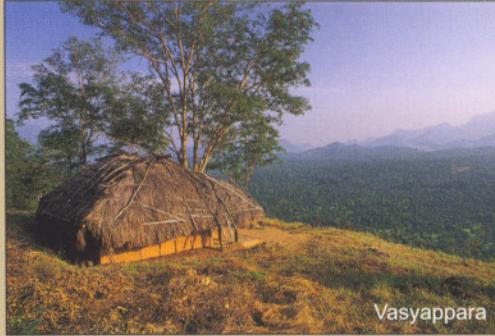


Dolmens



Vasyappara



Machan



Grey tufted langur

ECOTOURISM ACTIVITIES

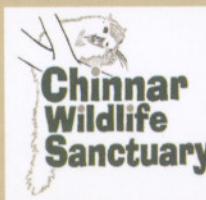
All the Ecotourism activities are organized jointly by the Forest Department and the Eco-development Committees (EDCs) of the local tribal communities. The activities are designed to offer a wide spectrum of wilderness opportunities to the visitors and to provide means of sustainable livelihood for local communities.

Ecotourism facilities include:

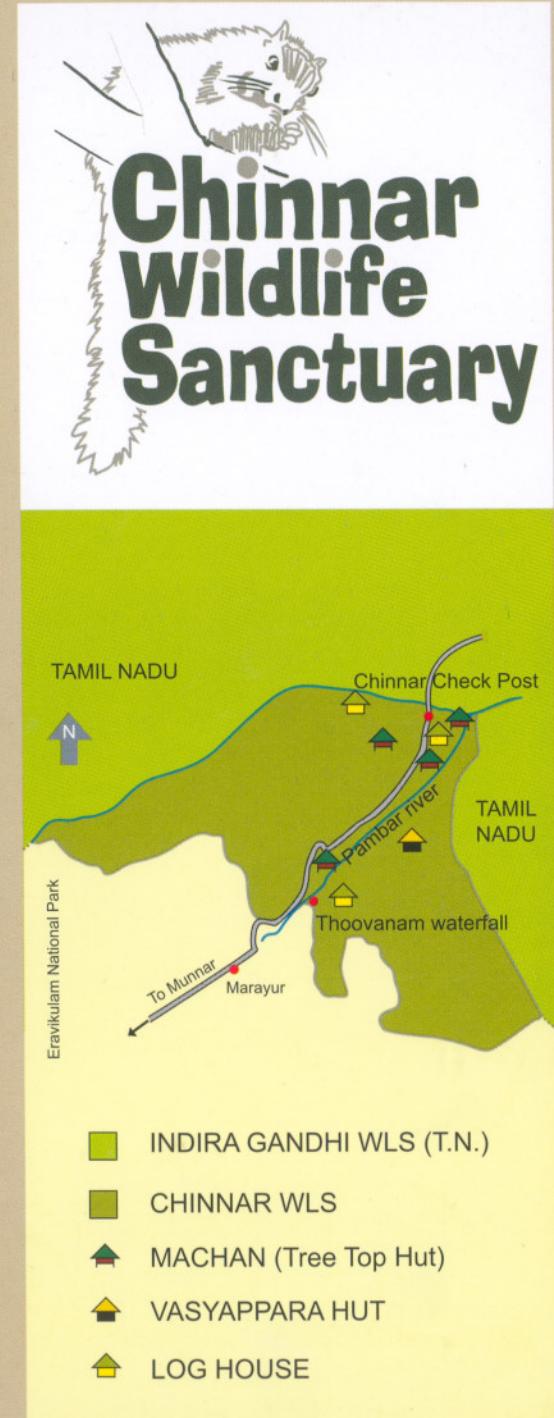
1. River side trekking
2. Trekking to the cultural site (dolmens)
3. Nature trail to the watch tower
4. Trek to Thoovanam Falls
5. Interpretation activities and visit to medicinal garden
6. Stay at log houses at Churulippetty, Koottar and Thoovanam
7. Stay at machans at Koottar, Karakkad, Champakad and Kombakkayam
8. Chinnar Valley Safari Trail (Trekking and Camping at Vasyappara Hut)

For enquiries & reservation:

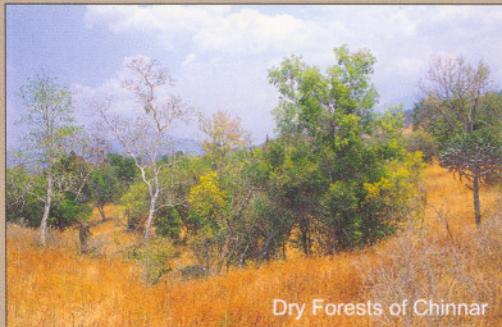
1. FOREST INFORMATION CENTRE
Wildlife Warden's Office
Munnar P.O. – 685 612
Tel/Fax: 04865 231587
E-mail: enpmunnar@sify.com
2. ASSISTANT WILDLIFE WARDEN
Chinnar, Marayoor P. O.
3. ECO-DEVELOPMENT
COMMITTEE OFFICE
Chinnar Check post
Chinnar Wildlife sanctuary
Marayur P.O. – 685 620



Web site: www.chinnar.org



LOCATION AND APPROACH



Dry Forests of Chinnar

The 90 Km² Chinnar Wildlife Sanctuary is located in the eastern part of the High Ranges of Southern Western Ghats of Kerala state. It is regarded as one of the unique protected areas in the whole of the Western Ghats due to its ecological, floral, geomorphological and cultural significance. The habitat types range from high altitude shola-grassland to dry thorny scrub. The Sanctuary is also contiguous to Eravikulam National Park, Kurinjimala Sanctuary, Anaimudi Shola National Park and Indira Gandhi Wildlife Sanctuary of Tamil Nadu.

Chinnar is accessible from Kochi (178 Km) and Coimbatore (115 Km) airports along main roads. The Munnar – Udumalpet road that passes through the Sanctuary divides it into more or less equal parts. Munnar, the major tourist centre, is 60 Km from Chinnar. The nearest town is Marayur (16 Km).

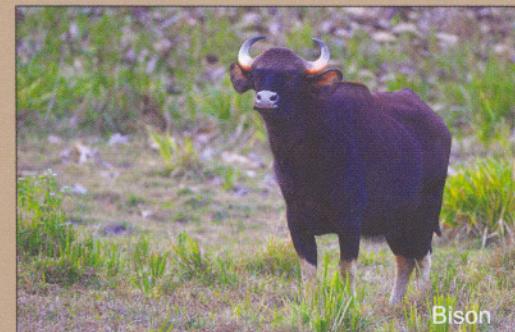
LANDSCAPE AND CLIMATE

The terrain is highly undulating with altitudes ranging from 500 m at Chinnar to over 2300 m at Nandala malai. The area is drained by two perennial rivers namely Pambar and Chinnar. The Sanctuary

is situated in the rain shadow region of the Western Ghats, getting rains mostly during the North-East monsoons (October-December). The plains are generally hot but the higher altitudes are cool.

FLORA AND FAUNA

Due to the significant variation in altitude and rainfall, Chinnar has a wide array of habitat types like deciduous forests, sholas and grasslands. It has about 1000 species of flowering plants and is a well known repository of medicinal plants. There are 114 endemics and *Albizzia lathamii*, a critically endangered tree has been recently reported from the dry forests. Chinnar has recorded the largest number of reptilian fauna in Kerala including the *Mugger Crocodile*. With 225 recorded species of birds, it is one of the richest areas of south India in avian diversity. The riverine forests support a healthy population of the endangered *Grizzled Giant Squirrel* - the pride of Chinnar. The famous and extremely rare *White Bison* has been recently reported. Other important mammals found are *Elephant*, *Tiger*, *Leopard*, *Gaur*, *Sambar*, *Spotted Deer*, *Nilgiri Tahr*, *Common Langur*, *Bonnet Macaque* etc. The phenomenon of butterfly migration occurs in between the monsoons.



Bison

FORESTS AND LOCAL COMMUNITIES



Local Tribesman

Two groups of tribes, Muthuvans and Hill Pulayas, inhabit the Sanctuary in 11 hamlets or kudies. The life of the two tribal communities is very different. The Sanctuary provides the livelihood options for the tribes and helps in maintaining their cultural heritage.

Archaeologically significant megalithic burial sites consisting of dolmens and cysts are found near some settlements. Being inside the Sanctuary, these 11 settlements have significant impact on the forests around them and vice versa.

With the launching of the Eco-development program, successful efforts have been made for evolving a model of biodiversity conservation in a human dominated landscape. The focus of the program is to minimize the impact of local tribal communities on the Sanctuary by involving them in its management and providing alternate means of income generation.