



WWF
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Mruthika

Newsletter of WWF - India, Kerala State Office

FROM THE STATE DIRECTOR'S DESK

The months of November and December witnessed some major initiatives in the marine and coastal programmes. WWF-India organised the Marine Strategy Workshop in Kochi in the beginning of November which saw the dynamic participation of experts in this sector from across the country discussing and deliberating three days on the issues faced by our coastal and marine habitats and its inhabiting life forms and suggesting the way forward to ensure the protection of our marine ecosystem, coasts and the coastal waters. The brainstorming sessions led by Ms. Louise and Dr. Sejal brought out the priority issues that we need to address in this sector and the participants put forward various strategies and suggestions at national, state and local levels to address these issues in the days ahead. The month of November also witnessed the landmark launch of the first MSC Certified Fishery in India i.e. the Short-neck Clam of Ashtamudi Estuary, having been facilitated by WWF-India Marine Programme under the leadership of Mr. Vinod. This was officially declared and the certificate handed over in a major function organized at CMFRI which witnessed the participation of dignitaries from the Central and State Government, experts in the marine and coastal sector from various institutions in and around Kochi and local stakeholders i.e. clam fishermen from Kollam. WWF-India also partnered with the Marine Biological Association of India (MBAI) to organize the international symposium 'Marine Ecosystems – Challenges and Opportunities' at Dream Hotel, Kochi in the month of December. As in previous years, we were instrumental in organizing the Kerala Bird Race in Thiruvananthapuram with the participation of 78 birders spotting 157 species of birds from 7 locations in and around the City and also the Salim Ali Day in Kollam in association with Social Forestry Division and Social Forestry Extension Unit, Kollam in which around 100 participants including 75 students enjoyed the very informative and interactive

bird quiz, technical sessions and also an exclusive bird photo exhibition. We also participated in the Third Indian Biodiversity Congress organized by CISSA, CPREEC and Navdanya at SRM University, Chennai in December with presentation of a technical paper and also putting up our exhibition stall. We organized four Teachers Training Workshops in these two months and that also helped us to start a new relationship with the Malayalam University initiated recently in Tirur, Malappuram as they played host to one of the workshops organized in the end of November. One of the Teachers Training Workshop targeting the School Teachers of Idukki District was coupled with a single day workshop on 'Conservation Challenges and Initiatives for the Western Ghats' targeting college students and Marian College, Kuttikkanam played host to the two days events. With our good in-house experience and expertise and based on our wide networking skills, we were invited to partner and contribute in various events, namely the 'Workshop on Participatory Forest Management' organized in December by Enviro Legal Defense Firm, New Delhi at the Conference Hall of the Kerala Forests and Wildlife Department HQ, the 'Inter-University Competition on Water Resource Management' organized by TERI, TERI University and Department of Zoology, Nirmala College, Muvattupuzha, Talk by UN Special Secretary (Energy) Kandeh K Yumkella on 'Energy Security and the major role of Renewable Energy sources' organized by Energy Management Centre (EMC), Govt. of Kerala at Mascot Hotel, Thiruvananthapuram and the meeting convened at Thiruvananthapuram International Airport by Kerala State Biodiversity Board on Bird Menace. WWF also put up an exhibition stall in the week long Chaithanya Karshika Mela organized at Chaithanya Pastoral Centre, Kottayam by the Kottayam Social Service Society. There is a great expectation from the society on us and we have been able to step up to it to a very great extent

Renjan Mathew Varghese,
State Director

IMPORTANT NEWS ON ENVIRONMENT AND NATURE

GLOBAL

Act now on climate change, says new IPCC report

Chairman of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) R.K. Pachauri said the window of action on tackling climate change was closing rapidly and warned that the path of inaction would be more costly than the path

of action. Speaking at the launch of the IPCC's Synthesis Report in Copenhagen, he said the scientific community had done its job and was in a sense passing on the baton to politicians and decision-makers. The Synthesis Report points to the human influence on climate, but also points out that there were means to limit climate change and build a sustainable future. He said the global community must look at the numbers in this report and bring about change. "There is no Plan B because there is no Planet B," he said to questions. "The report tells us that we need to tackle climate change with a combination of adaptation

and mitigation,” he added. (Source: *The Hindu*, 3 November 2014)

Chinese tiger eater jailed for 13 years

A Chinese businessman who bought and ate three tigers has been sentenced to 13 years in prison, state media reported. The wealthy real estate developer, identified only by his surname Xu, has “a special hobby of grilling tiger bones, boning tiger paws, storing tiger penis, eating tiger meat and drinking tiger blood alcohol,” the official Xinhua news agency said in June when he went on trial. Xu organised three separate trips last year for a total of 15 people, including himself, to Leizhou in the southern province of Guangdong, where they bought tigers for a “huge amount of money” that were killed and dismembered as they watched, the government-run news portal gxnews.com.cn reported. One of them filmed the entire process of a tiger slaughter with his mobile phone. The footage was later retrieved by the police. Police seized eight pieces of animal meat and bones from a refrigerator in Xu’s home, some of which were later identified as tiger parts, the report said, adding that, 16 geckos and a cobra were also found. Tiger bones have long been an ingredient of traditional Chinese medicine, supposedly for its capacity to strengthen the human body, and while they have been removed from its official ingredient list, the belief persists among some. (Source: *The Hindu*, 31 December 2014)

NATIONAL

Winged beauties under threat

Recent studies by the Zoological Survey of India has revealed that, of the 1677 species and sub-species found in India, more than one fourth are either threatened or endangered. Of the 425 species of butterflies, 123 species and sub-species of butterflies are included under Schedule-I (Part-IV) of the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972, while 302 species and sub-species are under Schedule-II (Part-II) of the Act. (Source: *The Hindu*, 2 November 2014)

Scientists track flight of the Amur Falcon

The entire migration route of Amur Falcons from Nagaland to South Africa further onto Mongolia and back to Nagaland has been scientifically plotted, with scientists confirming that a satellite tagged Amur Falcon ‘Naga’ has arrived almost a year after it began journey. Amur Falcons travel 22,000 kms a year, known to be one of the longest distance undertaken by migratory birds. The bird Naga was released in Doyang in Wokha district in Nagaland on November 7, 2013 and returned on October 29, 2014. (Source: *The Hindu*, 3 November 2014)

Global Stamp for Ashtamudi

Union Minister for Environment and Forests Prakash Javedkar announced that the Short necked Yellow Clam

of Ashtamudi lake in Kollam, Kerala was the first fishery certified by the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) in India. (Source: *The Hindu*, 9 November 2014)

STATE

Wayanad completes biodiversity documentation

Local self-government institutions in Wayanad district now have an effective weapon against biopiracy. The People’s Biodiversity Register (PBR) have been prepared for all the local bodies in Wayanad. It is a comprehensive database recording people’s traditional knowledge and insight of status, uses, history, ongoing changes, and forces driving changes on the biological diversity and resources of their locality. It provides information on the current utilisation patterns of biodiversity and its economic benefit to the local community. The PBR forms a baseline data for future management strategies for sustainable utilisation of biodiversity in a decentralised manner. (Source: *The Hindu*, 2 November 2014)

Study finds a dying Gayathripuzha

Gayathripuzha is facing an immediate death, says a study conducted by the Kerala State Land Use Board. The river is the major feeder of the Bharathapuzha and a perennial source of drinking water for thousands of families at Kollangode, Nenmara, Alathur and Vadakkancherry. Study identified large scale deforestation in its origin, apart from adverse changes in land use patterns on its banks and illegal mining as major reasons for the decline of the river. (Source: *The Hindu*, 4 November 2014)

Eravikulam grasslands at risk from invasive plants

Recent studies says grasslands of Eravikulam National Park are under threat from two invasive alien plants, Eagle Fern (*Pteridium aquilinum*) and Goatweed (*Ageratum conyzoides*) native to California and Brazil, which has spread across the grasslands, damaging the Parks’s flora and posing a threat to herbivores, especially the Nilgiri Tahr. “Both plants are unpalatable to herbivores and make colonies, are highly invasive and prevent the growth of grasses and other plants,” says T.V.Sajeev, Head, Department of Entomology, Kerala Forest Research Institute, Peechi. (Source: *The Hindu*, 8 November 2014)

SPECIES OF THE ISSUE

Common Green Shank (*Tringa nebularia*)

പച്ചക്കാലി

Common Green Shank is a medium sized water bird found in marshes, lake sides, along the shores and in other wetlands. This migratory bird has white under parts and grey upper parts with dark bars and spots. The black bill seems to be slightly curved upwards. The long legs are green in colour. Though forehead is pure white, the



remaining portions have dark spots and stripes. It usually feeds on small aquatic organisms and small fishes. This migratory bird is found all across the State's wetlands from November to March and they return to their breeding sites. This is a subarctic bird, breeding across northern Europe and Asia. Like all other water birds, they also face the threats from pollution and habitat loss.

CHILDREN'S CORNER

Birds are beautiful but attract our attention with their calls too. Here are some interesting words to mention calls of each bird group.....

Birds	Sound
Chicken	Chirp
Dove	Coo
Duck	Quack
Eagle	Screech
Falcons	Chant
Goose	Honk
Hawks	Scream
Hens	Cackle and Cluck
Peacocks	Scream
Owl	Hoot
Swallows	Twitter
Turkey	Gobble

MEMBER'S DESK

എന്റെ പക്ഷി നിരീക്ഷണാനുഭവം

വേനൽച്ചുട്ട് അതിന്റെ തീവ്രതയിൽ ജലിക്കവേ ധരണി ഒരു തുള്ളി ദാഹജലത്തിനായി വിണ്ണിലെ മഴമേഘങ്ങളോട് കേഴുന്നു, അങ്ങനെ വിണ്ണിലെ മഴമേഘങ്ങൾ മണ്ണിലേക്ക് പെയ്തിറങ്ങുന്ന വേനൽമഴ, അപ്പോഴാണ് എന്റെ മൊബൈൽ ഫോൺ റിങ് ചെയ്തത്. ശിവകുമാർ സാറിന്റെ കോൾ. സർ പറഞ്ഞു ഒരു മാഗസീനുവേണ്ടി പക്ഷിനിരീക്ഷണ അനുഭവങ്ങൾ എഴുതിനൽകണമെന്ന്, എനിക്ക് ഒരുപാട് സന്തോഷം തോന്നി. പക്ഷി നിരീക്ഷണം എനിക്ക് ഈ വേനൽമഴ പോലയാണ്

2013-14 BEd curriculum ഞങ്ങളെ വേട്ടയാടിക്കൊണ്ടിരിക്കുമ്പോഴാണ് World Migratory Bird Day celebration-ൽ ഞങ്ങൾക്ക് പങ്കെടുക്കാൻ അവസരം ലഭിക്കുന്നത്. അന്ന് നമ്മുടെ നാട്ടിലുള്ള പക്ഷികളെ കുറിച്ചും മറ്റും അറിയാൻ കഴിഞ്ഞു. ഹരിസർ ആണ് അവയെക്കുറിച്ച് വിവരണം നൽകിയത്. ക്ലാസ് കഴിഞ്ഞപ്പോൾ എനിക്കതു ഒരുപാട് സന്തോഷം തന്നു. പണ്ട് എൽ.പി സ്കൂളിൽ പഠിക്കുമ്പോൾ പക്ഷിനിരീക്ഷണത്തെക്കുറിച്ച് കേട്ടറഞ്ഞിട്ടുണ്ട്. അന്ന് അച്ഛനുണ്ടാക്കി തന്ന പ്ലാവില ബൈനോക്കുലർ കൊണ്ട് ഞങ്ങൾ പറമ്പിലും തൊടിയിലും വയലിലുമൊക്കെ നടക്കാനുണ്ടായിരുന്നു. അത് അന്നത്തെ പക്ഷിത്തുവൽശേഖരണത്തിനുകുമായിരുന്നു. അന്നത്തെ ആ മോഹങ്ങൾ വീണ്ടും ഉള്ളിലെവിടെയോ ഒന്നു ആളിക്കത്തി. അങ്ങനെ ഞാനും ഒരു പക്ഷിനിരീക്ഷകയായി മാറുകയായിരുന്നു. ഒരു കുഞ്ഞു പക്ഷിനിരീക്ഷക.

പിറ്റേന്നു കണ്ടച്ചിറയിൽ വച്ച് പക്ഷിനിരീക്ഷണത്തിനുവേണ്ട ചില കരുതലുകൾ സർ പറഞ്ഞു തന്നു. അധികം തിളക്കമുള്ള വസ്ത്രം ധരിക്കാതെ, അവയുടെ ആവാസത്തിനുകോട്ടം തട്ടാതെയൊക്കെ വേണം പക്ഷിനിരീക്ഷണം നടത്താൻ. അതിരാവിലെ 6.15 ന്റെ ബസിൽ ഞാൻ കണ്ടച്ചിറയിലെത്തി അപ്പോഴെക്കും സർ എത്തിയിരുന്നു. അവിടെ ചതുപ്പുനിയെ നിരവധി കൊക്കുകൾ. ഈ കൊക്കിനെ കാണിക്കാനാണോ രാവിലെ വിളിച്ചുകൊണ്ട് വന്നത് എന്ന് എന്റെ ഒരു സഹപാഠി ചോദിച്ചു. പിന്നീട് ആണ് എനിക്ക് മനസ്സിലായത് ഈ കൊക്കുകളിലെ വൈവിധ്യം, സർ അവയുടെ പ്രത്യേകതകളും അവയുടെ identification marks ഉം പറഞ്ഞു വിവരിച്ചു. ഏകദേശം 7 മണി ആയപ്പോഴേയ്ക്കും നിരവധി species കൾ വന്നെത്തി. ചിലത് ഇരതേടുന്നു മറ്റു ചിലത് പാറിനടക്കുന്നു. എന്നെ അന്ന് ആകർഷിച്ചത് പവിഴക്കാലികൾ ആയിരുന്നു. പൊയ്ക്കാലിൽ നടക്കുന്ന പക്ഷികൾ; നല്ല നീളൻ കാലുകൾ പിന്നീട് സർ ബൈനോക്കുലർ തന്നു അവയെ നിരീക്ഷിക്കാനായി. അനാദൃമായി ഞാൻ ബൈനോക്കുലറിലൂടെ പക്ഷികളെ കണ്ടു. പണ്ടത്തെ പ്ലാവില ബൈനോക്കുലർ അല്ലേയല്ല ഇത് !!! Its real! കുറേ അധികം പക്ഷികളെ കണ്ടെങ്കിലും ഒരു പുകമയം ആയിരുന്നു. ഒരുപാട് അറിയാനുള്ള ആഗ്രഹവും മനസ്സിൽ അവശേഷിപ്പിച്ച് അന്നത്തെ ദേശാടനപ്പക്ഷി ദിനാചരണത്തിനു തിരശ്ശീല വീണു. ഇങ്ങനെ ഞാനും പക്ഷികളുടെ ലോകത്തേക്ക് പറന്നുയരാൻ തുടങ്ങി

ഒരു കുഞ്ഞുകിളി എങ്ങനെയാണോ പറന്നു തുടങ്ങുന്നത് അതു പോലെ പലവട്ടം ഒരേ പക്ഷിയുടെ പേരു ചോദിച്ചും അവയെ തിരിച്ചറിഞ്ഞും കുഞ്ഞു വഴക്കുകൾ പറഞ്ഞും അമ്മക്കിളി കുഞ്ഞിക്കിളിയുമായി പറന്നുയരും പോലെ ശിവകുമാർ സർ എന്നെയും പക്ഷികളുടെ ലോകത്തേക്ക് കൊണ്ടുപോയി. പൊതുവേ മടിച്ചിയായ എന്നെ ഫോൺ കോൾ വഴി നിരീക്ഷണത്തിനു പ്രോത്സാഹിപ്പിച്ചു. പിന്നീട് ഹരിസർ, ജയ്ചന്ദ്രസാർ, ശിവകുമാർ സർ അങ്ങനെ കുറേയേറെ പേരുടെ ഒപ്പം പക്ഷിനിരീക്ഷണത്തിൽ പങ്കെടുക്കാൻ എനിക്കും സാധിച്ചു. ഓരോ അനുഭവങ്ങളും ഓരോ പാഠങ്ങളായി മനസ്സിൽ പതിഞ്ഞു.

ഒരിക്കൽ കണ്ടച്ചിറയിൽ പവിഴക്കാലിയുടെ കൂട് ശിവകുമാർസർ കണ്ടെത്തി. അതിന്റെ സംരക്ഷണച്ചുമതല സർ എനിക്ക് തന്നു. അന്നു മുതൽ മിക്ക ദിവസങ്ങളിലും മുട്ടവിരിഞ്ഞ കുഞ്ഞുങ്ങളെ കാണാൻ ഞാൻ എന്റെ കസിൻ നീതുവിനൊപ്പം അവിടെയെത്തി. അതൊരു മഴക്കാലമായിരുന്നു. എനിക്ക് നല്ല ആശങ്കയുണ്ടായിരുന്നു തുറന്നൊരു ചതുപ്പിലെ വരമ്പിലാണ് കൂട്, മുട്ടവിരിയണമെങ്കിൽ ചൂട് വേണം ഈ മഴയത്ത് അതെങ്ങനെ സാധ്യമാകും? ഞങ്ങൾ കണ്ടച്ചിറയിലെ

ത്തിയ ഒരു ദിവസം പതിവുപോലെ നല്ല മഴയുണ്ടായിരുന്നു. മഴക്കാറ്റ് ആകാശത്തെ മുടിയപ്പോഴേയ്ക്കും ഇരട്ടേടികൊണ്ടിരുന്ന പവിഴക്കാലികൾ പറന്നകന്നു. ആ കൂടുമാത്രം തനിച്ചായി പെട്ടെന്ന് എങ്ങു നിന്നോ ഒരു അമ്മ പവിഴക്കാലി ചിലച്ചു കൊണ്ട് വന്ന് അതിനു അടയിരുന്നു. കൂടും മുട്ടയും ചിരകിനടിയിൽ ഒരുക്കി കഴുത്തും തലയും കുമിച്ച് ഏകദേശം ഒരു പന്തുപോലെയായി. ആ പക്ഷിയുടെ മാതൃ സ്നേഹം കണ്ടപ്പോൾ എനിക്ക് ഓർമ്മവന്നത് പ്രസവിച്ചുടൻ തന്റെ കുഞ്ഞിനെ ഉപേക്ഷിക്കാൻ തയ്യാറാകുന്ന അമ്മമാരെയാണ്. അതുപോലെ തന്നെ പവിഴക്കാലികൾ വലിയ Actors ആണ്. ഒരിക്കൽ മുട്ടകൾ വിരിഞ്ഞോ എന്നറിയാൻ ഞാൻ പവിഴക്കാലിയുടെ കുടിനടുത്തേക്ക് ചെന്നു. പെട്ടെന്ന് ഒരുകൂട്ടം പവിഴക്കാലികൾ ചിലച്ചുകൊണ്ട് എനിക്ക് ചുറ്റും കൂടി. അവയിൽ ചിലത് ഞൊണ്ടി ഞൊണ്ടി നടക്കുന്നുണ്ടായിരുന്നു. മറ്റു ചിലത് വട്ടമിട്ടുകൊണ്ടിരിക്കുന്നതെന്ന, പെട്ടെന്ന് നിലത്തു പതിച്ചു, ഞാൻ കരുതി എന്തോ അപകടം പുറിയതാണെന്ന് കരുതി ഞാൻ അവയ്ക്കടുത്തേക്ക് നീങ്ങിയപ്പോൾ അവ പെട്ടെന്ന് പറന്നുയർന്നു. പിന്നെയാണ് എനിക്ക് മനസ്സിലായത് എന്റെ ശ്രദ്ധതിരിക്കാനായിട്ട് അവ നടത്തിയ പ്രകടനമാണ് ഇതെന്ന്. മനുഷ്യരിൽ മുല്യച്യുതി വന്ന പല കാര്യങ്ങളും ഇന്ന് പക്ഷിമൃഗാദികളെ കണ്ട് മനുഷ്യൻ പഠിക്കേണ്ടിയിരിക്കുന്നു.

പത്തനംതിട്ടയിലെയും കൊല്ലത്തെയും വിവിധ സ്ഥലങ്ങളിൽ നടന്ന പക്ഷിനിരീക്ഷണാവരണങ്ങൾ എനിക്ക് ഒരുപാട് കാര്യങ്ങൾ പഠിപ്പിച്ചു. അലയടിക്കുന്ന ഒരു കടൽപോലാണ് നമ്മുടെ മനസ്സുകളിൽ അല്പനേരം ഇവയെ നിരീക്ഷിച്ചാൽ നമ്മുടെ മനസ്സ് ശാന്തമാകും. പക്ഷിനിരീക്ഷണത്തെ ഒരു ഹോബിയായി കാണുന്നവർക്ക് അങ്ങനെയും ആകാം. നമ്മുടെ മനസ്സിനെ ഒരുപാട് സന്തോഷിപ്പിക്കുന്നുണ്ട് ഇവയെങ്കിലും നാം ഇന്ന് ഇവയെ ഇരയാക്കുകയാണ്. വനനശീകരണം, ചതുപ്പ് നികത്തൽ, പുഴനീക്കത്തൽ, മണൽവാരൽ, വയൽനീക്കത്തൽ കൂടാതെ മലിനീകരണവും ഇത്തരം പ്രവർത്തനങ്ങൾ ഇവയെ പ്രത്യക്ഷമായും പരോക്ഷമായും ബാധിക്കുന്നുണ്ട്. അതിനു ഉത്തമ ഉദാഹരണമാണ് ആറന്മുള വിമാനത്താവള പദ്ധതി. ഇത്തരത്തിൽ ആഗോളമായി ആവാസവ്യവസ്ഥയ്ക്കുണ്ടായ കോട്ടങ്ങൾ കാരണമാണ് നമ്മുടെ നാട്ടിലെത്തുന്ന പലദേശാടനപക്ഷികളും ദേശാടനകാലം കഴിഞ്ഞ് തിരികെ പോകാത്തതും അവയുടെ എണ്ണത്തിലുള്ള കുറവും.

മാറ്റം നമുക്ക് മാത്രമല്ല, നമ്മുടെ ചുറ്റും സംഭവിക്കുന്നുണ്ട്. നമ്മൾ വീക്ഷിക്കണം, മാറ്റങ്ങൾ കോട്ടങ്ങൾ ആകുന്നുണ്ടോ എന്ന്. കണ്ണുതുറക്കുന്നതിനോടൊപ്പം മനസ്സു തുറന്നു വീക്ഷിക്കണം. കാരണം പ്രപഞ്ചത്തിലുള്ളവയെല്ലാം തന്നെ പരസ്പരബന്ധിതങ്ങളാണ് അതിനാൽ ഒന്നിന്റെ മാറ്റം മറ്റൊന്നിനെ ബാധിക്കും. ഓർക്കുക നമ്മെ അവരിൽ നിന്ന് വ്യത്യസ്തനാക്കുന്നത് വിവേചന ബുദ്ധിയാണെന്ന്.

രാധിക രാഗനാഥ്

വയണവിള പടിഞ്ഞാറ്റിയിൽ, പുലിപ്ര, മുളവന പി.ഒ., ഈസ്റ്റ് കുണ്ടറ, കൊല്ലം

SPECIAL FEATURE

HSBC Bird Race 2014



The 8th Kerala Bird Race held on 16th November 2014 at Thiruvananthapuram spotted 157 species of birds from 7 locations in and around the City with the participation of 78 birders including experts, regular and budding birders. The annual participatory birding, in connection with

the birthday of Dr. Salim Ali, the Birdman of India was organized jointly by Yuhina Eco Media and WWF-India with the support of HSBC. Each team was led by expert bird watchers and the teams were in the field looking out for the feathered friends from dawn to dusk. Sighting of Montagu's Harrier from Ponmudi, White rumped Shama from Bonaccord, Booted Eagle from Arippa, Black Baza from Kottur forests, Lesser sand Plover from Veli beach, Amur Falcon from Punchakkary, and Asian Open bill from Aruvikkara wetlands were significant as these are not so common in these locations. The teams observed various threats, mainly, habitat degradation in most of the locations and expressed their apprehension. The delay in the onset of monsoon and the subsequent delay in arrival of migrants and pollution are the main culprits attributed to the decline of bird population in the wetlands. Akkulam Lake, once a haven for waterbirds, is now more like a sewage drain with all kinds of pollutants dumped into it, large scale reclamation, invasive species etc. The sighting of certain birds like the Indian Peafowl at Arippa Forests and Asian Open bill at Aruvikkara are clear indicators of increasing temperature profile. The Museum & Zoo Compound, the green lung of the City still remains a healthy habitat for, proof is the sighting of 42 species of birds with an active heronry of endangered Oriental Darters. The Kottur Forests, part of Neyyar Wildlife Sanctuary and Kallar – Ponmudi Forests also has a very good bird population, the numbers crossing 75. The teams got some bonus observations of mammals like Nilgiri Marten, Barking Deer and Malabar Giant Squirrel.



The evening valedictory session organised as a platform for the teams to share the observations and experience of the day was highly exciting, informative and interactive. The Chief Guest was Sri.O.P. Kaler IFS, Addl. Principal Chief Conservator of Forests (Biodiversity Cell), Kerala Forests & Wildlife Department. Mr. Kaler in his address asked the participants to submit their findings and recommendations to the Department for possible further action and to document the sightings for scientific planning of conservation initiatives. He also encouraged the participants to partner in wildlife protection, especially of those outside forest areas. Sri. Renjan Mathew Varghese, State Director of WWF-India and Sri. A.K.Sivakumar, Senior Education Officer and Bird Race Coordinator addressed the gathering. Follow-up activities like Sunday Bird Walk once in a month, annual Asian Waterfowl Census and Bird Watching Camps at different locations are in the pipeline for the participants in the coming days.

ACTIVITIES OF WWF-INDIA KERALA STATE OFFICE

Launch of the First MSC Certified Fishery in India



The Short-neck Yellow Clam of Ashtamudi Estuary has been certified by MSC facilitated by WWF-India Marine Programme under the leadership of Mr. Vinod and this was officially declared and the certificate handed over in a function organized at CMFRI on 5 November. The Kerala State Office was instrumental in making arrangements and inviting the participants for the event. The State Director and the Senior Education Officer represented the State Office in the event.

Birding at Ashtamudi Lake



As part of the follow up of World Migratory Bird Day 2014 held at Kollam in May, the monthly birding at Ashtamudi Lake was conducted on 22nd November with the participation of 15 birders led by Senior Education Officer. 42 species of birds were reported including migratory species like Green Shank, Red Shank, Barn Swallow and Whiskered Tern.

Bird Survey at Peechi - Vazhani Wildlife Sanctuary



A.K. Sivakumar, Senior Education Officer and two volunteers, Sri. C. Harikumar and Mr. Jaichand Johnson from WWF-India attended the four day comprehensive bird survey held at Chimmony and Peechi-Vazhani Wildlife Sanctuaries from 28th November to 1st December 2014. The survey sighted 187 species of birds from 9 base camps, of which three were led by the team from WWF.

Friday Forum - November 2014



The Friday Forum of the month was held at Museum Auditorium, Thiruvananthapuram on 7th November with the theme "Western Ghats – Haven of Biodiversity – Functions, Values & Services". Sri.S.Radhakrishnan, Dy. Director, Wildlife Education from Kerala Forests & Wildlife Department led the session. The session was quiet interactive with around 150 school students participating from different schools.

Sunday Bird Walk



The monthly Sunday Bird Walk was held at Arippa Forests on 9th November 2014 with the participation of 8 birders. 56 species of birds were observed from the diversified forests including Malabar Trogon, Flame throated Bulbul and Malabar grey Hornbill.

Salim Ali Day

WWF-India, Kerala State Office organized a single day awareness programme in connection with Salim Ali Day 2014 at Public Library Hall, Kollam on 12th November. The programme was arranged in association with Social Forestry Division and Social Forestry Extension Unit, Kollam, Kerala Forests & Wildlife Department. 75 students and teachers from 7 schools of Kollam and

around 15 individuals attended the programme. Bird quiz, technical sessions on bird watching, birds and man and bird photo exhibition were included in the programme.



Class on Energy Conservation at Olathanni School, Neyyattinkara



The State Director was invited to inaugurate the Oorjotsavam supported by Energy Management Centre, Government of Kerala at Victory HSS, Olathanni, Neyyattinkara and deliver a talk on 'Energy Conservation and Ecological Footprint' on 21 Nov, 2014.

Teachers Training Workshop at Malayalam University, Tirur, Malappuram



A Teachers Training Workshop on Education for Sustainable Development, supported by CPREEC, Chennai was held at Malayalam University, Tirur, Malappuram on 26th November 2014 in association with the University on the theme 'Western Ghats'. It was attended by 48 teachers from different schools of the district and few from the University. The workshop was inaugurated by Sri.K.Jayakumar IAS, Vice Chancellor of the University. Sri.Renjan Mathew Varghese and A.K.Sivakumar led the technical and activity sessions.



The Teachers Training Workshop held at Mercy College, Palakkad on 27th November in association with the College Nature Club was attended by 45 teachers from different schools of the district and the college. The workshop was inaugurated by Dr.Sr.Alice Thomas, Principal of the college. Dr. Jain J. Therattil of St. Aloysius College, Thrissur and A.K. Sivakumar led the technical and activity sessions.

Exhibition Stall in Chaithanya Karshika Mela

The Kottayam Social Service Society organized the Chaithanya Karshika Mela from 26 – 30 Nov, 2014 at Chaithanya Pastoral Centre, Kottayam. WWF was invited to put up our exhibition stall and two stalls were given free of charge. It was a good platform to showcase our work and products.



Meeting at Thiruvananthapuram International Airport on Bird Menace

The Kerala State Biodiversity Board had convened a meeting of experts on addressing the issue of bird menace in and around the Thiruvananthapuram International Airport. The State Director attended the meeting and participated in the discussions and deliberations. The main reason attributed to the increasing bird menace is connected to careless waste disposal since there is no municipal solid waste management system in place in the Capital City

now. The State Director shared the photographs of waste dumping, especially fish waste dumped along the Chackai ITI – All Saints College stretch.

International Symposium MECOS 2 at Kochi



The Marine Biological Association of India (MBAI) organized the international symposium 'Marine Ecosystems – Challenges and Opportunities' at Dream Hotel, Kochi from 2-4 December, 2014. The State Director attended the symposium along with Mr. Vinod Malayilethu, Senior Co-ordinator, Marine Programme and contributed in the discussions and deliberations. WWF was also invited to put up an exhibition stall in the symposium venue along with other similar organizations working in the coastal and marine sector.

Indian Biodiversity Congress 2014 in Chennai



The Third Indian Biodiversity Congress organized by CISSA, CPREEC and Navdanya was held at SRM University, Chennai from 18-20 December, 2014. The State Director attended the congress and contributed to the discussions and deliberations. The technical paper on 'Carbon Sequestration Capacity of the Mangrove Ecosystem of Kannur District of Kerala and its Comparison at Ecosystem and Species level' was accepted for oral presentation in the Congress. WWF was also given an exhibition stall in the venue itself free of cost.

Teachers Training Workshop at Kollam

The Teachers Training Workshop held at Public Library Hall, Kollam on 4th December 2014 was attended by 28 Teachers from different schools of the district. The workshop was inaugurated by Sri.S.Santhosh Kumar, ACF (Social Forestry), Kollam. Sri.S.Radhakrishnan, Dy.



Director (Wildlife Education) of Kerala Forests & Wildlife Department and A.K.Sivakumar led the technical and activity sessions.



Workshop on Conservation Challenges and Initiatives for the Western Ghats



A single day workshop on 'Conservation Challenges and Initiatives for the Western Ghats' was conducted by WWF-India, Kerala State Office in association with



Marian College, Kuttikkanam on 10th December 2014 at the college. The workshop was inaugurated by Fr. Ruban J. Thannikkal, Manager of the college. The technical sessions on 'Conservation of Western Ghats' and 'Human Animal Conflict' was led by Sri. Renjan Mathew Varghese and Sri. PA Vinayan, from WWF-India. An interactive 'Quiz on Wildlife' was led by Sri. A.K.Sivakumar in the afternoon session.



Following the workshop, on the second day, a Teachers Training Workshop on 'Education for Sustainable Development' was held at the same venue on 11th December 2014. The workshop witnessed the active participation of 48 Teachers from different schools of the district. The workshop was inaugurated by Sri. M.T. Thomas, President of Idukki District Panchayat in a session presided over by Fr. Ruban J. Thannikkal. Sri. Renjan Mathew Varghese introduced the workshop, organizers and supporters. Br.Sarat Thomas of Marian College delivered the welcome speech and Sri.N. Ravindran, Coordinator, WWF-India NCIs proposed the vote of thanks. The technical sessions were led by Renjan Mathew Varghese and A.K.Sivakumar.



Class on Geoinformation Technology in NRM at Kochi

The State Director was invited to give a guest lecture on the topic of 'Fundamentals of Geoinformation Technology and its Applications in the field of Natural Resource Management' in the training organized by CGIT at Rajagiri School of Engineering and Applied Sciences, Kochi on 13 December, 2014



Sustainable Development Congress in Kottayam

People's Forum for Sustainable Development in association with others organized Kerala's First Sustainable Development Congress in Kottayam from 13-14 December, 2014. WWF was specially invited to attend the seminar and put up our exhibition stall. Mr. Visanth, Volunteer represented WWF-India in the event.



Translation of Posters on 'Fishes of Chalakudy'

Under the Sustainable Livelihoods and Governance programme being carried out in the South Western Ghats Landscape, a new initiative has been launched to look at the sustainability aspects of the fishery resources of Athirappilly – Vazhachal area. A workshop in this regard was organized on 30 December, 2014 and the posters in English were translated into the vernacular language i.e. Malayalam, printed and used in the workshop.

EDITORIAL BOARD

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