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Lichen as Indicator of Forest Health Status in Achanakmar Amarkantak Biosphere Reserve

S.C.Tiwari

Associate Professor,
Department of Forestry, Wildlife & Environmental Sciences,
Guru Ghasidas Vishwavdyalay, Bilaspur, C.G.

sct_in@yahoo.com

Arvind Prajapati

Research Scholar,
Department of Forestry, Wildlife & Environmental Sciences,
Guru Ghasidas Vishwavdyalay, Bilaspur, C.G.
arvind_forestry2@yahoo.com

Abstract: Achanakmar Amarkantak Biosphere Reserve is genetic express highway linking Estern Himalaya and Western Ghats. One of the richest Bio-diversity habitat, is one of the highly potential conservational areas having rich floral and faunal diversity including lichen. Lichen epiphytes are important for biodiversity conservation and are also widely applied as environmental indicators. The lichen species distribution was studied in natural forest of Biosphere reserve by collection of lichen species and then identification of lichen specimen on each identified phorophytes in 20m x 20m quadrates. 20 number quadrates were laid down in three district namely; Anuppur, Dindori and Bilaspur districts in the biosphere reserve area. All the lichen host tree species including all phorophytes were enumerated and correlated with the degree of maintenance of natural forest, microclimatic condition and habitat. The detailed study reveals the occurrence of 11 indicator lichen communities of Arthonioid, Physcoide, Pyrenuloid, Lecidioid, Leprarioid, Cynolichen, Graphidioid, Lecanroid Parmelioide, Pertusarioide, Teloschistaceous in the forest. Presence of lichen according to habitat like saxicolouse, corticolouse, terricolouse were indicator of the nature of substrate and forest disturbances. Anuppur district showed the highest number of lichen followed by Dindori and then Bilaspur district. Majority of Crustose lichen followed by Foliose, Leprose and fruticose indicates the anthropogenic sensitivity of lichen

Keywords: Lichen identification, Epiphytic lichen, Forest health status, AABR

1. Introduction

Achankmar Amarkantak Biosphere reserve is the protected area for its flora and faunal diversity including lichen. This area include a total of 39.46% dense forest, 22.54% low dense forest and 22.45 % of Agricultural land [1] (Karwariya and Tripathi, 2012). Lichens are symbiotic organism of algae and fungi in which algae take part in photosynthetic activity and fungus provide moisture according to microhabitat of the forest. Current studies on lichen represents about 2303 species of lichen under 305 genera and 74 family in India [2] Singh and Sinha (2010). Enumeration on lichen at Amarakantak region was done by [3] Shukla and Singh (2012). They have added 22 new report to the Amarkantak area. Both forest age and continuity of forest canopy are critical factors for the development of epiphytic lichen communities. [4] Asta et.al. (2002) carried out causes of lichen evaluation value for describing vegetation. Lichen epiphytes are important for biodiversity conservation and are also widely applied as environmental indicators and the use of lichens as indicators is based primarily on a limited range of 'macrolichen' species. Transplant technique indicates variation in lichen community in city also explored [5] (Bajpai et. Al., 2004) with the help of Dirinaria consimilis a foliose lichen to find out metal contamination in city. Also arsenic contamination on lichen find out by [6] (Bajpai et. al., 2009) in the lichens of monuments to explore environmental quality. Many variables influence microhabitat characteristics important to lichen. Forest edge is different from forest centers in both light and wind which affects moisture

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regime substrate, tree age, and space in the forest [7] (Esseen and Renhorn, 1998). Temperature, wind, Sunlight, Substratum and moisture play important role in distribution of specific lichen species in the forest.

2. MATERIALS AND METHOD

Study is based on collection of epiphytic lichens from different places by quadrate method in the forest of Achanakmar Amarkantak Biosphere reserve in which 20m x 20m twenty number quadrates were laid down in three districts namely; Anuppur, Dindori and Bilaspur districts in the biosphere reserve area. All the lichens were collected, identified and deposited at National Botanical Research Institute, Lucknow. On the basis of Indicator parameters like type of forest, lichen substratum, growth form and sensitivity of disturbances, lichen distribution in the forest were studied. Diversity of Bio indicator lichen community was correlated with the microclimatic condition, habitat and their host relationship among the forest of each three district to know the forest health status.

3. RESULT

Most lichen thrives in high light and moderate temperature habitat. Lichen can grow on almost all natural substrates. *Shorea robusta* tree species has the maximum number of lichen on it showed the best host species of lichen due to nature of its bark. Altitudinal variation in the reserve results vigorous growth of lichen. Only one species of fruticose lichen *Cladonia praetermissa* A.W. Archer indicates the highest sensitive species due to anthropological disturbances in the reserve area within the lichen community. Forest has a large disturbance due to illegal cutting and felling of forest vegetation in Achanakmar Amarkantak Biosphere Reserve. Sensitive site like forest grazing, Forest fire, Soil erosion and wild life feeding habit can be identified with the lichen as following explored community.

4. FOREST INDICATOR COMMUNITIES OF AABR

Flora and fauna of specific area represents the environmental condition and ecosystem. Lichen communities are used as indicator of forest ecosystem function in several circumstances. Achanakmar-Amarkantak Biosphere Reserve has unique forest diversity and distribution pattern of species vary with the many factors. Different forest types with different tree species are good hosts for lichen species in the reserved forest. Lichen bio-indicator communities in the site are categorized as follows:

Arthonioid Lichen Community (Plate: b)

This group is characterized with unorganized Ascomata mostly rough granular thallus. In study area there were 7 Arthonioid lichen species which showed the virgin forest of the location. It also indicated the moist and humid climate of the forest. A number of Cryptothecia species sterile lichen in Achanakmar core zone area represents the successional stages of lichen.

Cyanolichen Community (Plate: c)

In this category of lichen, algal part (Blue Green Algae) takes part in symbiosis with fungal part. *Collema, Leptogium, Peltula, and Coccocarpia*, grows on all the soil, rocks and bark, indicates the moist shady location of Achanakmar Amarkantak Biosphere Reserve. This group is good indicator of forest ecosystem function, nutrient cycling and also are sensitive to pollution and forest age. Amarkantak has the unique collection of these community indicates the moist habitat of the forest including good and healthy regeneration status under the canopy. Sites like Dhunipani, Kpildhara, Amarkantak, Jagatpur Kabirchabutra has the good growth of Cyanolichen communities. Whereas the core zone has the poor growth of cyanolichen in lower altitude and indicates the poor and limited regeneration status.

Graphidioid Lichen Community (Plate: d)

The apothecia of this lichen community are in lirrellate apothecia. The host species of this lichen indicates the smooth bark tree species of Ficus sp. This lichen community is prejudiced by the nature of bark. Evergreen forest of India is abode of Graphidaceous lichen [8] (Upreti, 1988) with the pyrenocarpous lichen. In Amarkantak *Shorea robusta* is dominant species but graphidioid lichen community prefer smooth bark tree species as a host. In the community association *Mallotus phillipensis* has the maximum growth of this community.

Lecideoid Lichen Community (Plate: e)

This group of lichen is characterized by bearing apothecia without thalline cover. They are mostly crustose distributed among the bark and rocks substratum. Lichen colonization of this group showed the major distribution in the area. The genera *Bacidia, Lecidea, Phyllopsora and Haematomma* are representing more than 15 species in the area indicating the deciduous tree composition and well distributed on rocks in open forests. *Phyllopsora* accounts well growth in moist places of higher altitude of Amarkantak forest.

Lecanoroid Lichen Community (Plate: f)

The Lecanoroid community is characterized by the apothecia bearing crustose lichen. Presence of Lecanoroid communities indicates the healthy forest diversity. This community includes *Lecanora*, *Lecidella*, *Vainoria sp.* host over the all smooth and rough bark texture. More than 20 species of this group is distributed well in the entire area. These lichen have the property of pollution tolerance and well colonization over all rocks, bark, initial stage of bark shading tree species like *Eucalyptus*, *Terminalia bellarica*, *Terminalia arjuna* etc.

Leprarioid Lichen Community (Plate: g)

This community takes part in the primary lichen colonization of forest. This community has the members lichen having the powdery and granular thallus of varnish like crust over the substratum. This community belongs to *Lepraria*, *Cryptothecia* and *Chrysothrix* are well distributed in the area. Among these *Lepraria* grows well in shaded places under the canopy over the bark and rocks. Some *lepraia* species also accounted well growth in shaded monuments and statues. While *Cryptothecia* and *Chrysothrix* species were well distributed in dry habitat of Achanakmar region, *Cryptothecia* species of sterile lichen is good indicator of lichen colonization in the core zone of the Tiger reserve.

Parmelioid Lichen Community (Plate: h)

Parmelioid lichen community is type of foliose lichen and the dominant tree species, *Shorea robusta* is best host species of this community. This community prefers the places of sufficient penetration of light towards direction of sun on bark and some rocks. Amarkantak, Jagatpur, Karanjiya, and Achanakmar region accounted too much diversity of this community belonging to 7 species.

Physcioide Lichen Community (Plate: i)

This community belongs to the family of *Physciaceae*. The crustose and foliose growth form of this community exist major distribution in whole area and variety of substrate like rock and bark. This type of lichen is good indicator of pollution because they are most tolerant to pollution. A monitoring work has been carried out by using this community in the area. The foliose genera *Dirinaria*, *Pyxine*, *Physcia Heterodermia*, and *Phaeophyscia* exhibit majority of lichen growth. Amarkantak, Achanakmar, areas with very high anthropogenic disturbance are well colonized by this lichen specially *Dirinaria*, *Physcia*, *Pyxine*, and *Heterodermia* species. Some locations of moist habitat of forest has the healthy growth of this community.

Pertusarioid Lichen Community (Plate: j)

The community is characterized by crustose, verrucose fertile, perithecoide apothecia, and verrucose sorediate thallus. The community indicates old tree forest. The thick rough barked trees of *Shorea robusta* is good host species of pertusarioid lichen. The lichen species under breast height of tree species were found affected by forest fire every year in Amarkantak forest, but this lichen group bears the defending property between the rough bark of *Shorea robusta* as comparison to foliose, is good indicator of forest fire.

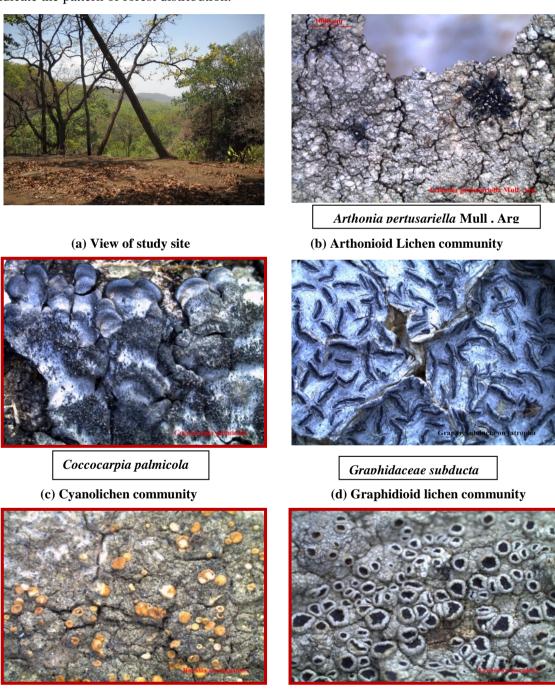
Teloschistaceous Lichen community (Plate: k)

This community belongs to crustose growth of lichen and anthroquinone bearing lichen gives yellow appearance to the thallus. *Caloplaca* and *Letrouitia* genus is well distributed in forest substratum of rocks and bark respectively. Caloplaca occurred in both rocks and bark in Amarkantak forest. The genus *caloplaca* indicates the moist, humid weather of Amarkantak in dense forest of *Shorea robusta*. The genus *Letrouitia* indicates also the same condition near to

waterfall like moist place of Kapildhara, Dhunipani, Sonmuda over the bark. *Caloplaca* cover the rough and smooth bark of *Ficus* species also. Where as *Letrouitia* is host on *Mallotus phillipensis* due to its bark property.

Pyrenuloide Lichen Community (Plate: 1)

This community belongs to presence of perithecia and presence of this community is indicator of moist and humid climatic conditions of the forest. Amarkantak is highest altitude in comparison to other sites and mountain valleys, ridge occupied shaded habitat of small waterfall areas. Pyreanuloide lichen communities were found in near waterfall areas. The earlier study explains the evergreen forest of India with having the, maximum growth of Pyrenuloid and Graphidaceous lichen. Similarly some observation on lichen also made by [9] (Bhatia, 1957) in western Himalaya indicate the pattern of forest distribution.



Bacidia incongruense (Stirt) Zhablr.

(e) Lecideoid Lichen Community

Lecanora perplexa Brodo

(f) Lecanoroid lichen Community



Caloplaca amarkantakana Y.Joshi & Upreti

(k) Teloschistaceous Lichen community

Pyrenula brunnea fée.
(I) Pyrenuloide Lichen Community

Table 1. Distribution of lichen Communities in Achanakmar Amarkantak Biosphere Reserve

S.No.	Lichen community	Lichen species	Growth Form	Habitat	Anuppur 67	Bilasp-ur 34	Dindori 56
1	Arthonioid	Arthoniaceae					
		Arthonia pertusariella Mull. Arg	Cr	Co	+		
		Arthonia recedens Stirton.	Cr	Co	+		
		Cryptothecia lunulata (Zahlbr.) Makhija & Patw.	Cr	Co	+	+	+
		Cryptothecia subtecta	Cr	Co		+	

	1						
		Stirt.		<u>ı</u>	 		
		Cryptothecia					
		macrospora Makhiza &	Cr	Co	ĺ		+
1			Cı	20	İ		
		Patw.					
		Cryptothecia involuta	Cr	Co	İ		+
		stirton	Ci		İ		+
		Herpothallon isidiatum					
		Jagadeesh & G.P.Sinha	Cr	Co	+		+
-				 			
		Caliceaceae			ļ		
		Dirinaria applanata	Fo	Co	1 .		
		(Fée) D.D.Awasthi	го		+	+	+
		Dirinaria aegialita					
			Fo	Co	+		
		(Afzel.)					
		Dirinaria confluence	Fo	Co	+		
		(Fr.) D.D.Awasthi,	10		— ∓ <u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u></u>
		Dirinaria consimlis	_	~			
		(Stirt.) D.D.Awasthi	Fo	Co	+	+	+
		Dirinaria picta (Sw)	Fo	Co	Ì	+	
		Clem. Shaer,	10	00	<u> </u>	'	
		Rhinodina sp.	Cr	S			+
1		Phsciaceae					
		Heterodermia		 			
			-		<u> </u>		
1		diademata(Taylor)	Fo	Co	+		+
1		D.D.Awasthi		<u> </u>			
		Heterodermia bscurata	Б				
2	Physcoide	(Nyl) Travis	Fo	Co	+		
	1 myscoluc	Heterodermia speciosa		 			
			Fo	Co	İ		+
		(Walf) Travis			<u> </u>		
		Hypotrachina exsecta	Eo	Co	İ		
		(Taylor) Hale	Fo	Co	İ		+
		Phaeophyscia ciliata					
			Fo	Co	+		
		(Hoffm.) Moberg,			<u> </u>		
		Phaeophyscia hispidula	Fo	Co	İ		+
		(Ach.) Moberg,	10	0	Ì		
		physcia albinea (Ach)	-				
		Malbr	Cr	S	İ	+	
		Physcia sorideosa		 			
			Cr	S	+		
		(Vain.) Lynge.	-		 		
		Physcia phaea (Tuck.)	Cr	S	1 .		
1		J.W. Thomson	Ci	ပ	+		
		pyxine coccoes	Fo	S	+		+
		Pyxine sunbsinerea stirt.	Fo	_			<u> </u>
				S	+		
		Pyxine sorideata (Ach.)	Fo	S	+	+	
		Coccocarpaceae		i T	 I		
		Coccocarpia palmicola					
		(Spreng.) Arv.&	Fo	Co	+		
			10		— ∓ 		
1		D.J.Galloway,			<u> </u>		
3		Collemataceae			<u> </u>		
	Cynolichen	Collema leptaleum	г-				
		Tuck.,	Fo	Co	+		+
		Leptogium burnetiae	Fo	Co	1		
			FU	CU	+		+
		Leptogium			İ		
		pseudopapillosum P.M.	Cr	S	+		+
		Jørg			İ		
		Graphidaceae					
4				 			
	Graphidioid	Diorygma junghunii	~		Ì		
		(Mont. & Bosch.) Kalb	Cr	Co	+		+
		& al.,					
		Graphis lineola Ach.	Cr	Co			+
		Graphis subducta Vain.,	Cr	Co	+	+	+
							'
1		Haemithecium sp	Cr	Co	 	+	
		Fissurina	Cr	Co	 	+	
	Lecanroid	Lecanoraceae		<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u></u>
		Lecanora achroa Nyl.in	~	~			
		Cromb	Cr	Co	+	+	
5		Lecanora alba Lumbsch.	C.	Co			
			Cr	Co	+	+	+
		Lecanora allophana	Cr	Co	+		
		Lecanora allophana (Ach.) Nyl.	Cr	Co	+		

		Lecanora andina Räsänen,	Cr	Co	+		+
		Lecanora austrointumescens Lumbsch & Elix	Cr	Co			+
		Lechonera chlarotera Nyl.,	Cr	Co	+		
		Lecanora formosula Lumbsch,	Cr	S	+		
		Lecanora helva Stizenb.	Cr	Co			+
		Lecanora interjecta Mull					
		Arg Lecanora mellanomata	Cr	Со	+		
		C.Knight	Cr	Со		+	+
		Lecanora perplexa Brodo,	Cr	Co	+	+	+
		Lecanora subimmersa (Fée) Vain.,	Cr	S	+	+	
		Lecanora sulphurescens Fee	Cr	S	+	-	
		Lecanora pseudistera Nyl.	Cr	Co			+
		Lecidella entroleucella (Nyl.)	Cr	Co			+
		Vainionora variabilis Kalb & Elix	Cr	Со	+	+	+
		Letrouitiaceae Letrouitia muralis					
		Hafellner	Cr	Co		+	
		Letrouitia transgressa (Malme) Hafellner & Bellem.	Cr	Co	+	+	+
		Parmeliaceae					
		Bulbothrix isidiza	Fo	Co	+		+
	Parmelioide	Bulbothrix setschwanensis (Zahlbr.) Hale	Fo	Со	+		
		Hypotrachina exsecta (Taylor) Hale	Fo	Co			
6		Parmotrem crinitoids J.C.Wei	Fo	Со		+	+
		Parmotrema mesotropum (Müll. Arg.) Hale	Fo	Co			+
		Parmotrema parasorediosum (Nyl.) Hale	Fo	Со	+	+	+
		Parmotrema tinctorum (Desper. ex Nyl.)	Fo	Co	+	+	
		Xanthoparmelia pseudocongensis Hale	Fo	Со	+		
		Pertusariaceae					
		Pertusaria quassiae (Fée) Nyl	Cr	Co	+	+	+
		Pertusaria mellastomella Nyl.	Cr	Co	+		+
	Pertusarioide	Pertusaria amarkantakana Preeti Shrivastav &	Cr	Со	+		+
7		D.D.Awasthi. Pertusaria concinna Erichsen,	Cr	Со	+	+	+
		pertusaria indica Preeti Shrivast. & D.D.Awasthi	Cr	S	+		
		Pertusaria leucosora Nyl.	Cr	S	+		+
		Pertusaria leucosorodes Nyl.	Cr	Co	+	+	+
		Pertusaria pertusa (L.)	Cr	Co	+	+	+

	Tuck., Pertusaria rigida Müll. Arg.	ζ.				
	Pertusaria rigida Müll.	-	1		t e	
		Cr	Co	+		+
	Pertusaria subochracea Stirt.	Cr	Co			+
	Pertusaria tuberculifra	Cr	Co	+		+
	Nyl pertusaria velata (Turner	Cr	Co	+		+
8 Pyrenuloi) Nyl. Pyrenulaceae					
o Tyrchulor	Pyrenuta brunnea tee.	Cr	Co	+		+
	Ramalinaceae					
	Bacidia arnoldiana Körb.,	Cr	S	+		
	Bacidia delicata (Larbel.ex.leighton) Coppinse	Cr	Co			+
	Bacidia fusconigrescens (Nyl.) Zahlbr.,	Cr	Co			+
	Bacidia incongruens (Stirt.) Zhalbr.,	Cr	Co		+	+
	Bacidia millegrana (Taylor) Zahlbr.,	Cr	Co			+
	Bacidia submedialis (Nyl.) Zhalbr.,	Cr	Co	+		+
9 Lecidioid	Phyllonsora	Cr	Со			+
	Phyllopsora buetteneri (Müll. Arg)	Cr	Co	+		
	Phyllopsora corallina (Eschw.) Müll. Arg.	Cr	Co	+		+
	Phyllospora himalayensis G.K.Mishra, Upreti &	Cr	Со	+		
	Nayaka					
	Haematommataceae					
	Haematomma puniceum	Cr	Co		+	
	(Sw.) A.Massal.,					
	Lacidea granifora (Agh.)					
	Lecidea granifera (Ach.) Vain.	Cr	Со	+	+	+
	Lecidea sp.	Cr	Co		+	
	Stereocaulaceae					
	Lepraria santosii (Hue) Sipman,	Lep	S	+		+
	Lepraria coriensis (Hue) Sipman,	Lep	S,Co	+	+	
10 Leprarioi	(J.R.Laundon) Kukwa	Lep	Co	+		
	Lepraria incana (L) Ach.	Lep	S	+		+
	Lepraria lobificans Nyl.	Lep	Co,S	+	+	
	Lepraria yunnaniana	Lep	Co			
	(Hue) Zahlbr					
	Leprariya sp Teloschistaceae	Lep	Со	+	+	
	Caloplaca					
	amarkantakana Y.Joshi & Upreti	Cr	S	+		+
11 Teloschista	Calonlaca atrosanauinaa	Cr	Co			+
ous	Caloplaca cupulifera (Vain.) Zahlbr.,	Cr	S	+	+	
	Caloplaca subpolieotera Y. Joshi & Upreti	Cr	S	+	+	
	Caloplaca bassia	Cr	S	+		
	Cladoniaceae					
Dimorphic	Cladonia praetermissa A.W. Archer	Frut	ricose	+		

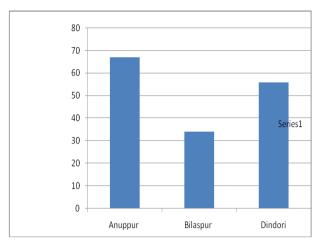


Fig1. *Graph representing the distribution of lichen in three districts of Biosphere Reserve.*

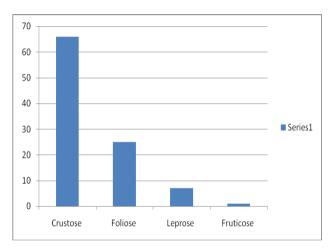


Fig2. Graph representing the distribution of lichen according to their growth form

Abbreviation: Cr: Crustose, Co: Corticolouse, S: Saxicolous, Lep: Leprose, +:, Fo: Foliose

5. DISCUSSION

Occurrence of 11 communities with having 16 genera of abundance growth of lichen indicates the healthy forest structure. Graphidioide lichen community indicates smooth bark tree species like ficus religeosa, ficus bengalensis, these tree species are good nutrition supplier of all birds and insect family. Lichen abundance in top canopy like Foliose, Crustose lichen on twigs indicates undisturbed forest whereas crustose and poor growth of lichen indicates sensitivity to microclimate change in the Bilaspur district. Only one fruticose lichen on soil entire the Biosphere Reserve even in central India signifies the sensitivity to anthropogenic disturbance of soil. Bark shading trees like Syzigium cumini, Eucalyptus eucalyptus with enriched growth of lichen supplies nutrient to the forests ground floor. Lepraria species like Lepraria coriensis, Lepraria lobificans are also known as primitive species helps in pioneering of life and take part in lichen succession. Genera of Pertusaria species are observed resistant to forest fire are well distributed upto a breast height in forest prone areas.

Amarkantak is abode of diversity, monitoring with the help of lichen diversity will make available basic and essential natural information used by basic scientific disciplines. It may be used to understand the habitat in which lichen exists in the sensitive and non sensitive area.

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