



## FRUIT AND SEED DIVERSITY IN WET EVERGREEN AND DECIDUOUS FORESTS IN CENTRAL WESTERN GHATS

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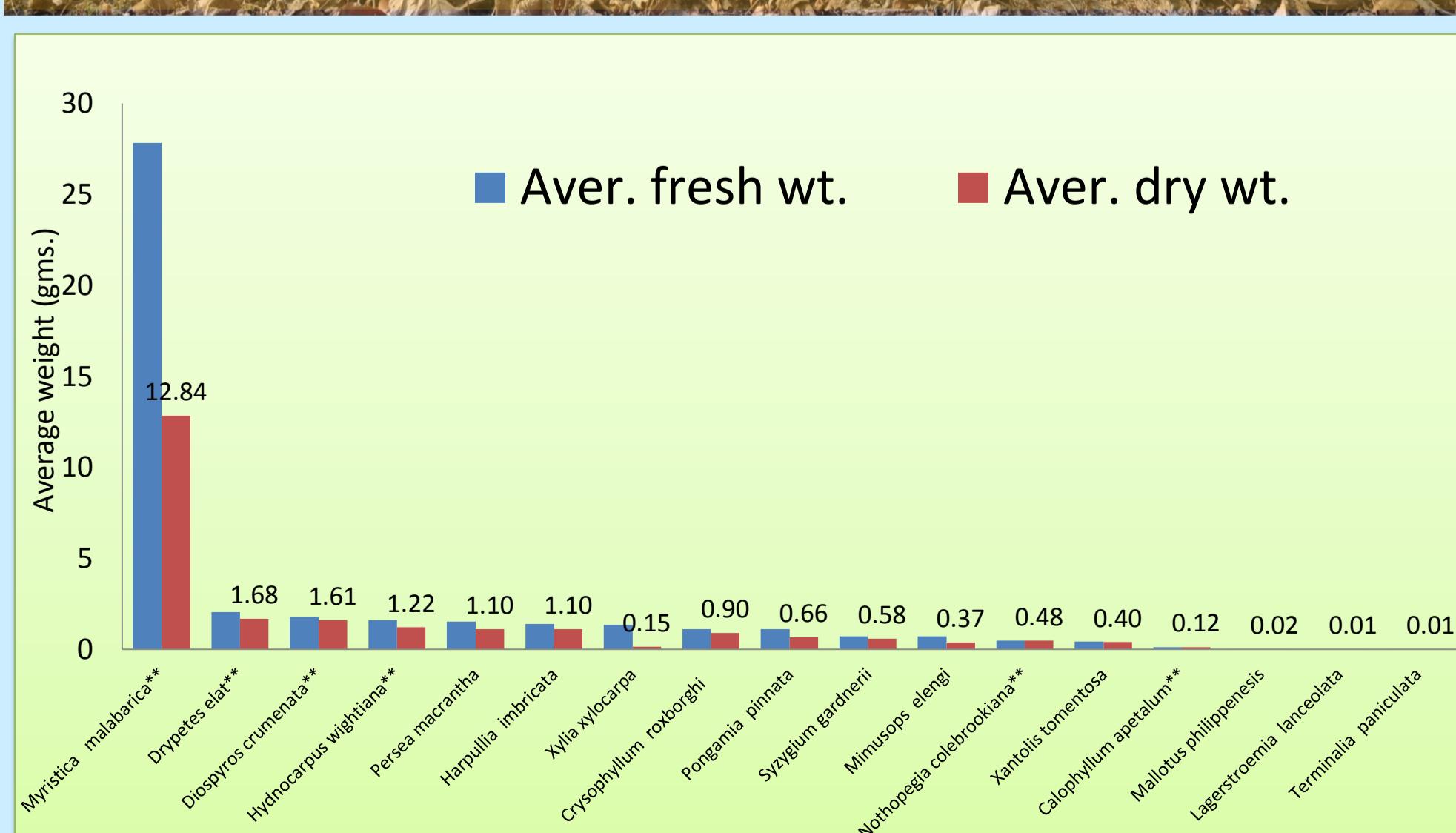
Most tropical rainforests of the world are being destroyed at an alarming speed and many of their species are on the verge of extinction. In this context, knowledge about rainforest seeds is essential for forest scientists and technicians working on rainforest ecology and management. Seeds provide a natural vehicle for plant reproduction. Plants are transported as seeds and stored as seeds. Through seed banks plant genetic diversity is preserved for future. Trees of darker forests tend to have heavier seeds than those of more open forests and deciduous forests. Forest openings often result in primary forest trees with large seeds getting replaced by small seeded secondary species.



Tropical evergreen forest- *Myristica* Swamp forest



Tropical deciduous forest



Wetter the forest heavier the seeds. Larger seeds store more food and produce taller saplings which get better light in shaded forest and increase survival value. Trees in open areas in brighter light and higher temperature have smaller seeds. Larger seeds often germinate early whereas smaller seeds remain dormant in drier soils for months or even years. With rains they germinate grow in crowd and many perish in competition. Seedlings of large seeded trees grow in lesser number and have lower mortality.

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