

# BNHS and Van Vihar National Park observes International Vulture Awareness Day 2024

International Vulture Awareness Day takes place on the first Saturday of September and was established to highlight the importance of vulture conservation. Vultures are a vital part of the planet's ecosystem and are currently fighting several threats out in the wild, with some species facing extinction. On this day, Van Vihar National Park & Zoo and Bombay Natural History Society, Vulture Conservation Breeding Centre, Bhopal organised some events for vulture conservation.

On 07 September 2024, a workshop was held on vulture conservation. The directors/managers of the cow shelters operated by all the non-governmental voluntary organizations around Bhopal city and under MGNREGA (Chief Minister Gauseva Yojana) participated in the workshop. The objectives of the workshop were highlighted by Avdhesh Meena I.F.S., field director, Van Vihar National Park-Zoo, Bhopal. He emphasized that vultures play a significant role in keeping our ecosystem healthy and clean. Vultures do not hunt live prey but act as natural scavengers feeding on the carcasses of dead animals. He further stressed the impact of the Diclofenac drug effect on vulture decline in India as well as safe alternative drugs such as Meloxicam and Tolfenamic Acid utilization on treating cattle.

Shri Mohammed Khaliq, Bhopal Birds, Bhopal gave a presentation on vultures in Madhya Pradesh, their population and identification keys, and importance of vultures in the ecosystem. Further, he insisted on the importance to create vulture restaurants for boosting the vulture population and monitoring the vulture population as well. Ms. Zainab Zaheer Khan, research biologist, Bombay Natural History

Society VCBC- Bhopal gave a talk on the impact of NSAIDs on the Vulture population in India and the overview and highlights of the Vulture Conservation Breeding Centre, Bhopal. In her talk, she explained the impact of NSAIDs on the vulture population such as Diclofenac, Acelofenac, Ketoprofen, and Nimusulide and their ban in veterinary practices. Further, she stressed the importance of the vulture conservation breeding program and the importance of what kind of species are involved in a captive breeding program in Bhopal, husbandry & care centre achievements to the participants. Dr. Ajay Ramteke, deputy director, Veterinary Services, in his talk advised the farmers not to use Diclofenac drug in the treatment of milch animals and to use Meloxicam drug instead. The use of Diclofenac drug is banned by the Government of India for dairy animals. At the end of the workshop, a vulture-based snake and ladder game was played to make all the participants aware.

On the spot quiz programme and vulture conservation snake and ladder game were conducted at the snake park to create awareness among general visitors of the zoo. The public participated enthusiastically and the winners were awarded with gifts. Prizes were distributed to the students who participated in the painting and drawing competitions. The assistant director of Van Vihar Zoo gave the vote of thanks.

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Workshop on Vulture Conservation (Gaushala representatives).



Vulture conservation based snake & ladder game conducted at Snake Park, Van Vihar National Park & Zoo.



Posters created during the drawing and painting competition.



On the spot quiz programme with visitors at Snake Park, Van Vihar National Park & Zoo.



Group photo with participants on Vulture Conservation workshop 7 September 2024.