

ZOO commemorates International Vulture Awareness Day

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Birds of Prey Programme in South Africa and the Hawk Conservancy Trust in England jointly run International Vulture Awareness Day to expand the initiative into an international event. Every year it is celebrated on the first Saturday in September. The objective of the event for the participating institutions is to carry out their own activities highlighting vulture conservation and awareness.

On 06 September, Zoo Outreach Organization celebrated this event at Tulsi Trust's Knowledge Centre in Vadivelampalayam Village of Coimbatore district, India. About 50 rural students aged between 10-17 participated in the event. The children were taught about the vulture facts such as vultures are part of the biodiversity, total number of vulture species found in the world (23) and nine species found in India, and general information about their morphology, reproduction, lifespan, how vultures are portrayed in our culture, ecological significance of vultures, threats to Critically Endangered 3 Indian *Gyps* species i.e. White-backed Vulture, Slender billed vulture and Long billed vulture and its reasons mainly the usage of the painkiller medicine Diclofenac in cattle, other causes of mortality, vulture decline in India, *ex situ* and *in situ* conservation of vultures in India and other neighbouring South Asian countries, vulture restaurants and Action Plan for vulture conservation in India and Nepal.

Zoo Outreach Organization's vulture education kit was explained and used in the programme. At the end they watched a documentary on Vanishing Vultures. They took a pledge to save vultures. The programme was arranged by Mr. N. Thiyagarajan, Project Officer, Tulsi Trust and Mr. R. Marimuthu, Senior Education Officer, ZOO handled the session.



Teaching about Vulture facts



Flash cards from ZOO's Vulture kit



Watching Vulture documentary



Holding Indian Vultures photos

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