

**DIVERSITY OF SPIDER FAUNA IN THE ESTUARINE ECOSYSTEM OF GORAI,
MUMBAI, MAHARASHTRA, INDIA- A PRELIMINARY STUDY**

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ABSTRACT

A preliminary study was conducted from May 2018 to April 2019 to record the diversity of spiders in the Eco-sensitive mangrove systems located in the Gorai region of western Mumbai, India. The mangroves of Gorai Creek, Mumbai coast have dense mangrove vegetation which has recently witnessed significant degradation. The survey conducted resulted in the identification of 54 species of spiders belonging to 39 genera and 16 families. Araneidae was the most dominant family with 15 species belonging to 8 genera. At the species level, *Pisaura gitae* was the predominant species. Guild structure analysis revealed 7 feeding guilds, viz., orb weavers, stalkers, ground hunters, foliage runners, sheet web builders, scattered line weavers, and ambushers. Orb weavers and stalkers were the dominant feeding guilds representing 35% and 26% respectively of the total collection.

Keywords: Gorai, estuary, spiders, Araneidae, diversity.