <https://www.deccanherald.com/india/karnataka/bengaluru/book-celebrates-citys-peepal-tree-shrines-800104.html>