

Uniyala Keralensis

Source: TH

Researchers have confirmed the existence of a new plant species, *Uniyala keralensis* (family **Asteraceae**), in the **Agasthyamala Biosphere Reserve** in Kerala.

About Uniyala Keralensis:

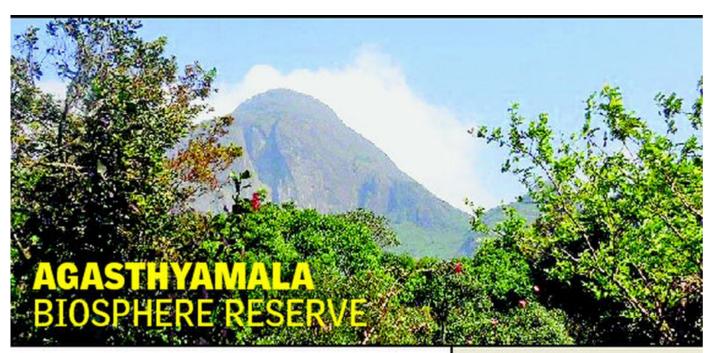
- Genus: Uniyala
- Plant Type: Dense shrub with light purple flowers, growing 1-3m tall with flowering & fruiting between August and April.
- Distinct Features: Larger leaves, longer petioles, and fewer lateral veins than U. comorinensis & U. salviifolia.
- **Distribution**: Endemic to **southwest India**, found in **Agasthyamala Biosphere Reserve** at 700-1,400m elevation.
- Population: Around 5,000 individuals across 4 subpopulations over 250 km².
- IUCN Status: Data Deficient (DD)



Agasthyamala Biosphere Reserve:

- Location: Southern Western Ghats, spanning Kerala & Tamil Nadu.
- Protected Areas: Includes Shendurney, Peppara, Neyyar Wildlife Sanctuaries & Kalakad
 Mundanthurai Tiger Reserve.
- Biodiversity: Hosts 2,254 higher plant species (405 endemic), Nilgiri Tahr, Lion-tailed
 Macaque, Bengal Tiger, Indian Elephant.
- **Tribes:** Kani tribes (Kerala and Tamil Nadu)

• UNESCO Recognition: Man and Biosphere (MAB) Programme, 2016.



FACT FILE

- Established in 2001
- Area 3,500.36 sq km
- Area in Kerala 1,828 sq km
- Area in Tamil Nadu 1672.36 sq km



East Longitude

- Home to 2,254 species of higher plants
- About 400 endemic to the area
- 18 biosphere reserves in India
- 9 included in UNESCO network

Population in tribal settlements 3,000

- Sanctuaries in the reserve
- Shendurney, Peppara, Neyyar wildlife sanctuaries
- Kalakad Mundanthurai tiger reserve

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