



New Varieties of Neelakurinji Flowers

Why in News?

Recently, **6 new varieties of Neelakurinji Flowers** have been identified in the **Kallippara hills in Santhanpara** region of Western Ghats.

- Neelakurinji Flowers are in full bloom on a vast area on the Kallippara hills in Idukki, Kerala.

What are Neelakurinji Flowers?

▪ About:

- In Neelakurinji, '**Neela**' means blue, and '**Kurinji**' refers to the flowers.
 - At maturity, the light blue color of the flowers changes to purple bluish.
- The flowers give the '**Nilgiri Mountain Range**' its name.
- The plant is named after the famous **Kunthi River** which flows through Kerala's **Silent Valley National Park**, where the plant occurs abundantly
- It usually grows at an **elevation of 1,300-2,400m.**

▪ Scientific Name:

- Strobilanthes Kunthiana

▪ New Varieties Discovered:

- The types of neelakurinji flowers that have been identified from the hill ranges include:
 - **Strobilanthes Anamallaica**
 - **Strobilanthes Heyneanus**
 - **Strobilanthes Pulnyensis**
 - **Strobilanthes Neoasper**

▪ Habitat:

- All neelakurinji species are **endemic to the [Shola Forest of Western Ghats](#).**
- According to statistics, there are more than 40 different varieties of neelakurinji in India.

▪ Flower Bloom:

- Flower Bloom takes place **once in 12 years** as the **pollination of flowers** needs a longer period.
 - It bloomed for the last time in 2006. The next bloom was expected to happen in 2018, but because of **forest fires**, Neelakurinji were not seen that year.

▪ Other Facts:

- Tamil Nadu's '**Paliyan**' tribe used the Neelakurinji flowers to calculate age.
- There are almost 250 Neelakurinji species in the world.

[Source: TH](#)