

## Ecological characteristics of wetlands and swamps of North Bihar, India

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**Abstract** – Wetlands/swamps occupy vast land masses in North Bihar, India. These water bodies are formed owing to the shifting course of the river Kosi. Limno-biotic studies of these swamps have been made, taking Kusheswarasthan “Chaur” (wetland) as a typical example. The water becomes hypoxic and hypercarbic, especially in the summer, which makes the environment unsuitable for gill breathing fish. A statistical analysis indicated differences in the physico-chemical characteristics between surface and deep water in all seasons of 1990–1991, except for the water temperature and pH. The total population of phytoplankton and zooplankton of winter, summer, and monsoon showed highly significant differences between 1990 and 1991. Only air-breathing fish which bear specialized air-breathing organs could live, propagate, and flourish in these water bodies.

**Key words:** ecology, wetlands, swamps, India, North Bihar, Kusheswarasthan.