

Difference Between Tropical Evergreen and Tropical Deciduous Forests

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The diverse geographic and climatic variations have given rise to various types of forest. Among these, Tropical Evergreen and Tropical Deciduous Forests are the two most prominent and ecologically significant categories. While they both belong to the tropical forest category, they differ in appearance, climatic conditions, biodiversity, and ecological importance.

Tropical Evergreen Forests

Tropical Evergreen Forests are also known as Rainforests where dense, multilayered forests are found in regions that receive high annual rainfall (more than 200 cm) and have no pronounced dry season. These forests remain green throughout the year due to continuous leaf shedding and growth.

Tropical Evergreen Forests Characteristics

- These forests are found mostly in the Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Karnataka, Maharashtra

- The climate observed in the forest is usually hot and humid throughout the year, with rainfall exceeding 200 cm annually.
- Canopy of the trees form a thick, multilayered canopy, blocking sunlight from reaching the forest floor.
- The forest is rich in plant and animal species; includes mahogany, ebony, rosewood, orchids, and ferns. Fauna includes elephants, leopards, monkeys, and a variety of insects and birds.
- Despite the dense vegetation and apparent richness, the soil in Tropical Evergreen Forests is relatively nutrient-poor.

Tropical Deciduous Forests

Tropical Deciduous Forests are also called Monsoon Forests, are found in areas with seasonal rainfall between 70 to 200 cm. These forests are known for their trees that shed leaves during the dry season to conserve water.

Tropical Deciduous Forests Characteristics

- The forest is widespread across central India, Eastern Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Odisha, parts of Maharashtra, and the foothills of the Himalayas.
- The climate observed is usually Hot summers and cold winters, with a distinct dry season.
- The canopy of the forest is Moderately dense, allowing sunlight to reach the forest floor.
- Dominated by species like sal, teak, neem, and bamboo. Fauna includes tigers, langurs, deer, and several bird species.
- More fertile due to less leaching compared to evergreen regions, making these forests more suitable for agriculture.

Difference Between Tropical Evergreen and Tropical Deciduous Forests

Below is the Difference Between Tropical Evergreen and Tropical Deciduous Forests discussed in the table below:

Difference Between Tropical Evergreen and Tropical Deciduous Forests		
Aspect	Tropical Evergreen Forests	Tropical Deciduous Forests
Also Known As	Rainforests	Monsoon Forests
Rainfall	Above 200 cm annually	100–200 cm annually
Dry Season	No dry season	Prominent dry season (3–4 months)
Leaf Shedding	Trees do not shed leaves seasonally	Trees shed leaves during dry months to conserve moisture

Location in India	Western Ghats, North-Eastern states, Andaman & Nicobar	Central India, Himalayan foothills, Odisha, Chhattisgarh
Density of Forest	Very dense and dark; multilayered canopy	Less dense; more light reaches the ground
Sunlight Penetration	Minimal sunlight reaches forest floor	Moderate sunlight penetration
Flora	Mahogany, ebony, rosewood, bamboo, orchids	Teak, sal, neem, peepal, bamboo
Fauna	Leopards, elephants, bats, snakes, butterflies	Tigers, monkeys, deer, langurs, peacocks
Biodiversity	Extremely rich and diverse	Moderately rich
Soil Quality	Poor and acidic due to leaching	Fertile, supports agriculture
Economic Importance	Hardwood timber, medicinal plants, spices	Timber, firewood, fodder, medicinal plants
Human Habitation	Sparse due to dense cover and poor soil	More accessible and often cleared for cultivation

Tropical Evergreen and Tropical Deciduous Forests Importance

Both Tropical Evergreen and Tropical Deciduous Forests plays an important role in maintaining ecological balance:

- **Carbon Sink:** Both forest types absorb CO₂ and regulate the climate.
- **Biodiversity Hotspots:** They support varied species, many of which are endemic.
- **Livelihood Support:** Forest produce like timber, fruits, herbs, and honey are economically important.

Water Cycle: They help regulate the regional hydrological cycle by retaining soil moisture and supporting rainfall.

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