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## **Biodiversity and Bioprospecting of Lichens from Andhra Pradesh, India**

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### **Abstract**

Lichens are a highly diverse group, universally distributed, and exhibit distinctive symbiotic relationship. However, until recently they have received comparatively little scientific attention. Despite the foundation of a classification in 19<sup>th</sup> century and an interpretation of their dual alga-fungal characters was given in about 60 years later. Lichens have been the neglected plants and even today they are usually unregarded by researchers and botanists. Lichen classification seems to be an unsolved problem and needs in-depth analysis and critical evaluation. Lichens are of economic value and they are used in perfumes, medicines, dyes, besides being useful as food stuffs and pollution indicators. The economic uses of lichens have not been widely recognized by the public. *Parmelia andina*, *P. hababiana* and *Pyxine cocoes* were found to be effective against many pathogenic bacteria. These lichens have also yielded lecanoric acid and coumarin compounds. A survey of lichens of Andhra Pradesh, India was done so as to provide a floristic picture of lichens of less known geographic region. The lichens were studied in relation to distribution, substrate relationship and growth forms. Most of the lichens were of Ascolichens category. Many lichens colonized the bark compared to other substrates such as rock and soil. The foliose lichens dominated the forest localities followed by crustose and fruticose lichens. Altogether 48 lichen species belonging to 17 genera were collected from diversified habitats.

**Keywords:** Lichens, substrate, taxonomy, ecology

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