

~ PREFACE ~

"A plant is like a self-willed man, out of whom we can obtain all which we desire, if we will only treat him his own way"- J.W. von Goethe

Vegetation characterization and floristic composition with correlation to climatic, edaphic and altitudinal factors helps in deriving a significant conclusion on the dynamicity and potentiality of plant species in forests. The understanding of community functioning implies knowledge of structure and composition of the component species that touches upon the life of plants socially. Phytosociological attributes helps in determining the vegetation structure, community composition and ecosystem functioning in different habitats at the landscape level. Darjiling being an integral part of the Himalaya hotspot with varied topography and diverse habitats at different levels, the present work is the output initiated in this direction to characterize and classify the vegetation types as a function of altitude and to co-relate the distribution of plant communities to some environmental parameters and compare vegetation trend along the altitude with special focus on diversity, richness and community composition.

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[SAURAV MOKTAN]

Department of Botany

University of North Bengal