

## “Wetlands for a sustainable urban future” on World Wetlands Day

The theme for World Wetlands Day for 2 February 2018 was **“Wetlands for a sustainable urban future.”** With the increasing urban sprawl, the city wetlands have been encroached to meet the increasing demand for land.

The aim of the programme was to create awareness amongst the students, to make them understand that urban wetlands make cities liveable by reducing floods, replenishing drinking water, filtering waste, improving water and air quality, promoting human well-being, enabling people to earn a living and many more. The inventiveness to involve the students was undertaken from 1<sup>st</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> February.

During these 10 days, various activities in school were carried out followed by field trips. Contests and competitions raised awareness and knowledge about World Wetlands Day and the mission of the organization. A very simple yet incredibly effective



Students learning about the waterbirds from posters and banners



Students watching the birds during the field trip to reservoirs

contest for the students was to write the Hindi or local names of 10 water birds that they have seen, read or heard about. It was not astonishing to find that most of the students ended up in writing 6-7 names only. This activity was a

self realizing experience for them. After this the students were provided with posters and banners that had the photographs of water birds and their names in Hindi and English. The students noted down the names in their note books

and they also identified a number of birds that they often saw but didn't know their names. The students were also provided with the colour-in poster designed by the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands as in their outreach material. The students coloured the posters and learnt about the urban wetlands and their role in sustainable livelihood.

The participants were felicitated for their efforts so as to encourage others to come closer to nature. They were provided with flyers on World Wetlands Day in Hindi, the local language. The field trips provided first-hand experience with physical sites and resources in the nearby water reservoirs. It provided the participants the opportunity to directly engage in watching the biodiversity of the wetlands. On 9 February, Bird Watching Day was also celebrated with the Forest Department, Jhansi Division.

The activities for the students were same as for World Wetlands Day. The students from orphanage were also involved. For many of them it was



**Students enjoying the field trips**



**Posters coloured by the students**

their first experience to watch out the migratory birds. The school staffs were very active and took the initiatives to help in arranging the field trips for the students. Paryavaran Jeev Seva Sansthan, Gonda and Society for Scientific Research, Barabanki

and Sarthak Pragati Prayas Sansthan, Jhansi, collaborated in the program.

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