

Conservation Highlights of WWF-India, Kerala State Office

FROM THE STATE DIRECTOR'S DESK

India's Tiger population has risen by 30% over two decades - primarily this news article is a matter of great joy and pride because of the facts that the apex predator of the forest ecosystem is protected (which translates to "Save the Tiger, Save them All" - the Tiger being an Umbrella Species), our National Animal is being revered and protected, India is home to 60-70% of the wild Tiger population globally. If the Tiger population has increased, it means that its habitat, the forest ecosystem, has improved (as envisaged under the TX2 Project). But in these days of escalating human-wildlife conflicts, especially in Kerala, in the recent past - there has been loss of human lives, the man hunting Tiger was found dead in the Wayanad forests, carcasses of three Tigers were recently found, problematic Tiger was captured from Wayanad and relocated to the Thiruvananthapuram Zoo, etc. This news will not be taken in a positive tone by a major section of society, especially the people affected in the high ranges along the forest fringes. There will be several parties misquoting these data and report and instigating the people against the Government and the Forest Department. Already the slogan of the people are against the Forest Department, saying "Your Tiger..... Your Elephant..... Your Leopard".

When we desire to have better wildlife in our forests, we should also ensure that (1) Forest degradation as a result of human intervention is stopped at all costs (2) Degraded forest patches are brought back with scientific eco-restoration approaches (3) Contiguity of forest patches is ensured and forest fragmentation is avoided (4) As the Supreme Court has directed, diversion of forest land for linear infrastructures should be avoided or proper compensatory reforestation be carried out (5) Forest Managers ensure that food and water availability is available for wildlife all throughout the year (6) Carrying capacity-based studies for particular forest types and their wildlife be carried out comprehensively (7) Tourism should be regulated and only nature-based tourism should be allowed (8) Proper surveys and monitoring of wildlife be conducted on a regular basis with the help of NGOs, researchers, college students, etc. (9) Eradication of invasives be carried out on a war footing (10) Traditional knowledge and manpower/ expertise of the local people, be it tribals or non-tribals, be used by the Forest Department in protecting habitat and monitoring wildlife (11) Forest Fire prevention measures be enhanced to protect the forests and inhabiting wildlife.

Renjan Mathew Varghese
State Director

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN NATURE AND ENVIRONMENT

Global

Reward for tourists who litter pick in Copenhagen

Tourists will be rewarded with free food and activities if they participate in environmentally friendly tasks while visiting Copenhagen, the city's tourist board has announced. The trial scheme, which begins on 15 July, will see tourist attractions in the Danish capital offer rewards for activities such as litter-picking, travelling by public transport or biking around the city. Under the initiative, visitors can claim free lunches, coffees, glasses of wine and kayak rental in return

for their work. The "CopenPay" scheme is designed to offset the "environmental burden" of tourism, according to the Copenhagen tourist board. (Source: BBC, 9 July 2024)

Florida is building the world's largest environmental restoration project

Florida is embarking on an ambitious ecological restoration project in the Everglades: building a reservoir large enough to secure the state's water supply. The Everglades Agricultural Area (EAA) reservoir will be located south of Lake Okeechobee, the largest freshwater lake in Florida. The project intends to store, clean and send water from Lake Okeechobee to nourish the Everglades and supply clean drinking water to millions in South Florida. It also intended to dramatically reduce the algae-causing discharges that have previously shut down beaches and caused mass fish die-offs. The reservoir will stretch over 10,100 acres large

and, in addition, have a 6,500-acre stormwater treatment area. It will be able to store 78 billion gallons of water. The infrastructure projects range from rehydrating carbon-sequestering wetlands, to building a complex network of stormwater treatment areas, smaller reservoirs and water control structures. The whole project is due to be completed in 2029. (Source BBC, 16 August 2024)

National

Pollution causing significant environmental degradation, harming aquatic life: SC

The Supreme Court has voiced serious concerns over the unchecked dumping of plastic and other waste materials into water bodies, warning that this pollution is causing significant environmental degradation and harming aquatic life. A bench of justices Hrishikesh Roy and SVN Bhatti emphasised that without a unified effort from authorities and the cooperation of the public, any attempts to address illegal constructions and improve water quality in rivers, including the Ganga, will remain “illusory.” The Supreme Court order follows a directive issued on December 1, 2023, asking the Bihar government to identify and remove unauthorised constructions adjacent to the Ganga. The state reported it had identified 213 such illegal constructions, and efforts were underway to remove them. The state shall ensure no further illegal construction or unauthorised encroachment takes place adjacent to the river Ganga, particularly in and around the City of Patna. (Source: Hindusthan Times, 6 August 2024)

India, Bhutan to work together in areas of environment and climate change

India and Bhutan on Friday agreed to work together in the areas of air quality, forest, wildlife management and capacity building in the field of environment and climate change, with New Delhi suggesting holding joint working group meetings between the two countries. A Bhutanese delegation headed by Minister of Energy and Natural Resources Gem Tshering met Union Minister of State for Environment Kirti Vardhan Singh and discussed issues related to air quality, climate change, forests, natural resources, wildlife and renewable energy, a statement said. Singh thanked the Bhutanese minister for joining the International Big Cat Alliance, a global initiative by India to protect and conserve the seven big cat species worldwide. He said India and Bhutan share the same geography, ecosystem as well as common values of democracy. Climate change is a common concern for both the countries, he added. Tshering informed Singh about successfully hosting the Sustainable Finance for Tiger Landscape Conference in April 2024 in Paro. He said that Bhutan is already a carbon negative country and obtains its major share of energy from hydropower. (Source: Business Standard, 12 July 2024)

All Indian salt and sugar brands have microplastics: Study

The study, “Microplastics in Salt and Sugar” and conducted by the environmental research organisation Toxics Link, tested 10 types of salt including table salt, rock salt, sea salt and local raw salt and five types of sugar purchased from both online and local markets. The study revealed the presence of microplastics in all salt and sugar samples, in various forms, including fibre, pellets, films and fragments. The size of these microplastics ranged from 0.1 mm to 5 mm. The highest levels of microplastics were found in iodised salt, in the form of multi-coloured thin fibre and films. While organic rock salt had the lowest, according to the study. The concentration of microplastics in the salt samples ranged from 6.71 to 89.15 pieces per kilogramme of dry weight, the report said. In sugar samples, the concentration of microplastics ranged from 11.85 to 68.25 pieces per kilogramme, with the highest concentration found in non-organic sugar. Previous studies found that the average Indian consumes 10.98 grams of salt and around 10 spoons of sugar every day much higher than the World Health Organization’s recommended limits. (Source: Hindusthan Times 13, August, 2024)

India recorded 9% more rainfall than normal in July, says IMD

India recorded 9% more rainfall than normal in July, with the central region of the country receiving 33% excess rain. IMD data showed significant rainfall deficits in east Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand, Gangetic West Bengal, and parts of the northeast. The rainfall deficit in Haryana, Punjab, Himachal Pradesh, and Jammu and Kashmir ranged from 35% to 45%. (Source: CNBC TV 18, 1 August 2024)

State

Wayanad landslides: Kerala’s heaviest loss in July-August

The multiple landslides that devastated Meppadi, Mundakkai and Chooralmala in Wayanad in the early hours of July 30, killing more than 100 people, is the largest Kerala has witnessed. Most tragedies have struck in late July or early August when the state receives copious rainfall. The tragedy that hit Pettimudi in Idukki on August 6, 2020, was the biggest landslide-related tragedy in Kerala until now. (Source: Manorama Online, 30 July 2024)

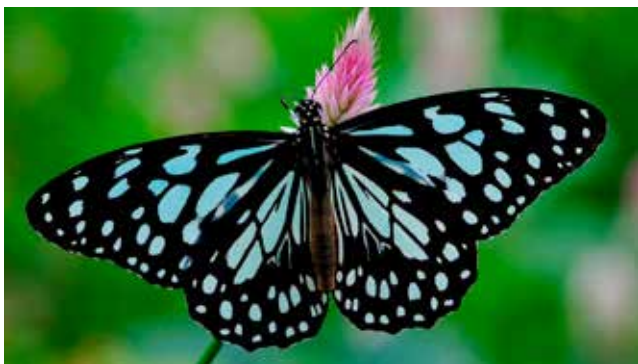
Massive fish kill in Periyar river attributed to industrial pollution

Approximately 5.5 million residents of central Kerala rely on the Periyar river for various needs, including drinking water, farm irrigation, fishing, and aquaculture. The 244-kilometre river has been celebrated in poetry for its role as a conduit for cool breezes from the Western Ghats. The residents of the industrial areas in the district, including Edayar,

Eloor, Varapuzha, Kothad, Kadamakudy, Cheranallore, and Kottuvally, were significantly affected by the fish kill. The Kerala University of Fisheries and Ocean Studies (KUFOS) and the Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (CMFRI) in Kochi conducted a study on fish kill incidents in the Periyar river. The findings of scientists at KUFOS and CMFRI confirm that the concerns fish farmers have about the reasons for fish kills are indeed valid. According to a KUFOS report that Mongabay India accessed, on May's fish kill incident in Periyar, the fish mortality was caused by the opening of three gates at the Pathalam regulator-cum-bridge: one at 3:30 pm and two more at 6 pm on May 20, resulting in the discharge of polluted water. The state irrigation department reported that the gates were opened due to rising water levels from the Bhoothathankettu barrage and heavy rainfall on that day. (Source: Mongabay, 11 July 2024)

SPECIES OF THE ISSUE

Blue Tiger Butterfly
Tirumala limniace exotica



CHILDREN'S CORNER



HOPE OF STRIPES

Deepanshu Joshi

Stripes of orange, black and gold,
A masterpiece, wild and bold.
Tiger, a creature of the night,
Symbol of power, strength and might.

Forests their home, a verdant green,
But shadows creep, a dismal scene.
Poaching's hand, the cruellest art,
Tears at their hearts, a broken part.

Yet hope endures, a flicker bright,
Guardians rise, with all their might.
Protecting realms, where tigers roam,
Ensuring futures, a cherished home.

MEMBER'S CORNER

ആനക്കണ്ണീരും മലയാളിയുടെ ശാസ്ത്രബോധവും ശബരി ജാനകി

(വൈൽഡ് ലൈഫ് ഫോട്ടോഗ്രാഫർ)

(ആനക്കണ്ണീരിന്റെ ശാസ്ത്രീയ തിരയുന്നവർക്ക്
മുന്നിൽ ഈ കാടനുഭവം സമർപ്പിക്കുന്നു.)

എന്റെ വനജീവിതത്തിനിടയിൽ ശാസ്ത്രത്തിനോ പഠനങ്ങൾക്കോ തെളിയിക്കാൻ പറ്റാത്ത ഒരുപാട് കാടനുഭവങ്ങളിലൂടെ കടന്നുപോയിട്ടുണ്ട്. അത്തരം ഒരനുഭവം ഇവിടെ പങ്കുവെക്കാം. കഴിഞ്ഞ മാസം ഞാനും എന്റെ രണ്ട് കുട്ടികാരും ഒരു യാത്ര പോയിരുന്നു. കൂടെയുള്ള രണ്ടുപേരുടെയും കാട്ടിലേക്കുള്ള ആദ്യ യാത്രയാണ്. ആദ്യദിനം ക്യാമ്പിന് ചുറ്റും ഒന്ന് നടക്കാനിറങ്ങി. ധാരാളം വനജീവികളുടെ സാന്നിധ്യമുള്ള ഒരു പ്രദേശമായതിനാൽ അധികം ചുറ്റിക്കറങ്ങാതെ ഞങ്ങൾ ക്യാമ്പിലേക്ക് മടങ്ങി. രാത്രി കിടക്കുമ്പോൾ രാവിലെ ആറു മണിക്ക് തന്നെ പുറത്തിറങ്ങണമെന്നും ഇറങ്ങിയാൽ കരടിയെ കാണാനുള്ള സാധ്യതയുണ്ടെന്നും ഞാൻ പറഞ്ഞു. അങ്ങനെ പിറ്റേന്ന് പുലർച്ചെ ഞങ്ങൾ ക്യാമ്പിൽ നിന്ന് നടക്കാനായി പുറത്തേക്ക് ഇറങ്ങി. വളരെ ശാന്തമായ ഒരു പുലരിയായിരുന്നു. കോടമഞ്ഞിന്റെ ചെറിയൊരു മൂടൽ ഉണ്ട്. ചുളക്കാക്കയുടെ പാട്ടും.. ഇടയ്ക്ക് മറ്റു കിളികളുടെ ചെറിയ ശബ്ദങ്ങളും കേൾക്കാം. ക്യാമ്പിൽ നിന്ന് ഇറങ്ങി ഒരു 50 മീറ്റർ താഴേക്ക് റോഡിലൂടെ നടന്നു തുടങ്ങിയതും കാടിനുള്ളിൽ നിന്ന് ആരോ വിറകു വെട്ടുന്ന ശബ്ദം... ടപ്പെടേ എന്ന് ആഞ്ഞു വെട്ടുന്ന പോലെ ഉച്ചത്തിൽ ശബ്ദം കേൾക്കാം.... ഞാനാണ് മുന്നിൽ നടക്കുന്നത്... ഈ സമയത്ത് ആരാണ് കാട്ടിൽ വിറകു വെട്ടുന്നത് . അതും ഈ തണുപ്പത്ത് . അറിയാൻ വലിയ ആകാംഷ... ഞാൻ പതിയെ മുന്നോട്ടു നടന്നു.. ഒരു 20 മീറ്റർ മുന്നിലേക്ക് ചെന്നപ്പോൾ ഞാൻ കാണുന്ന കാഴ്ച എന്റെ തൊട്ടുമുന്നിൽ ഒരു കൊമ്പനാന



അതിന്റെ തുമ്പിക്കൈയിൽ ഒരു മരക്കമ്പ് ചുറ്റിപ്പിടിച്ച് തൊട്ടടുത്ത മരത്തിൽ ആഞ്ഞത് ആഞ്ഞത് അടിക്കുന്നതാണ്. ശബ്ദത്തിന്റെ പ്രതിധ്വനി കാരണം ശബ്ദം കേൾക്കുന്നത് കുറെ ദൂരെ നിന്നാണ് എന്ന് തോന്നിപ്പോകും... ആനയെ കണ്ടതും ഞാൻ പുറകിലേക്ക് ഓടി... ഞാൻ ഓടുന്നത് കണ്ടു കൂടെയുള്ള രണ്ട് പേരും തിരിച്ചു മുകളിലേക്ക് റോഡിലൂടെ ഓടിക്കയറി... ഞാൻ അവരുടെ പുറകെ എത്തി. എത്തിനാണ് ഞാൻ ഓടിയതെന്ന് അവർക്ക് മനസ്സിലായിട്ടില്ല. അവർ എന്നോട് എന്താണ് എന്ന് ചോദിക്കുന്നുണ്ട്... “നിങ്ങൾ ഒരു വിറകുവെട്ടുന്ന ശബ്ദം കേട്ടിരുന്നോ...?”

“അതൊരു ആനയാണ്. കൊമ്പനാന...നമ്മുടെ തൊട്ടുമുന്നിലുണ്ട് ...ഞാൻ കാണിച്ചു തരാം.. ഞങ്ങൾ തിരിച്ചു ഓടിയ സമയം മുതൽ ആന വടികൊണ്ട് അടിക്കുന്നത് നിർത്തി മുന്നോട്ട് നടക്കാൻ തുടങ്ങി.... കുറച്ചുനേരം നിന്ന് ഞങ്ങളെ ഒന്ന് ശ്രദ്ധിച്ച് കാടിനകത്തേക്ക് നടന്നു കയറി. ആന പോയ ശേഷം ഞാൻ കൂടെയുള്ളവരോട് ചോദിച്ചു.. “നമ്മൾ ക്യാമ്പിൽ നിന്ന് ഇറങ്ങുമ്പോൾ ഈ വിറകു വെട്ടുന്ന ശബ്ദം കേട്ടിരുന്നുവോ...?”

“ഇല്ല...”

“നമ്മൾ നടന്നു ആനയ്ക്ക് മുന്നിലെത്താറാവുന്നതിന് തൊട്ടുമുമ്പായിട്ടാണ് ഈ ശബ്ദം കേട്ടു തുടങ്ങുന്നത്... ഞാൻ വിശ്വസിക്കുന്നത് ആന നമുക്ക് ഒരു മുന്നറിയിപ്പ് എന്നോണം അതിന്റെ സാന്നിധ്യം മനസ്സിലാക്കി തന്നതാണ് എന്നാണ്. എന്റെ കൂടെയുള്ളവർക്ക് അത് പൂർണ്ണ ബോധ്യമായി....

ഇത് ആദ്യാനുഭവമല്ല.. പലപ്പോഴും നമ്മൾ നടന്നു



പോകുന്ന വഴികളിൽ ആനയോ മറ്റേതെങ്കിലും ഒരു വന്യ ജീവിയോ ഉണ്ട് എങ്കിൽ എന്തെങ്കിലും ഒരു സൂചന ആ ജീവി നമുക്ക് തരാറുണ്ട്. പ്രത്യേകിച്ച് ആനകൾ. (അത് എപ്പോഴും സംഭവിക്കണം എന്നില്ല) ഇത് ഒരുപാട് തവണ അനുഭവിച്ചിട്ടുണ്ട്. ഞാൻ ഈ അനുഭവങ്ങൾ പല വാച്ചർമാരോടും പറയാറുള്ളപ്പോൾ പലരും അത് ശരിയാണ് എന്ന് പറഞ്ഞിട്ടുണ്ട്. ഇതിന് ശാസ്ത്രീയമായ വിശകലനം എന്താണെന്ന് അറിയില്ല... ഒരുപക്ഷേ ശാസ്ത്രം ചികഞ്ഞു നോക്കിയാൽ തന്റെ അടുത്തേക്ക് നടന്നുവരുന്ന ആളുകൾക്ക് ഞാൻ ഇവിടെ ഉണ്ട് എന്ന് സൂചന കൊടുക്കുന്നത് വന്യജീവികളുടെ സ്വഭാവസവിശേഷതയായി കാണാൻ കഴിയില്ല. ഇതുപോലുള്ള ഒരുപാട് കാര്യങ്ങൾ വന്യജീവികൾക്കിടയിൽ നടക്കുന്നുണ്ട്. ഇതൊക്കെ കൂടുതൽ പഠനങ്ങൾ നടത്തേണ്ട വിഷയമാണ്.

ഇനി നമ്മുടെ വിഷയത്തിലേക്ക് വരാം.. ഇവിടെ എല്ലാം നഷ്ടപ്പെട്ട് കുരാകുരിരുട്ടിൽ രക്ഷ തേടി കാട്ടിലൂടെ നടക്കുമ്പോൾ....ആനക്കൂട്ടത്തിന്റെ മുന്നിൽ പെട്ട അമ്മമ്മയും അവരുടെ ഇടനിയ വാക്കുകളുമാണ് ഈ ചർച്ചയ്ക്ക് ആധാരം.



ആനയുടെ കണ്ണീർ കണ്ടു എന്ന് ആ അമ്മമ്മ പറയുമ്പോൾ ആനയ്ക്ക് കണ്ണീർ ഗ്രന്ഥി ഇല്ല എന്ന് ശാസ്ത്രീയമായി തെളിയിക്കുന്ന ആളുകളോട് ഒരൊറ്റ കാര്യമേ പറയാനുള്ളൂ... അവിടെ രണ്ട് ജീവിതങ്ങൾ തമ്മിലുള്ള സമ്പർക്ക പെടൽ (communication) ആണ് നടക്കുന്നത്. നിസ്സഹായനായ മനുഷ്യനും ആനയും തമ്മിൽ... ആനയ്ക്ക് മനുഷ്യന്റെ വൈകാരിക സംവേദന ക്ഷമത (Imotional feelings) മനസ്സിലാക്കാൻ കഴിയുന്നു എന്നത് ശാസ്ത്രീയമായി തന്നെ തെളിയിക്കപ്പെട്ടതാണ്. അങ്ങിനെ എങ്കിൽ ആ അമ്മമ്മ പറഞ്ഞത് നമ്മൾ അംഗീകരിക്കേണ്ടിവരും.... . പിന്നെ കണ്ണിൽ നിന്ന് വന്നത്...അത് കണ്ണീർ ആവാം... മഴത്തുള്ളികൾ ആവാം... ആനയുടെ കണ്ണിൽ നിന്ന് വെള്ളം ഒഴുകാറുണ്ട്... അത് കാട്ടാനകളെ നിരീക്ഷിച്ചിട്ടുള്ളവർക്ക് അറിയാം.. അതിന് പല കാരണങ്ങളുണ്ട്. അത് ആ അമ്മ കണ്ണീരായി തെറ്റിദ്ധരിച്ചു എങ്കിൽ അവരെ കുറ്റം പറയാൻ ശാസ്ത്രീയ ഉത്തരങ്ങൾ കണ്ടെത്തുന്നത് സാമാന്യ യുക്തിക്ക് നിരക്കുന്നതല്ല എന്നാണ് എന്റെ തീർത്തും വ്യക്തിപരമായ അഭിപ്രായം... ഇതൊരു കാടനുഭവം പങ്കുവെച്ചു എന്ന് മാത്രം. ... സ്നേഹം....

ACTIVITIES OF WWF-INDIA KERALA STATE OFFICE

Environment Education

Nature Connect - Monthly Moth Observation

Moth observation was conducted along with Volunteers at the Museum and Zoo Campus from 22-24 July, 25-26 at Ernakulam and 27 and 28th at Vazhachal Forest Dormitory. It was a great experience for the Volunteers of Global Tiger Day conducted at Athirappilly-Vazhachal from 27-29 July and they spent time observing the moths and took photographs of all the insects attracted to the LED lights. The photographs were uploaded on the specific project page of iNaturalist.

People 4 Planet - Magical Mangroves

Thirty-seven Volunteers registered for the Magical Mangroves program in Kerala in 2024. The Volunteers have attended the inauguration and virtual orientation of the program on 22 August 2024. A state-specific orientation session was organized on 30th August.

ECHO

The State-level Winners from Kerala i.e., College of Engineering Trivandrum and Anushreedha S.S., Project Officer attended the ECHO National Summit at New Delhi from 7-9th July. The team put up their stall and explained to the audience and judges about their product, URECO mattress, made from used textile materials. Their project was given special mention by the jury.

Global Tiger Day

Global Tiger Day was observed by Kerala State Office from 27-29 July at Athirappilly- Vazhachal Tourism area, jointly with the WGNL Program Office, the Vazhachal Forest Division of Kerala Forests and Wildlife Department and Vazhachal CFR Coordination Sangham. The three-day program included technical sessions by Boominathan about Tiger Conservation by WWF-India, Tiju C. Thomas about Vazhachal Forests, Communities and the CFR experience), experience sharing on tigers in the wild and photography by Sabari Janaki, WWF-India Volunteer, Nature Walks, Sticker and Poster campaign, "I lend my hand for the Tiger" Signature Campaign, Selfie-booth and Social Media Campaign, Open Quiz for the public, Communicating Conservation - Caption Contest for Tiger Photos and Tiger Rally.





VOLUNTEERS



VOLUNTEERS



VOLUNTEERS



Workshop on Capacity Enhancement for Participatory Forest Management in Kerala



The Kerala State Office was instrumental in facilitating the discussions between the WGNL Team with Mr Justin Mohan, IFS, APCCF (ED & TW) of Kerala Forests & Wildlife Department to jointly organise the Two-day Workshop on Capacity Enhancement for Participatory Forest Management in Kerala on 24-25th July 2024 at the Mascot Hotel, Thiruvananthapuram inaugurated by Shaseendran, Hon'ble Minister for Forests, Govt. of Kerala. Renjan Mathew Varghese, Tiju C. Thomas and Vishaish Uppal worked together with Mr Justin Mohan and Mr Saby Varghese to organise the workshop. About 100 participants attended the two-day presentations, discussions and deliberations. The State Office Team and Mr Predit and Ms Mullai from the WGNL Team also attended the workshop proceedings giving the needed support.



Tribute to Dr AJT Johnsingh



In Memoriam: Dr. AJT Johnsingh, India's Wildlife Conservation Luminary Dr. AJT Johnsingh, a revered figure in wildlife conservation, has left an indelible mark

on India's natural heritage. His dedication to the study and preservation of India's wildlife has inspired generations of conservationists. This tribute aims to honor his contributions, celebrate his life, and reflect on the legacy he has left behind. Dr. AJT Johnsingh was born in Tamil Nadu, India, and developed an early interest in wildlife and #nature. Dr. Johnsingh's association with the Wildlife Institute of India (WII) was one of the most significant phases of his career. As a faculty member and later as the Dean, he played a crucial role in shaping the institute's research and training programs. His work at WII focused on field_based wildlife_research, emphasizing the importance of understanding animal behavior and ecology to devise effective #conservation strategies. Dr. Johnsingh was a passionate Field Biologist, known for his extensive research on large mammals such as tigers, leopards, elephants, and dholes. His pioneering studies in the Rajaji and Corbett National Parks provided valuable insights into the behavior, movement patterns, and habitat requirements of these species. His work on the corridors connecting various protected areas highlighted the importance of landscape-level conservation. Beyond research, Dr. Johnsingh was a tireless advocate for wildlife conservation. Many who had the privilege of knowing Dr. Johnsingh personally speak of his humility, kindness, and unwavering commitment to wildlife conservation. Colleagues and students remember him as a #mentor who generously shared his knowledge and encouraged them to pursue their #passion for wildlife. His ability to connect with people from all walks of life and his genuine concern for the well-being of both wildlife and local communities are fondly remembered. Dr. AJT Johnsingh's life and work have been a beacon of hope for wildlife conservation in India. His scientific rigor, advocacy, and passion for wildlife have left an enduring legacy that will continue to inspire and guide future conservation efforts. As we remember Dr. Johnsingh, we celebrate not just his achievements but also his unwavering spirit and dedication to the natural world. His legacy will live on through the protected landscapes, the thriving wildlife, and the inspired hearts of those who continue to follow in his footsteps.

(Courtesy: India Biodiversity Conservation Foundation)

Raptor Monitoring Program

Raptor monitoring was conducted at Punchakkary Wetlands on 10th August by Volunteers Reji Chandran, Jaichand J., and Jayakrishnan S. along with Anushreedha S.S. They found only Black Kites and Brahmini Kites there at both the vantage points.

Beach Combing

Beach Combing, the monthly monitoring program of shore birds of Thiruvananthapuram District was held on 3rd August 2024 with the participation of 10 volunteers under the leadership of Rejichandran and Jayakrishnan.

It was conducted in two sites - Perumathura and Poovar. They noted ten species of shore birds like Bridled Tern, Saunder's Tern, Great-crested tern, Lessercrested Terns, Whiskered Tern, Common Tern, Wilson's Storm Petrel, Little cormorant, Black Kite, Brahminy Kite and few large Tern species.

Invited Talk in the Workshop on Role of Youth in Nature Conservation & Environment Protection



The State Director attended the workshop at Women's College, Karur near Dindigul organised by GRAMIUM and Viswa Yuva Kendraon being invited as resource person and delivered the talk on the general theme of role of youth on 2nd August. Mr Saravanan, WGNL Office, Coimbatore presented the EE Pillars of WWF-India and the opportunity for youth to engage in WWF work.



Invited Talk: Lluvia, the National Seminar on "When Nature Strives for Balance"

Renjan Mathew Varghese and A.K. Sivakumar attended the Lluvia 2024, National Seminar on "When Nature Strives for Balance" on 23 August 2024 at National College, Thiruvananthapuram. Dr. Priya Gopinath welcomed guests and participants. Dr. S A Shajahan, Principal of the College delivered the presidential Address. Dr. Balakrishnan, Member Secretary of Kerala State Biodiversity Board inaugurated the workshop. Renjan delivered the major technical session which was attended by around 100 students.





All Women Nature Walk

All-Women Nature Walk is a pan India initiative taken independently by women across cities to create a space for women of all ages to enjoy the outdoors. Anushreedha S.S., Abhirami G.S., Nisha, Anju Junu, Sheena and Vijayalekshmi P.V., WWF-India Volunteers participated in the All-Women Nature Walk organized at Thiruvananthapuram Museum and Zoo Compound on 18th August and shared their knowledge on various biodiversity.

Interaction with ADB Team on the proposed coastal protection project of Govt. of Kerala

The State Director was invited by Mr Joseph Mathew, Consultant working with the Irrigation Department, to facilitate the ADB Consultations on the upcoming proposed coastal protection project along the Kerala Coast. The interaction meeting with the ADB Team Members was on 14th August at 10.30 am at the Conference Hall of IDR B at Vikas Bhavan. Dr. K.V. Thomas, Senior Scientist (retd), National Centre for Earth Science Studies and Dr. Bijukumar, Head, Dept. of Aquatic Biology & Fisheries, University of Kerala, Dr. Devika, Gender Expert from Centre for Development Studies were also present.

Discussion on Wayanad Landslide at Centre for Development Studies

Renjan and Anushreedha attended the expert panel discussion conducted on August 14th at 3.00 pm at CDS organised by the Student Cell. Dr. Soman and Dr. Srikumar Chattopadhyay, Senior Scientists retired from NCESS and Mr Sridhar, Engineer cum Environmentalist were the experts in the panel discussion.

Interaction with Students of SPA, Hyderabad

A team of 35 students from the School of Planning and Architecture, Hyderabad is here in Trivandrum with the objective of developing the Perspective Development Plan of Thiruvananthapuram District. Out of them, two students assigned the component of forests, wildlife and biodiversity visited the Kerala State Office at 2.00 pm on 30th August and interacted with the Team to collect relevant data and information. The team members led by the State Director had detailed discussions, provided data and information and shared contacts with other departments and institutions.

Independence Day and Flag-hoisting

The staff and the families came together on the morning of August 15th to hoist the flag as part of Independence Day Celebration. On hoisting the flag, everyone saluted the flag and sang the National Anthem. The team had breakfast together and dispersed for the day.



EDITORIAL BOARD

Mr. Renjan Mathew Varghese
Ms. Anushreedha Sivanandan
Mr. A.K. Sivakumar

Published by WWF-India, Kerala State Office, Vanchiyoor P.O., Thiruvananthapuram - 695035
For private circulation only • Phone: 0471-2302265 • email: klso@wwfindia.net • web: wwfindia.org
Pre-Press: Soft and Soft, Sasthamangalam, Phone: 8547043499, Printed at: New Multi Offset, Tvpm