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Wetland restoration: Community engagement series

As the founder of Zoo Outreach Organisation – Sally Walker always said, “There are 3 Cs of Conservation – Communication, Cooperation, Collaboration”, and we at Zooreach truly follow these immortal words and believe in carrying forward her legacy in all our projects.

The outreach component of the Nallusamy Wetland restoration project (which is its final year of execution) also embodies this.

This project is a CSR initiative of Bosch Global Software Technologies limited. The restoration of this wetland has been ongoing for past two years and is now in its final year. We have been collaborating with, and empowering the local community members/influencers after conducting knowledge and perception

surveys. The outreach is called the Friends of Wetlands program which included an introductory workshop in the second year. We are now in the process of training local community members to become communicators for biodiversity.

With this vision we had an interaction with a team of close to 15 people who are part of different local chapters of Kousika Neerkarangal (a local NGO) who endeavour in their own way by volunteering to conserve water bodies and the Kousika river restoration. During this workshop on 11 April 2026 we started with the tradition of tying rakhis to each other symbolising our willingness to befriend biodiversity and protect it. The importance





of native plants and the threat of non-native plants were discussed with much interest. We also spoke about different types of water bodies, their definitions and played games with relevance to this. We also informed them of our expectations and reporting structures and invited them to become part of the outreach program. In other words, this program was an initial interaction to invite members from Kousika Neerkarangal to become trained in

outreach activities related to biodiversity and take it to various target audiences like local community members, colleagues, and kids. The interaction ended with the enrollment form given to the members to take the plunge and become a trainer. It was a special moment for us to see these members of the community, enthusiastic volunteers, and well-wishers of biodiversity & people come forward for this Friends of Wetlands training.

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After a spirited interaction and fascinating discussions during our first interaction with members of Kousika Neerkarangal for the final year of the Nallusamy Wetland Restoration project, we met again on 16 May 2026.

and these six members will be conducting outreach programs after being trained by us in their own local spaces with school kids, youth, colleagues, and local community members.

This time our group was smaller and tight knit with a key agenda of planning the topics of training, methods of teaching and associated materials/tools. There were six members who have now signed up for the training program

After a recap of the previous session, the team members were introduced to wetland and wetland associated biodiversity observed at Nallusamy wetland, their roles and importance. A few games and activities were demonstrated to give the participants an idea of how they can



talks that will be held to support the Friends of Wetlands trainers. On the whole it was a wonderful experience, bringing together many hardworking people who volunteered their time to contribute towards conservation. It was inspiring and reminded us that conservation is always a result of teamwork, and collective effort, never just the work of a single person!

conduct similar sessions while teaching their own audiences. Next we went through different topics of training, the tentative timeline and kinds of materials that will be supplied to them to empower them to conduct the outreach programs for their audience. This was followed by the expectations that we require from them in terms of reporting, details regarding frequency of outreach, audience details, and the kind of support they may need to complete the outreach programs with their audiences.

The session ended with a talk on importance of birds including their roles, their identification technique, and some adaptations that make them unique, to give them a taste of the expert



Priyanka Iyer & Neenu Purushothaman
LivelyWaters!, Zoo Outreach Organisation, Coimbatore,
Tamil Nadu, India. priyanka@zooreach.org

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