

Moth watching at GITAM University Campus, Visakhapatnam

Moths are a crucial part of our ecosystem. They function as pollinators, help maintain ecological balance, serve as indicators of ecosystem health and provide evolutionary insights. Yet, moths are rarely appreciated. In order to better understand moths, national moth week, a global event, is organized annually in the month of July.



As part of the national moth week, we organized moth watching in the GITAM University campus at Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh. The participants included the members of the nature club—Green Poets' Society.

We set up the white screen with LED lights to attract the moths. While we waited for the moths to get attracted to the lit screen, I briefed the participants about moths, their ecological importance and the prey-predator interactions between bats and moths.

After this, Dr. Harish Prakash organized a group game. The participants were divided into groups and were handed a printout containing movie posters related to moths. Each team had to pick a movie poster and come up with a movie plot based on the poster. The participants came up with unique, mind-blowing stories on moths.





Scorpion © Nikhil Biswas

When we went back to check the light screen, we did not find any moths. Rather, we found other insects such as rove beetles, winged ants, and forest cockroaches. We also examined the ground and trees nearby and found a scorpion, geckos, and mantis. Towards the end of the event, although we did not find any moths, we had a great time observing the nocturnal taxa around us. The moth watching event not only

ended up with participants appreciating moths, but all the tiny critters that live around us.

Acknowledgments:

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Light trap setup © Melito Pinto