

Bannerghatta National Park, Location, Biodiversity, Significance

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Bannerghatta National Park is a well-known **wildlife park** located near **Bengaluru** in **Karnataka**. It is a popular place where people can experience **nature**, see **wild animals**, and learn about **conservation**. Even though it is close to a busy city, the park provides a peaceful **natural environment** filled with **forests, hills, and diverse wildlife**. It is home to many animals like **elephants, tigers, and deer**, and also includes attractions like **safaris** and a **butterfly park**.

Bannerghatta National Park Location

- **Bannerghatta National Park (BNP)** is located about **22 km south of Bengaluru** in Karnataka, spread across **Bengaluru Urban and Ramanagara districts**.
- It lies in the **Anekal hill range**, which is part of the larger Deccan Plateau landscape.
- The park forms the **northern tip of the Mysuru Elephant Reserve**, making it very important for elephant conservation.
- Often called the **“green lung of Bengaluru”**, it helps maintain ecological balance in a rapidly urbanising region.

Bannerghatta National Park Historical Background

- The area was first declared a **Reserve Forest in 1970**, recognising its ecological importance.
- It was later notified as a **National Park in 1974** by the Government of Karnataka.
- In **2002**, a part of the park was separated and developed into the **Bannerghatta Biological Park (BBP)** to promote conservation and eco-tourism.
- The park has evolved over time with initiatives like **lion safari (1979)**, **tiger safari (1987)**, and India's **first butterfly park (2006)**.

Bannerghatta National Park Geographical and Physical Features

- The park is characterised by **granite hill formations**, which give it a rugged terrain and support diverse habitats.
- It has a mix of **valleys, uplands, and forested slopes**, each supporting different types of vegetation and wildlife.
- Bannerghatta National Park serves as a **vital wildlife corridor** connecting **BR Hills and Sathyamangalam forests**, allowing safe movement of elephants and other animals.
- The **Suvarnamukhi river** flows through the park and acts as a **lifeline for wildlife**, especially during dry seasons.

Bannerghatta National Park Vegetation and Forest Types

- The park has a mix of **three major forest types**, which support biodiversity:
 - **Dry Deciduous Scrub Forests** found in higher and drier areas
 - **Southern Tropical Dry Deciduous Forests** which dominate most parts
 - **Southern Tropical Moist Mixed Forests** found in valleys and water-rich zones
- This diversity of vegetation helps support a wide range of animal species and maintains ecological balance.

Bannerghatta National Park Flora (Plant Diversity)

- **Bannerghatta National Park** is home to a variety of important plant species such as **Sandalwood, Neem, Tamarind, Bamboo, and Eucalyptus**.
- Other species like **Schleichera oleosa, Terminalia tomentosa, Grewia tilaefolia, and Bauhinia purpurea** are also found here.
- The vegetation not only supports wildlife but also plays a role in **soil conservation, climate regulation, and groundwater recharge**.

Bannerghatta National Park Fauna (Animal Diversity)

- The park is known for its rich wildlife and acts as a **safe habitat for many endangered and important species**.
- Key animals include **Asian Elephants, Tigers, Leopards, Indian Gaur, Sloth Bear, Wild Dog, and Wild Pig**.

- Herbivores like **Sambar Deer, Spotted Deer, and Barking Deer** are commonly found.
- It also supports smaller species like **Slender Loris, Pangolin, and Common Mongoose**, indicating high biodiversity.
- The park is also rich in **birdlife**, including species like **Grey Heron, Jungle Fowl, and various owls and hornbills**.

Bannerghatta National Park Special Conservation Features

- **Bannerghatta National Park** is famous for its **Tiger and Lion Safari**, which helps in awareness and conservation.
- It houses **India's first butterfly enclosure**, showcasing insect biodiversity and promoting eco-tourism.
- The **Bannerghatta Biological Park** includes a **fenced elephant sanctuary**, one of the first of its kind in India.
- These initiatives make **Bannerghatta National Park** a model for combining **conservation with education and tourism**.

Bannerghatta National Park Significance

- Bannerghatta National Park acts as an **important biodiversity hotspot near Bengaluru**, supporting diverse plant and animal species while protecting natural ecosystems in an urban region.
- It serves as a **vital wildlife corridor**, allowing movement of animals like elephants and ensuring genetic exchange between connected forest areas.
- The park contributes to **climate regulation and ecological balance** by improving air quality, conserving water, and reducing the environmental impact of urbanization.
- It supports **livelihoods through eco-tourism, research, and educational activities**, creating awareness and employment opportunities for local communities.
- Bannerghatta is a strong example of **coexistence between urban development and nature**, highlighting the importance of sustainable conservation practices.

Source: <https://vajiramandravi.com/current-affairs/bannerghatta-national-park/>

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