



MAJOR TOURIST ATTRACTIONS

Situated on the banks of the Chaliyar River, Nilambur region is noted for vast rain forests, tribal settlements, waterfalls and extensive plantations of teakwood, rosewood, mahogany and bamboo. The widely forested land is well known for Connolly's Plot, the world's oldest teak plantation and bamboo woods. This is also the original home of the Cholaiaickans, the oldest aboriginal tribe of Kerala.

On the Calicut - Ooty highway, 40 Kms from Malappuram, Nilambur Municipality is an important halting place for tourists on route to Ooty, as it houses a well-designed Teak Museum, the Aruvacode Pottery Village, and the Nilambur Kovilakom and is a trading centre of hill products.



Teak Museum and premises

The Teak museum of Nilambur is the first and only teak museum in the world and traces the history and uses of the wonder wood. The museum, dedicated to history, biology, cultivation and utilization of teak, was established in 1995 on the campus of the sub-centre of Kerala Forest Research Institute (KFRI) because of the historical significance of teak to the area.

The exhibits include comprehensive information on aspects of the use of teak in their exhibits and articles on the subject. The museum provides extensive information of value historically, artistically and scientifically.

The various exhibits found are, an extensive root system of 55-year-old teak tree, magnificently carved teak door, a translite of one of the oldest naturally growing teak tree - 'Kannimara', a traditional granary made out of teak wood, a miniature model of sailing vessel, Uru, made of teak wood and paintings of 'Kannimara teak' and a sailing ship etc. Various problems encountered such as pests, diseases and physiological disorders in teak plantations

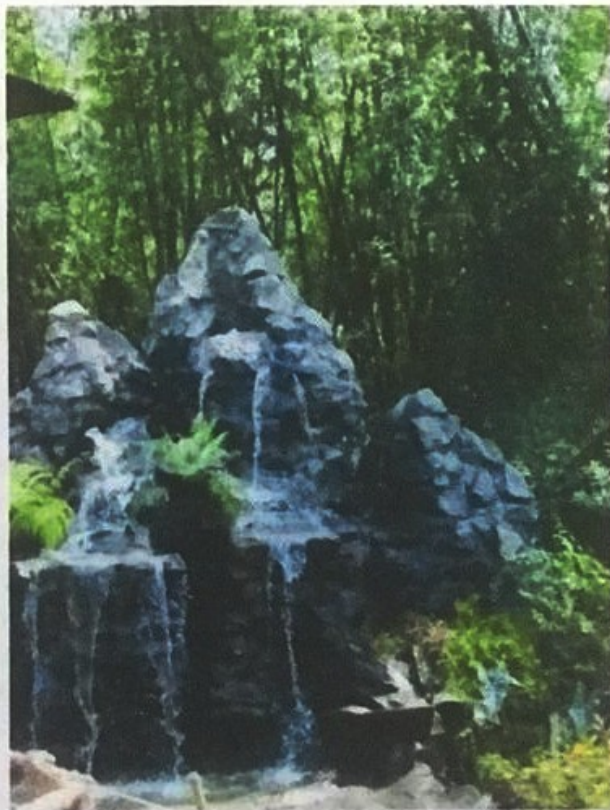


and their remedies are presented next. Natural stands and plantations of teak harbour a large number of insects both useful and harmful, some of which are exhibited. A collection of more than 300 butterflies, moths and insects is displayed next. Adjacent to this is presented the plant and animal associates of teak. A few illustrations depict moods of teak as it passes different phenological phases of flushing, flowering, fruiting, defoliating in different seasons. A mini auditorium having facilities for audio-visual presentations and a

library with world literature on Teak is also functioning in the museum.

Bio-resources Nature Trail

Adjacent to the Teak Museum, there is an 800 m long Bio-resources Nature Trail, which is a live mimic of natural ecosystems and the native biodiversity. The Nature Trail depicts habit and habitat of various plants and animals under various themes which are arranged beautifully on a trail, which attracts lots of visitors of all genres, from international tourists and researchers to school children, as well as picnic teams from the region.



Butterfly Garden is one of the major attractions of this nature trail. The garden is a boon to zoologists and researchers as it accommodates a wide range of butterflies. Besides there is an Orchid House, a Shade House, a Fern House, a Xerophyte House, a Taxonomic Garden, a Star and Rashi Garden, a Hydrophytes garden, a Bamboo House, a Palms and Rattan Garden, a Rock Garden, a Medicinal Plants Garden and a megalithic

burial site, all within the premises of the Teak Museum.

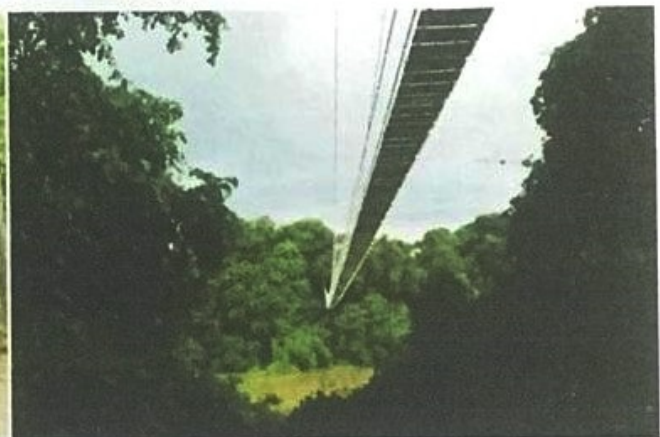
Nilambur Forests



Nilambur forests, an integral part of Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve, and a notified Elephant Reserve which contains the existing natural habitats and migratory routes of elephants, present for the tourists the serene nature and wild life in its extensive wooded areas brimming with teak, venteak, bamboos, mahagoni, rosewood, choropin, etc. Nilambur is abode to one of the best wilderness areas in Kerala, a place where nature in the wilds is accessible to all and diverse. A small but gorgeous forest trail takes the tourists to Chaliyarmukku, a place of ethereal beauty, where three rivers Chaliarpuzha, Kuthirapuzha and Kanjirapuzha converge.

Connolly's Plot

The Connolly's plot extends across 2.31 hectares besides the Chaliyar River, just across the municipal boundary, and has been acclaimed for having the oldest living teak tree. A cable suspension bridge, claimed to be longest steel hanging bridge in Kerala, takes visitors across the river.



The plantation is named in honour of H.V. Connolly, the then British Collector of Malabar who was instrumental in planting teak in the entire Nilambur area with the help of Chanthu Menon, a forest officer under him. This plantation was done around 150 years ago during 1842-1844 and is thus known as the world's first teak plantation. Chanthu Menon was laid to rest in this very teak garden, Connolly's plot, as a mark of honour.

Nilambur Kovilakom



Nilambur town houses a cluster of *kovilakoms*, the palatial residences of the Nilambur Royal Family, erstwhile local rulers or the *Rajas*. These residences of the local rajas were built according to traditional Kerala architecture and boasts of excellent skill and craftsmanship. These structures are famous for their beautiful frescoes and artworks in wood and are of prime interests for heritage & architecture enthusiasts and students. Puthiya Kovilakom, Valiya Kovilakom and Billiard's hall are buildings of high heritage value and needs

special mention. Of these the Puthiya Kovilakom is offered to tourists as a heritage-home stay.

Nilambur *Pattulsavam* and the *Vettakkorumakan* Temple



The *Vettakkorumakan* Temple located in the premises of Nilambur Kovilakom was built by the Nilambur rajas nearly 200 years ago. This shrine of the son that Lord Siva had in his *kirata* avatar (that of a tribal), a popular deity among the local community, is famous for the six-day music festival called the Nilambur *Pattulsavam* held here. The *Pattulsavam*, which falls in the month of January, features singing of hymns by the members of the royal family along with the

tribals of Nilambur and *Kalampattu* or ritual powder drawing on floor. It is the most important festival in the region.

Associated with the *Ulsavam*, a 15-day-long the annual trade and tourism festival called Nilambur *Mela* is organized by the municipality with lots of cultural events, tribal & folk arts festival, shopping fairs, arts & crafts exhibitions etc. which attracts people from all over the region.

Aruvacode pottery/ Kumbham Handicrafts Village



Aruvacode is the village of potters of the Kumbharan community, who were invited from Andhra and settled by the erstwhile Rajas, for meeting the demand for pottery items for household needs in the region. The community which used to make a decent living out of selling pottery items nearly lost not only their livelihoods, but also their traditional skills, down to the invasion of cheap industrial substitutes. A small movement led by activist-designer K. B. Jinan who explored the possibilities of intertwining terra-cotta suited for the modern context

with traditional pottery, and *Kumbham* was born. The villagers revived their traditional craft through the *Kumbham* Handicraft project. *Kumbham* is hailed as a rare instance of a traditional artisan community rehabilitating itself through the very craft they have been estranged from. Many distinguished products by their form and function have reached the markets from Aruvacode. *Kumbham* products have found wide acceptance in households, corporate offices, hotels and resorts, within and outside the State.

Central Forest Nursery

This is one of the four central forest nurseries in Kerala and was established during the year 1997, at Valluvassery by the Kerala Forest Department. With a view to meet the requirements of good quality planting stock of important plantation species like teak, eucalypts, acacias, etc., the nursery is fully equipped to produce root trainer seedlings and rooted cuttings of these species in required quantities. The average annual production of the nursery during the past three years was 150000 teak root-trainer seedlings, 120000 eucalypt seedlings, 50000 seedlings of acacias, and 90000 seedlings of miscellaneous species.



Bungalow Hill and the DFO Bungalow

Banglavu Kunnu (Bungalow Hill) is famous for its meandering road bordered by ayurvedic herb gardens. The old DFO Bungalow situated at the hilltop near forest rest house is an ideal location for conducting nature camps. The refreshing view from this hill opens up the beauty of the lush green forests along River Chaliyar.



Manavedan School

The Manavedan School established in 1940, by the then ruler Sri Manavedan Raja of Nilambur Kovilakam, is a symbol of the benevolence and progressive attitude of the erstwhile rules of the region. The school paved the way for higher education and progress in Nilambur region. This school which has now become a Vocational Higher

Secondary School is blessed with 17 acres of land, two acres of agricultural land and buildings including quarters for teachers, bestowed by the Kovilakam, in its name. The building and the premises are of significant heritage and cultural value.

Chemmalala Fish Farm & Boating



Chemmalala Fish farm, pioneered by the late Chemmalala Aboobacker, a fore-runner, self-taught expert, and revered guide in inland aquaculture of ornamental and edible fishes, is the most famous among the aqua farms in Nilambur. A place of interest for students as well as entrepreneurs in this field, it has also developed into a regional tourism attraction and is a very good example of a tourism initiative from the natives. An indigenously developed houseboat operates in the artificial lake created for the farm, offering a floating dining facility for tourists,

who will be served with delicious dishes made of fresh fish caught from the farm. Many rare varieties of pet animals like ornamental fishes, pigeons, hens, rabbits, turkeys, ducks etc are also reared in the farm and are available on sale.