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Upload pics of local trees to help conserve them

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BANGALORE: If you'd like to be a citizen scientist, you could photograph the tree outside your house, on the footpath or near your bus stop. Upload the images to www.treesindia.indiabiodiversity.org and you're on your way to doing your bit to document the flora around you.

Even if you don't know the common or scientific names of the tree, an expert will identify it and send you details about its species and curated information about its biological characteristics.

The India Biodiversity portal is kicking off an online neighbourhood trees campaign from Tuesday, also observed as [Earth Day](#), to document tree species. The information will be curated by scientists to create an exclusive page on the species and the information will be available in the public domain.

Trees India is a part of the India Biodiversity portal. The campaign is a collaborative activity of [treesindia.in](#), The French Institute, Atree, Season Watch, Nizhal in Chennai, Keystone Foundation in Kotagiri, Strand Life Sciences, [Azim Premji](#) University, [Wipro](#), Earthian, eflora India and many local groups in 40 cities across the country between April 22 and 27. In Bangalore, the events are organized by Atree, Save Horamavu Lakes group, Rajarajeshwarinagar I-Care and Bannerghatta National Park.

The portal has already compiled information on 1,000 species of trees in India but scientists say there are 7500 species and the portal aims to provide information such as seasonality, fruiting time and flowering pattern.

Scientists with these groups aim to create awareness about the need to conserve local trees. "Citizens will get a lot of information about their neighbourhood trees and the website will help them connect, contribute and share biodiversity information from different areas," R Ganesan, plant taxonomist, Atree, told STOI.

R Prabhakar, Atree fellow who works with Strand Life Sciences, said, "There are over 1.35 lakh species of flora and fauna in the country but the access to curated content for them is not easily available for ordinary citizens. These events will help people map local trees. This is an attempt towards documenting them. In the process, we'll conserve the trees since we'll appreciate their value."

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