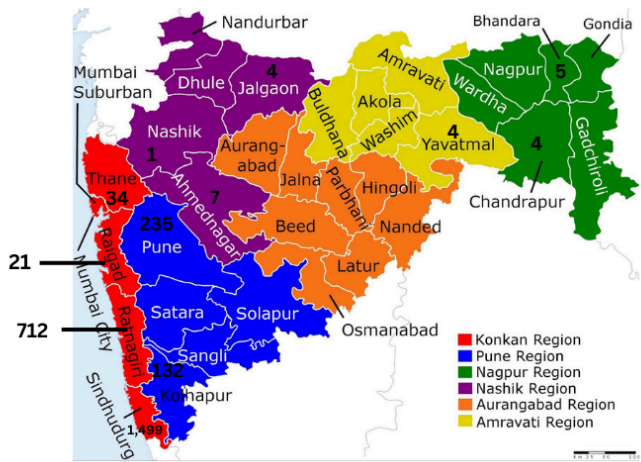


Sr.No.	State	District	Name of the Grove	Known As	Village/Location	Latitude Longitude	Area (Ha/Bigha/sq m)	Altitude (m)	Community Present	Maintained By	Ownership	Key Species	Protection Status	Associated Deities/Folklore	Festivals Associated	Source Link
1	Maharashtra	Ahmednagar	Devrai at Ambidumala	Devrai	Ambidumala	Not Known	80 Ha	Not Known	Not Known	Not Known	Not Known	Not Known	Not Known	Rokdeshwar	Not Known	https://ecoheritage.cpreec.org/maharashtra/
2	Maharashtra	Ahmednagar	Devrai at Mhaswandi	Devrai	Mhaswandi	Not Known	5 Ha	Not Known	Not Known	Not Known	Not Known	Not Known	Not Known	Maladevi	Not Known	https://ecoheritage.cpreec.org/maharashtra/
3	Maharashtra	Ahmednagar	Devrai at Kalasubai	Devrai	Kalasubai	Not Known	0.41 Ha	Not Known	Not Known	Not Known	Not Known	Not Known	Not Known	Kalsubai	Not Known	https://ecoheritage.cpreec.org/maharashtra/
4	Maharashtra	Ahmednagar	Devrai at Rajur	Devrai	Rajur	Not Known	0.05 Ha	Not Known	Not Known	Not Known	Not Known	Not Known	Not Known	Ghorpadidevi	Not Known	https://ecoheritage.cpreec.org/maharashtra/
5	Maharashtra	Ahmednagar	Devrai at Ratanwadi	Devrai	Ratanwadi	Not Known	1.21 Ha	Not Known	Not Known	Not Known	Not Known	Not Known	Not Known	Kaloba	Not Known	https://ecoheritage.cpreec.org/maharashtra/
6	Maharashtra	Ahmednagar	Devrai at Udhadvane	Devrai	Udhadvane	Not Known	4.05 Ha	Not Known	Not Known	Not Known	Not Known	Not Known	Not Known	Bhavaidevi	Not Known	https://ecoheritage.cpreec.org/maharashtra/
7	Maharashtra	Ahmednagar	Devrai at Udhadvane	Devrai	Udhadvane	Not Known	1.21 Ha	Not Known	Not Known	Not Known	Not Known	Not Known	Not Known	Maruti	Not Known	https://ecoheritage.cpreec.org/maharashtra/
8	Maharashtra	Bhandara	Devrai at Devri	Devrai	Devri	Not Known	5 Ha	Not Known	Not Known	Not Known	Not Known	Not Known	Not Known	Shiva	Not Known	https://ecoheritage.cpreec.org/maharashtra/
9	Maharashtra	Bhandara	Devrai at Kalimati	Devrai	Kalimati	Not Known	0.5 Ha	Not Known	Not Known	Not Known	Not Known	Not Known	Not Known	Not Known	Not Known	https://ecoheritage.cpreec.org/maharashtra/
10	Maharashtra	Bhandara	Devrai at Korambi	Devrai	Korambi	Not Known	22 Ha	Not Known	Not Known	Not Known	Not Known	Not Known	Not Known	Kalika	Not Known	https://ecoheritage.cpreec.org/maharashtra/
11	Maharashtra	Bhandara	Devrai at Pongezara	Devrai	Pongezara	Not Known	1 Ha	Not Known	Not Known	Not Known	Not Known	Not Known	Not Known	Shiva	Not Known	https://ecoheritage.cpreec.org/maharashtra/
12	Maharashtra	Bhandara	Devrai at Vandhara	Devrai	Vandhara	Not Known	0.2 Ha	Not Known	Not Known	Not Known	Not Known	Not Known	Not Known	Ram	Not Known	https://ecoheritage.cpreec.org/maharashtra/
13	Maharashtra	Chandrapur	Devgudi at Alampalli	Devgudi	Alampalli	Not Known	1 Ha	Not Known	Not Known	Not Known	Not Known	Not Known	Not Known	Maruti	Not Known	https://ecoheritage.cpreec.org/maharashtra/
14	Maharashtra	Chandrapur	Devgudi at Antargaon	Devgudi	Antargaon	Not Known	Not Known Ha	Not Known	Not Known	Not Known	Not Known	Not Known	Not Known	Kondai	Not Known	https://ecoheritage.cpreec.org/maharashtra/
15	Maharashtra	Chandrapur	Devgudi at Bhimkund	Devgudi	Bhimkund	Not Known	2 Ha	Not Known	Not Known	Not Known	Not Known	Not Known	Not Known	Bhim	Not Known	https://ecoheritage.cpreec.org/maharashtra/



SACRED EARTH TRUST

SACRED GROVE OF MAHARASHTRA



Note:This Document contains 15 sacred grove of Maharashtra
Our Complete data set of 2658 sacred grove from this state.if you wish to access the full dataset please submit a request through the from provided on our website.we will share the extended data upon verification

Sacred Groves of Maharashtra: Ancient Devrais and Community-Conserved Forests of the Western Ghats

Maharashtra, located in western India and encompassing a significant portion of the globally recognized Western Ghats Biodiversity Hotspot, possesses one of the richest and most extensively documented traditions of sacred groves in the country. Known locally as **Devrai, Deorai, Devrahati, Devban, and Devachi Rai**, these sacred forests represent a remarkable fusion of ecological conservation, indigenous knowledge, and religious belief. Protected for centuries through customary laws, cultural taboos, and spiritual traditions, sacred groves in Maharashtra serve as living examples of community-based conservation and continue to safeguard invaluable biodiversity across diverse landscapes ranging from the Konkan coast to the Sahyadri Mountains and the Deccan Plateau.

Maharashtra is home to numerous indigenous and rural communities, including the **Warli, Kokna, Katkari, Mahadev Koli, Thakar, Gond, Madia, Kolam, Kunbi, Dhangar, Bhil, and other traditional forest-dependent groups**, many of whom maintain strong cultural ties with sacred groves. These forests are regarded as the dwelling places of village deities, guardian spirits, ancestral beings, and nature gods. In most sacred groves, tree felling, hunting, grazing, and extraction of forest produce are either strictly restricted or completely prohibited. Such traditional conservation practices have enabled many groves to survive for hundreds of years as islands of natural vegetation amidst agricultural and human-dominated landscapes.

Maharashtra possesses one of the largest documented sacred grove networks in India. Various surveys conducted by the Forest Department, ecological researchers, and conservation organizations have recorded **more than 2,500 sacred groves across the state**, with the highest concentrations occurring in the districts of **Sindhudurg, Ratnagiri, Raigad, Pune, Satara, Kolhapur, Thane, Palghar, Nashik, Ahmednagar, Chandrapur, Gadchiroli, Gondia, and Bhandara**. The Konkan region and Western Ghats contain particularly large and well-preserved Devrais, many of which represent remnants of the original climax evergreen and semi-evergreen forests that once covered the region extensively.

The sacred groves of Maharashtra are exceptionally important from a biodiversity perspective. They harbor a rich diversity of plant species, including **Mango (*Mangifera indica*), Jamun (*Syzygium cumini*), Hirda (*Terminalia chebula*), Behada (*Terminalia bellirica*), Ain (*Terminalia tomentosa*), Kinjal (*Terminalia paniculata*), Jambha, Anjani (*Memecylon umbellatum*), Banyan (*Ficus benghalensis*), Peepal (*Ficus religiosa*), Kadamba (*Neolamarckia cadamba*), Umbar (*Ficus racemosa*), and numerous endemic Western Ghats species**. Many sacred groves also preserve rare medicinal plants, orchids, climbers, ferns, and threatened tree species that have disappeared from surrounding landscapes due to deforestation and land-use change.

These sacred forests provide critical habitat for a wide variety of wildlife, including birds, reptiles, amphibians, insects, pollinators, and small mammals. Several studies have shown that sacred groves often contain higher biodiversity and better-preserved vegetation than adjacent reserved forests or agricultural lands. Many groves function as important refuges for endemic Western Ghats flora and fauna, helping maintain ecological connectivity and genetic diversity across fragmented landscapes.

The religious and cultural significance of Maharashtra's sacred groves is deeply rooted in local traditions. Most Devrais are dedicated to deities such as **Waghoba, Bhairavnath, Ravalnath, Hirva Dev, Kalsubai Devi, Vaghjai, Mahalakshmi, Mhasoba, Gramdevata, and various clan deities and ancestral spirits**. Many sacred groves contain shrines, stone idols, sacred trees, or ritual platforms where villagers perform seasonal ceremonies and

offer prayers. The belief that deities actively protect the grove and punish violations has historically ensured strict community compliance with conservation rules.

Numerous festivals and rituals are associated with sacred groves throughout Maharashtra. Celebrations such as **Jatra festivals, Gramdevata Pujas, Waghbaras, Holi-related rituals, Ashadhi festivals, Navratri ceremonies, and local harvest festivals** reinforce the spiritual importance of these forests and strengthen community stewardship. During these events, villagers gather within sacred groves to conduct traditional rituals, seek blessings, celebrate agricultural cycles, and renew cultural bonds with nature.

The ecological importance of Maharashtra's sacred groves extends far beyond biodiversity conservation. Many groves protect natural springs, streams, watersheds, and groundwater recharge zones that are vital for local communities. Sacred groves also help regulate microclimates, prevent soil erosion, conserve traditional medicinal resources, and serve as living repositories of indigenous ecological knowledge. In several drought-prone regions, sacred groves act as critical water conservation sites and ecological refuges.

Despite their significance, sacred groves in Maharashtra face increasing threats from urbanization, infrastructure development, mining, tourism pressure, agricultural expansion, invasive species, and the gradual erosion of traditional belief systems. While many groves continue to receive strong community protection, others have experienced fragmentation and degradation. Recognizing their ecological and cultural value, researchers, conservation organizations, and government agencies have increasingly emphasized the need for systematic documentation, legal recognition, restoration efforts, and community-led conservation initiatives.

The sacred groves of Maharashtra represent one of India's most successful examples of traditional environmental stewardship. These ancient Devrais demonstrate how spiritual beliefs, customary institutions, and community governance can effectively conserve biodiversity over centuries. As living landscapes where culture and ecology coexist, Maharashtra's sacred groves continue to play a crucial role in protecting the biological richness of the Western Ghats while preserving the cultural identity and traditional wisdom of local communities.

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