



WWF

NEWS  
LETTER

KERALA

2014

January-February 2014

# Mruthika

Newsletter of WWF - India, Kerala State Office

## FROM THE STATE DIRECTOR'S DESK

The last two months of January and February 2014 has been really gratifying that we could accomplish some very relevant work which has been in our mind since sometime. The National Environment Awareness Campaign 2013-14, which is one of the biggest national environment awareness campaigns of the Ministry of Environment and Forests, Govt. of India, provided us a platform to put forward a novel project proposal to conduct a survey of the trees in Thiruvananthapuram City and document the heritage trees. The project was titled 'Muthassi Marangal Katha Prayunnu'. WWF envisaged carrying out the project on a participatory mode and in this regard eleven educational institutions in the City stepped forward to take up this responsibility and hence we could complete the work comprehensively and on time. The project report and the Poster on Heritage Trees of the City has been prepared and submitted to the funding agency for approval. Similarly, 'Paaristhithikam', the state level environmental awareness campaign co-ordinated by Dept. of Environment and Climate Change, Govt. of Kerala helped us to carry out a survey and assessment of the status of the tanks and ponds in Thiruvananthapuram City. This was again completed successfully with the active participation of Mr. Sivaprasad, our volunteer and ex-employee of BSNL and we are very grateful to him for his field level efforts in documentation and photography. The observations, findings and recommendations have been compiled into a really beautiful handbook with relevant text, maps and photographs of the tanks and ponds within the City limits. We hope that this documentation will go a long way in protecting our natural water resources which can cater to our water security. WWF had completed a very novel project for the Dept. of Environment and Climate Change, Govt. of Kerala titled 'Development of Sustainable Livelihood Security Index for the Ramsar Site (Vembanad) of Kerala'. The project was completed and the report submitted to the funding agency. The final stakeholder's workshop was organized in Kumarakam, Kottayam with the association of ATREE CERC, Alappuzha. Around 80 participants attended the workshop including LSG representatives, stakeholder groups including fishermen, clam collectors, lime shell collectors, farmers, local

NGO representatives etc. The full day workshop witnessed very dynamic interaction between the project team and the stakeholders. Many constructive recommendations and decisions came up as an outcome of the workshop. Slightly apart from our main agenda, we associated with two other agencies to conduct two programmes aimed at the welfare of animals. A one day workshop was organized by CPREEC with the support of Animal Welfare Board of India and the local co-ordination of WWF-India. Around 160 participants attended the workshop including animal activists, local NGOs, veterinarians, animal protection groups, students etc. The technical sessions in the workshop were led by the leading experts from across the country including the Chairman of AWBI. We also partnered in the campaign titled 'Share the World' organized by People For Animals (PFA) in Thiruvananthapuram voicing their concerns mainly on the burning stray dog issue in the City. The campaign included Cycling by Indus Cycling Embassy, Walkathon and distribution of stickers and leaflets by the volunteers of WWF and PFA. On our awareness and extension front, we were invited to put up our exhibition stall at the Kerala Science Congress organized by KSCSTE in Wayanad and also on the Global Ayurveda Festival organized by CISSA in Kochi. The WWF South Western Ghats Team had an interaction meeting with the senior most officers of the Kerala Forests and Wildlife Department led by Mr. V. Gopinathan, PCCF (Wildlife) & Chief Wildlife Warden on the Tiger Estimation Exercise being carried out by WWF and WCS in Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Karnataka. On a personal front, I was invited to participate in the three days People's Management Programme (PMP) organized by the HR Division of WWF-India with the assistance of the resource persons from WWF-International and Better Future. It was a really great learning and sharing experience. Around 28 participants actively took part in the discussions and deliberations and the activity oriented and participatory learning process which was put forward to us. I would like to thank WWF-India for giving me such a wonderful learning experience.

**Renjan Mathew Varghese,**  
State Director

## IMPORTANT NEWS ON ENVIRONMENT AND NATURE

### GLOBAL

#### Vanishing large carnivores threaten ecosystems

In ecosystems around the world, the decline of large predators such as lions, wolves, otters and bears is changing the face of landscapes. Ironically, they are vanishing just as the scientists are learning about their important

ecological effects. A significant analysis of 31 carnivore species shows for the first time how threats such as habitat loss, persecution by humans and loss of prey combine to create global hotspots of carnivore decline. More than 75 percent of the 31 large-carnivore species are declining, and 17 species now occupy less than half of their former ranges, the authors reported in a study published in the journal Science. Southeast Asia, Southern and East Africa and the Amazon are among areas in which multiple large carnivore species are declining. "With some exceptions, large carnivores have already been exterminated from

much of the developed world, including Western Europe and the Eastern United States,” said William Ripple, Lead Author and a Professor in the Department of Forest Ecosystems and Society at Oregon State University. This included African Lions, Leopards, Eurasian Lynx, Cougars, Sea Otters and Dingoes. (Source: <http://zeenews.india.com> January 9, 2014)

## NATIONAL

### Farmers to get 50 per cent subsidy for solar fencing

The government will provide 50 per cent subsidy to farmers to put up solar fences on their farms, said Minister for Forests of Karnataka State, as an obstacle against entry of wild animals and to reduce man-animal conflict. The Minister told presspersons that the Department had put up elephant-proof trenches and installed solar-powered fences around some stretches of the reserve forests and national parks. “This is part of the Karnataka Sustainable Forest Management and Bio-diversity Conservation Programme. However, if farmers want to get solar fences installed by private companies, we will grant them 50 per cent subsidy,” he said. (Source: *The Hindu*, January 3, 2014)

### India lost 63 wild tigers in 2013

The country lost 63 of its wild tigers in 2013. The first tiger death of the year was reported from the South Brahmपुरi Forest Range of Chandrapur district, Maharashtra, on January 6, 2013 caused by suspected poaching. The last wild tiger death of the year was reported from the Heggadadevana Kote Range of the Mysore Forest Division in Karnataka on December 28, 2013 and the cause is under investigation. A good majority of the wild tiger deaths in the country was the result of poaching. Data on the wild tiger deaths released by the National Tiger Conservation Authority confirmed that 48 of the wild tiger deaths in 2013 were caused by poaching or suspected poaching. Old age as the cause of death was reported in only two instances — at the Similipal Tiger Reserve in Orissa and the Kharangana Forest Range in Maharashtra. Two tigers were killed by poisoning — one at Kaziranga Tiger Reserve, Assam, and the other at Pilibhit Forest Division of Uttar Pradesh. The highest number of wild tiger deaths was reported from Karnataka, sixteen, followed by Maharashtra with nine. From Assam and Uttarakhand, eight deaths each were reported. Five wild tiger deaths were reported from Kerala during the year and four of them occurred at the Wayanad Wildlife Sanctuary. (Source: *The Hindu*, January 2, 2014)

### Vizag Zoo to get country's first Wild Dog Breeding Centre

In about two to three months' time, the Indira Gandhi Zoological Park (IGZP) at Vishakhapatnam will be the first zoo in the country to have a Conservation Breeding Centre

for the endangered Wild Dog or 'dhole.' Selected by the Central Zoo Authority to carry out this project at a cost of Rs. 50 lakh, the zoo authorities have earmarked an area on the premises for the centre. After a series of successful in-breeding of wild dogs in the zoo, its population witnessed a massive increase within the protected area from just two to 22, the highest number of wild dogs in captivity in the country, according to current records. Recently, two more litter of wild dogs were spotted at the wild dog enclosure, which is now being monitored to prevent disturbances. However, the number and gender of the litter are yet to be ascertained. Similar in-breeding of wild dogs was carried out in zoos in Chennai and Mysore without much success. Classified as endangered by the IUCN, wild dogs or 'dholes' are dwindling in numbers due to habitat loss, depletion of prey base, and destruction of forest corridors leading to fights with other predators and diseases from domestic and feral dogs. (Source: *The Hindu*, February 19, 2014)

## STATE

### Kerala plans to compile list of quarries

Ecologist Madhav Gadgil's disclosure on illegal quarries in the Kerala part of Western Ghats has resulted in the Department of Mining and Geology planning to compile a list of quarries in the State. The Directorate of Mining and Geology, Kerala, has written to all its district units to prepare a status report on quarries operating in their respective areas. The units may need some time to compile the list. Prof. Gadgil had stated that 1,700 illegal quarries were operating in the hill ranges of the State. The revelation was made at a recent function in Odisha in the presence of Union Minister Jairam Ramesh. The ecologist went on to state that the quarries didn't possess the licence issued by the District Collectors. They were operating defying the orders of Village Panchayats to stop quarrying, he said. At the same time, Mr. Prabhakumar said that the directorate had issued quarry licence of one-year validity to 2,308 units in the State. Long-term mining licences were given to another 487 units with which they could operate for 12 years. The most number of quarries, including granite and laterite quarries, were located in Malappuram district, he said. (Source: *The Hindu*, January 2, 2014)

### Biodiversity Board warns against conversion of Aranmula Pancha

The Kerala State Biodiversity Board (KSBB) has warned against conversion of wetlands for the Aranmula Airport Project, as it will have serious environmental and ecological implications. A report prepared by a KSBB team, on the basis of the third report submitted by the Kerala Legislative Committee on Environment, categorizes the land identified for the airport as a biodiversity-rich wetland. It says 400 of the 500 acres identified for the project is part of the 3,500-acre Aranmula Pancha (paddy field). A major stream, Valiyathode, that flows through the

puncha is a tributary of the Pampa and carries the water collected in the puncha during the monsoon. The runway of the airport has been planned across this stream and 70 acres of the puncha has been converted razing an adjoining hill, Karimaruthumala. It requires razing of many hills for converting the entire land required for the project, which will lead to biodiversity degradation and groundwater depletion. The report says the Aranmula Puncha remains waterlogged throughout the year. The paddy field serves as a water storage area of the wetland and land conversion will hit water availability. Conversion of even a major portion of the Aranmula Puncha, where water spreads and flows evenly during the rainy season, will affect the wetland system, the report says highlighting problems of water-logging as well as water scarcity in store for the region. (Source: *The Hindu*, January 2, 2014)



migratory bird that breeds in the hot wetlands of Tamil Nadu and Karnataka. It makes an open nest by heaping up decayed vegetation on swamps itself and lays eggs. It has the immense habit of parental care while brooding, by pretending like injured to attract the enemy or predator to it and keep away from its nest. Once the enemy or predator is moved to a safe distance from the nest, it will fly away. But there are reports of this bird's nesting in Kollam and Ernakulam districts which indicate our wetlands are also becoming hotter. Usually these birds are seen in groups and often feeds merged with other wader groups. It feeds on small aquatic insects and organisms.

## CHILDREN'S CORNER

### Sparrow Watch

Sparrows are very common birds, found in our bus terminals, railway stations, markets and other public places, catching our attention with enchanting chirps. Once these active birds were abundant in our state but suddenly a drastic fall in their number was noticed, attributed to several reasons. Here comes a very good opportunity to study these friends, as part of World Sparrow Day on 20<sup>th</sup> March 2014. You also can be part of this by doing the following

1. Identify the places where you come across these birds very frequently in your locality
2. Just have a rough count of the birds
3. Observe what they feed on, where they feed on and what they are doing otherwise?
4. Find out the places where they make nests
5. Find out where they roost
6. Put some drinking water for them in summer and observe
7. Put up a bird feeder with some grains and observe
8. Put up some bird nests with wood/card board/some other materials
9. Make a Sparrow Diary by documenting all these information from your own observation
10. Share it with your friends

## SPECIES OF THE ISSUE

### Black winged Stilt

Black winged Stilt is a beautiful bird that wades in the shallow waters of our wetlands. This black winged white bird with ruby colored long slender legs and black bill is a regular visitor of our wetlands. In Kerala, this is a

## MEMBER'S DESK

### ജലം ജീവവായു

ജലം, ജഗന്മാഹന സലിലം  
 ജലം ഇന്ന് ജംഗുലം  
 ജനതയ്ക്കു വിണ്ണിൽ പൊരുതേണ്ട ലക്ഷ്യം ജലം  
 ജലമാണ് ജീവൻ... ജലമാണ് ജീവൻ...

ജലമാണ് ജീവന്റെ സ്വത്വം  
 ജലാജലം, ജിതേന്ദ്രമാം ജനലോകം വാഴ്ത്തും സലിലം  
 ഭൂമിതൻ ഊറ്റം ഭോജനസങ്കടം  
 പ്രജകൾ തൻ പ്രപഞ്ചം പ്രച്ഛിലമായ്  
 (ജലമാണ് ജീവൻ)

ഇനിയൊരു ലോകമഹായുദ്ധമുണ്ടെങ്കിൽ  
 ജലത്തിനെ ആസ്പദം തീർച്ച!  
 ഓരോ തുള്ളിയും പാഴാക്കാതെ ആവശ്യ-  
 മായ് നാം ശീലമാക്കൂ.

(ജലമാണ് ജീവൻ)

അമൂല്യമാം ജലം പാഴാക്കാതെ  
 ജനകീയ മിഴികൾ തുറക്കൂ  
 ഒരു തുള്ളി, ഒരു തുള്ളി, ഒരു തുള്ളി  
 ജലമതിനായ്, നാളെയ്ക്കു വേണ്ടി നാം സംഭരിക്കൂ

(ജലമാണ് ജീവൻ)

ജാനകി എൽ.

ഗവ. യു.പി.എസ്. തമ്പകച്ചുവട്  
 ആര്യാട് പി.ഒ., ആലപ്പുഴ

## SPECIAL FEATURE

### ASIAN WATERFOWL CENSUS 2014 PATHANAMTHITTA DISTRICT

#### Introduction

Every January, thousands of volunteers across Asia and Australia visit wetlands in their country and count water birds, including the migratory ones. This event is called as the Asian Waterfowl Census (AWC), which is part of a global waterfowl monitoring programme, the International Waterfowl Census (IWC). This is a worldwide estimation process of water birds as they are one of the health indicators of our wetlands. Information from the AWC contributes to the identification and monitoring of wetlands of international and national importance. It also assists decision-makers in designating sites to the Convention on Wetlands (Ramsar, Iran 1971). The census has been an ongoing effort since 1987. It is conducted by a large network of volunteers working through national and state coordinators. The AWC network is coordinated by Wetlands International. The census is annually organised during the second and third weeks of January.

#### Kerala Scenario

The State Level Strategic Planning & Capacity Building Workshop on Avian Fauna (outside forests) held on 25th November 2013 at Govt. Guest House, Ernakulam hosted by Social Forestry Division of Kerala Forests & Wildlife Department was organized with the objective to bring all such related efforts in Kerala on avian fauna (birds) on a common platform under a single umbrella. It includes the annual AWC, heronry monitoring, pelagic bird survey and common bird monitoring programme.

During the core team discussion under the leadership of Dr.B.S.Corrie IFS, PCCF (SF), Sri.W.S.Suting IFS, APCCF (SF), Dr. A K Bhardwaj, IFS APCCF (FMIS), it was decided to assign the task of conducting the annual AWC, heronry monitoring, pelagic bird survey and common bird monitoring programme in Thiruvananthapuram, Kollam and Pathanamthitta districts to WWFIndia, Kerala State Office and Travancore Natural History Society (TNHS).

#### Monitoring Sites

##### 1. West Othara & Thiruvamanapuram wetlands

West Othara paddy fields, located in the western side of Othara of Eraviperoor Panchayat still have good agriculture and are buzzing with biodiversity. The major portion of this wetland falls in the east side of Chengannur – Thiruvalla Rail route. Only a very small portion lies on the west side of the railway line. There was a good population of migratory waders found during our study. Thiruvamanapuram paddy

fields are located north of Othara. Major part of this wetland remains waterlogged and small area was being prepared for paddy cultivation. A good population of Waders was found in the area under paddy cultivation.

##### 2. Aranmula – Nalkalikkal Wetlands

The vast wetlands have considerable water depth. Waters in the middle and are shallow towards the side. The site is very near to Aranmula Parthasarathy Temple and falls under the disputed land proposed for the KGS International Airport. The wetlands have been partially reclaimed by the airport authorities and that is a considerable loss to the waterfowl habitat. Thirty-seven species of birds were sighted here in which 18 species falls under the AWC. Since the water body is interconnected with nearby streams, this would serve the ecological functions of a very good wetland. The river bed of Pampa also is included in this site.

##### 3. Pandalam – Thonnallur Ela

This site has a landuse mix of rice fields and a wet swamp lying uncultivated, but still a highly potential water fowl habitat. The diversity and individual count of water birds found here was high. The cultivated land, shallow waters and deep water logged areas offer varied habitats for wide range of water birds. Apart from being unattended, this area does not face any serious anthropogenic threat. Its connectivity with the Karingalichal makes it a contiguous wetland.

#### Methodology

The dates proposed were announced in advance and communicated to the experts in waterfowl identification. Interested volunteers were also included. AWC in Pathanamthitta was fixed for 21st at Othara – Thiruvamanapuram wetlands, 22nd at Aranmula – Nalkalikkal wetlands and 23rd at Pandalam – Thonnallur Ela to maintain the uniformity in line with the internationally ongoing AWC. In every site, the census was conducted as a single day event starting from 6.30am and extending up to 11.30am to get maximum result. In every site three experts were present to collect the data, cross check and finalize to avoid any incidental errors. All the three day's observations were compiled and given as a press release in the local newspapers. The separate AWC datasheet for all the sites were sent to Dr.P.O.Nameer, AWC State Coordinator.

#### Conclusion

Since the AWC is being conducted in the district for the first time; a comparative data analysis is not possible, as timeline data of previous years are not available. But in general, the bird population and species diversity was high in Pandalam – Thonnallur Ela compared to Others.

Among the waterfowl observed, Waders and Migrants were much more in number. Sighting of migrants like more than 80 Red Shanks, 5 Little Terns, 344 Wood Sandpipers,

78 Barn Swallows, a pair of Spot billed Ducks, 47 Little Stints, 106 Whiskered Terns, 7 Green Shanks, 40 Black winged Stilts and 4 Black headed Ibises were important. The congregation of a mix of Little and Intermediate Egrets numbering around 500 at the Cherikkal part of the wetland was a remarkable observation and is a direct indicator of abundant food, mainly fish, available in the area. During the census, the team observed the birds as very busy in feeding right from the early morning hours and this again is an indication of the plentiful food availability. A major suggestion in this regard is that paddy cultivation in this region should be promoted in line with bio farming to ensure that this wetland remains as a potential water bird habitat benefiting the local people and the farmers.

The vast Aranmula – Nalkalikkal wetlands are potential habitat for water birds like Jacanas and Wild Ducks. This wetland complex faces serious threats due to the heavy disturbance in the area brought about through drastic landuse changes in the form of extensive wetland reclamation as preparatory work for the proposed Aranmula International Airport and excessive growth of invasive *Salvinia* plants (African Paayal). A considerably good portion of the wetland has been reclaimed for the construction of the runway for the airport. This reclamation portion now acts as a barrier for water movement between the upper lying Kidangannur paddy fields, Nalkalikkal Thodu and these wetlands. This has resulted in the excessive growth of *Salvinia* leading to the destruction of the entire habitat.

The difference in water dynamics in the wetland, both in the reclaimed and unreclaimed area is very evident, the dynamics still holding very good in the unreclaimed area where Nalkalikkal Thodu joins the Aranmula wetland. Even then bird diversity was pretty high even in the reclamation area, as it still has some extent of flowing water. We recommend that the Government critically reviews the proposed project on whether it is actually required or otherwise scrap the project to protect the remaining natural wetlands and maintain its social, ecological, hydrological and economical values and services. In this region also, paddy cultivation needs to be promoted the organic way to augment the biodiversity.

The West Othara – Thiruvamanapuram paddy field wetland complex also is rich with migratory birds and serves as a water bird landing point, suitable for both waders and others. There was a good population of migratory waders found by the study team. Thiruvamanapuram paddy field is also a healthy wetland which provides good feeding sites to migratory birds. About 2/3rd portion of this wetland is not cultivated and remains water logged.

#### Recommendations

1. Conduct a detailed inventory of wetlands in the district and document the same for AWC in the coming years.
2. Carry out quarterly bird surveys in all these or selected

potential wetlands to make a complete database of bird population and its seasonal trends in species and numbers.

3. Conduct sensitization programmes targeting students and local community residing near to these wetlands. It could be camps, exhibitions, awareness sessions, slide shows, preparing pamphlets, brochures, stickers, posters etc.
4. Formulate a comprehensive Wetland Education Programme for the selected potential wetlands targeting school students and teachers ensuring tangible results in the days ahead.
5. Form local Wetlands Conservation Network including nearby schools, colleges, youth clubs and other organized bodies
6. Promote organic agriculture, especially paddy, so that the migratory waders can be attracted with abundant feeding grounds.
7. Revamp agricultural activities in and around these wetlands by facilitating farmers with possible support from the Kerala Forests & Wildlife Department and by coordinating with other line departments.
8. Since the proposed International Airport in Aranmula needs to reclaim a large area of wetlands and thereby disturb the bird population, the proposal has to be critically reviewed and if necessary scrapped.
9. Implement biodiversity augmentation measures by planting medium sized fruiting and flowering trees along the banks of the wetlands.
10. Kerala Forests & Wildlife Department officials may conduct monthly field visits to these wetlands to improve enforcement.
11. Intervene at all possible levels to prevent extensive wetland reclamation for development projects
12. Take necessary legal measures to stop unwanted and unscientific wetland reclamation.

## ACTIVITIES OF WWF-INDIA KERALA STATE OFFICE

### Laterite Mining Project



From the Dept. of Mining and Geology and other records, Chirayinkil was identified as the hotspot of laterite mining in Thiruvananthapuram. Based on this understanding, a recon survey was carried out in most of the laterite mining sites in and around Chirayinkil. The recon survey helped us to get a better understanding and clearer picture on the extent and magnitude of this very harmful mining process. In this process, we could also identify some new dimensions to be considered under study like occupational hazard, health and safety issues. Based on this understanding, a detailed discussion was carried out with Dr. Pradeep Kumar, Department of Geology, GoK. The associated data of rainfall from IMD and ground water data from CGWB and SGWB have been requested for.

#### **Position Paper on Climate Change in Kerala**

We visited many R&D institutions, University departments and interacted with the experts working in the various sectors with linkage to climate change. We could collect secondary information. We could talk to these experts and understand the work which has been completed, ongoing etc with regard to CC in the various sectors and this also helped us to identify the gaps in data and research.

#### **Urban Greening of Thiruvananthapuram City**

The Social Forestry Division of the Kerala Forests and Wildlife Department with the financial support of the Dept. of Environment and Climate Change is setting out on a major project to improve the urban greening of the Capital City. In this regard, a brainstorming session was conducted at the Conference Hall of the Forest HQ on 27<sup>th</sup> Jan, 2014 for which WWF was also invited. A detailed note on the same was prepared internally, refined and the same was submitted to the PCCF (SF) by the State Director in the meeting.

#### **Orientation Session for Nature Club members of SN Public School, Kollam**

Senior Education Officer led a 2 hour long orientation session on nature sensitization for the Nature Club Members of SN Public School, Kollam on 7<sup>th</sup> Jan 2014.

#### **Legislative Assembly march to implement Gadgil Report on the Western Ghats**

State Director, Senior Education Officer and Project Officers participated in the public march to Legislative Assembly to implement Gadgil Report on the Western Ghats with other like minded NGOs. It was lead by Smt. Sugathakumari Teacher and Sri. V.S. Vijayan of Prakrithi Samrakshana Samity.

#### **Bird Walk in January**

The monthly bird watching programme was conducted at Polachira Wetlands of Kollam District on 11th January with 12 bird watchers. The participants noted around 52 species of birds. This data would supplement the Asian Waterfowl Census.



**Nature Orientation Trip to Chathancode**



Senior Education Officer led a team of 25 students of St. Mary's HSS, Pattom to Chathendcode, part of Peppara WLS. They interacted with the tribes there and had a wonderful nature watch.

#### **Asian Waterfowl Census**



WWF coordinated and conducted the waterfowl count of 3 major wetlands of Pathanamthitta district. Sri.C.Harikumar, Neha Waikar and Senior Education Officer led the teams. Detailed report appended under special feature.

#### **Share the World – Cycle Rally for Animals**



WWF joined hands with People for Animals (PFA) to conduct a cycle rally on 26<sup>th</sup> January morning from Kawdiar to East Fort to convey the message of sharing this world with our animal friends. A set of 6 stickers were prepared with good image and caption to be used in the rally.



### Exhibition at St. Stephen's College, Pathanapuram

As part of their Golden Jubilee Celebrations, St. Stephen's College, Pathanapuram organized a grand exhibition and they exhibited the awareness panels of WWF also as part of the same. The exhibition was attended by school and college students of the adjoining areas and was also open to public.

### Kerala Science Congress 2014 – Saasthrajalakam

WWF was also invited to put up our exhibition stall in Saasthrajalakam at Wayanad from 28-31 January, 2014.



### Paaristhithikam - State Environment Awareness Programme



Kerala State Office conducted a reconnaissance survey on ponds and tanks of Thiruvananthapuram City and published it into a handbook. The survey was done by a team of

volunteers under the leadership of Sri. K. Sivaprasad, Rtd. BSNL Officer. The awareness programme was conducted at Salvation Army School, Thiruvananthapuram and was inaugurated by Dr. Subhash Chandra Bose, Director, CCDU of Dept. of Water Resources.

### Seminar on Animal Welfare

Kerala State Office organized a single day seminar on Animal Welfare on 24<sup>th</sup> January 2014 at Thiruvananthapuram in association with CPREEC, Chennai which was attended by around 160 participants. The sessions were led by Dr. R. Sukumar, Dr. Gharb, Dr. Chinni Krishna, Mr. S. Vinod Kumar, Dr. Nanditha Krishna, Mr. N. Jayasimha and Mr. Rahul Easwar.



### Stakeholder's Workshop as part of the ongoing SLSI Project of Vembanad Lake

WWF-India Kerala State Office has recently concluded a project titled 'Development of Sustainable Livelihood Security Index (SLSI) for the Ramsar Site (Vembanad) of Kerala'. The project report was submitted to the funding agency i.e. Dept. of Environment and Climate Change, Govt. of Kerala. In this regard, the final Stakeholders Workshop was organized on 7<sup>th</sup> Feb, 2014 at KTDC Waterscapes, Kumarakam, Kottayam in association with ATREE CERC, Alappuzha. Against the expected 50 participants, the workshop witnessed the active participation of around 80 stakeholders including LSG representatives, NGOs, environmentalists, stakeholder groups etc.



### Tiger estimation meeting at KFD

WWF-India South Western Ghats Landscape Team and the State Director had an interaction with the senior most officials of the Kerala Forests and Wildlife Department led

by Mr. V. Gopinathan IFS, PCCF (Wildlife) & Chief Wildlife Warden on 10<sup>th</sup> Feb, 2014 at the Conference Hall in the Forest HQ. The meeting was to discuss on the ongoing and future tiger estimation exercise being carried out covering Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Karnataka. Representative from WCS was also present.

### **Bird Survey at Silent Valley National Park**

Mr. A.K. Sivakumar attended the Annual Bird Survey from 5<sup>th</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup> Feb, 2014 at Silent Valley National Park with the objective of formulating the authentic data on avifauna of the Park. He was deputed to the interior Walakkad area for the purpose. Sixty-eight species of birds were identified from the site including Eurasian Woodcock, Grey Nightjar, White bellied Shortwing etc.

### **Common Bird Monitoring Programme**



As part of the Green Partnership programme, Kerala State Office coordinated the Common Bird Monitoring Programme (CBMP) of Thiruvananthapuram, Kollam and Pathanamthitta districts that was carried out from 14<sup>th</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup> February 2014. Orientation programmes for proper observation and data submission were conducted at Thiruvananthapuram and Konni with the support of Social Forestry Wing of Kerala Forests & Wildlife Department. Big Bird Day was observed by Kerala State Office coupled with CBMP as both were falling on the same dates.

### **National Science Day at KUCoTE, Kumarapuram and Kollam**

Senior Education Officer was invited for delivering a talk on the theme of “Fostering Scientific Temper in Biodiversity Conservation” at Kerala University College of Teacher Education at Kumarapuram and Kollam in connection with National Science Day 2014 on 14<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> Feb 2014 respectively.

### **Teachers Training Workshop**

A Teachers Training Workshop was conducted at Peet Memorial Training College, Mavelikara with the support

of CPREEC, Chennai in which 80 Teacher Trainees from two institutions participated. The technical and activity sessions were led by Sri. Jojo T.D., Programme Officer of ATREE and Senior Education Officer, WWF-India.



### **National Environment Awareness Campaign**



The awareness component of the NEAC, in association with CED and MoEF was held on 17<sup>th</sup> January 2014 at Thiruvananthapuram with the participation of around 160 students from 9 schools and 2 college of the City. Training on documenting the heritage trees of the City was held with other supporting technical sessions.



The action component, a poster on Heritage Trees of Thiruvananthapuram City was prepared in A0 size. The photographs and data were collected by the students of 11 educational institutions of the City who were partners in the project. The collected data was compiled into a poster which will be useful for future planning of the city.

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Published by WWF-India, Kerala State Office, Moolavilakom, Vanchiyoor P.O., Thiruvananthapuram-695035  
Phone:0471-2302265, E-mail: [wwfklso@gmail.com](mailto:wwfklso@gmail.com), Web:[www.wwfindia.org](http://www.wwfindia.org)  
Computer Graphics: Soft and Soft, Sasthamangalam, Phone: 9447451314, Printed at: New Multi Offset, TVPM.