has, however, been observed that no particular species is dominant.

It would not be proper to conclude that the level of plant biodiversity in the area would go up if the biotic interference is reduced to zero. In fact, as the biotic interference goes down many species, which were hitherto suppressed, begin to dominate as has been the case in Valley of Flowers in Garhwal. One no longer sees the kind of floral diversity that had made the area famous worldwide. After the area was closed to grazing, one particular species, *Polygonum polystachyum* almost filled the entire valley. *P. polystachyum*, had hitherto remained suppressed and was under check due to grazing by sheep and cattle.

In Darma valley too, species like *P. polystachyum* and others that were grazed by sheep and cattle earlier had begun to reappear as the number of grazers started declining. These species had remained suppressed in the valley because of extensive cultivation and grazing. However, unlike the Valley of Flowers in Garhwal, the sheep and cattle have not disappeared from the scene. Changes in the traditional way of living have brought about more than 75% reduction in sheep population and 50–75% decline in cultivation level in the valley. Besides, extraction of some species that are in great demand like *A. heterophyllum, D. hatagirea, P. kurroa, C. sinensis, R. emodi, A. glauca*, etc. continues. Moreover, those who still live in the valley do cultivate *F. esculentum* not for subsistence though, but for earning their livelihood. Therefore, the conditions as they exist today appear to be suited for optimal biodiversity and further changes in any one factor may affect the biodiversity adversely.

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Errata

In the cover-photo featuring the article 'Are red-listed species threatened? A comparative analysis of red-listed and non-red listed plant species in the Western Ghats, India' by N. A. Aravind *et al.* (*Curr. Sci.*, 2005, **88**, 258–265), the photograph in the top left panel is not *Saraca asoka* as mentioned on page 203, rather it is *Ixora* sp. The error is regretted.

– Authors

In the Research News 'Negative thermal expansion in ZrW_2O_8 – Do we give up the concept of normal mode?' by S. L. Chaplot (*Curr. Sci.*, 2005, **88**, 347–349), read *ref. 15*, on p. 348, col. 1, line 22, instead of *ref. 14* and *ref. 16*, on p. 348, col. 2, line 21, instead of *ref. 15*.