

SANITZ-Educational Activities Report

World Environment Day 2007

World Environment Day Celebrations in Hyderabad

on June 5th 2007, World Environment Day celebrations took off with much excitement in the environs of the Mahaveer Harina Vanasthali National Park, a peaceful heaven to Blackbucks in Hyderabad. This event was organized by the team of Wildlife Education Extension Wing of the Andhra Pradesh Forest Department. About 60 students representing 52 different schools from all over Hyderabad were present on the occasion.



Competitions such as elocution and art were held, the themes of which included 'Climate change and Me' and 'Art from Waste - The best out of Newspaper' respectively. The older group of students raised their concerns about the changing environmental conditions while the younger lot thoroughly enjoyed what they loved to do most—tear, stick, colour in short make a mess around them yet bring out unique art pieces.

Ms. Anuradha Vinod, Education Officer of the Wildlife Education Extension Wing coordinated to bring the students ranging from age 4 to 16 from different schools. Dr. C. Srinivasulu introduced the children to bats and rats saying that the bats belonged to Chiroptera and elucidated the meaning of Chiroptera while some of the eager students chipped in to say that the rats belonged to Rodentia.

The session was more interactive with the students giving their inputs throughout, about the teeth of the rats and how 'long' they were. They went on to say that the 'bats were ugly, the rats squeak!, they are creepy, dirty, the bats drink blood' and so on. But as the talk progressed we handed them the Bats and Rats education material they became increasingly fascinated by the facts and information that was being given to them and one of them in fact went to the extent of saying that 'though they

are ugly and smelly, once you get to know them better they are good and beautiful'. Some children were more enthusiastic and came forward saying that 'the bats have 'wolf-like faces' and have 'claws' to walk in the trees and that 'they fly in the night'. They were even interested to know whether they could keep bats as pets!

Dr. C. Srinivasulu spoke at length about the different kinds of bats and how to easily differentiate between them. He took the help of short and tall students to highlight the size differences among both the fruit bats and the insectivorous bats. He then proceeded to explain to them about the important aspect of feeding among the insectivorous bats, the use of echolocation. Here also children were volunteers and they enjoyed immensely taking turns being the prey or the predator. Through this activity he explained to the children how the bats send ultrasound signals that fall on the prey and hence can pinpoint the exact location of the prey so as to be able to capture it. He explained to them about the importance of the uniquely shaped structures on the nose of the bats and the significance of their ears and their use in echolocation. He also told them about the huge number of insects being predated upon by the bats and how useful and important they were to the humans by eating away numerous disease causing night-flying insects, hence should be protected. Here he also spoke about the importance of the rodents.

At the end of the talk they were asked to take a pledge with the wrist band and they hesitated no further and pledged to take care of the bats and rats and protect them. The kids were asked if they used the internet and referred to the easily found site of BCI Bat Conservation International where they could learn more about bats and the more difficult but uniquely South Asian site of ZOO's tms, Threatened Taxa Monitoring System.



Later that day a snake show was organized wherein the members of Friends of Snakes Society exhibited common venomous and non-venomous snakes of Hyderabad and shared basic information about them. The day ended with a prize distribution ceremony, the Chief Guest of the programme Mr. A.V. Joseph (CCF-Wildlife) gave away the prizes.

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Wildlife Week 2007

Green Heart Nature Club celebrated Wildlife Week 2007 in Kokrajhar, Assam

The objectives of the celebration of Wildlife Week 2007 was a campaign to sensitize students, teachers, parents etc. towards need of conservation of wildlife & nature with a dialects "Know nature, Feel nature, Serve nature" through different programme.

The following programme were conducted involving school children, youth and teachers: A painting competition was held among different groups of school & college students where different theme were given like conservation of endangered Golden langur and its habitat, compassion to wildlife, save birds and its habitat and wetlands for aquatic animals with special reference to amphibians. More than 300 students from different schools & classes from III to Degree course participated. Participants depicted multicoloured picture with caption.

Another drawing competition held at Fakiragram Rly. Bengali School Fakiragram, where children from different schools of this area participated. Fakiragram is a village at distance of 20km from Kokrajkhhar District Head Quarter and was the first such kind of programme in the area. More than 200 school children participated in the programme and drawn multicoloured picture on different themes like save Golden langur, love wildlife, save forests and habitat of wildlife and wetlands. An awareness programme was conducted among the children on conservation of frog, tiger, bats, monkey using printed education material kits and were also distributed among the school children. A programme 'learn through fun' was conducted involving the school children to make them understand the need of conservation of wildlife, forests and the environment as a whole using nature education game kit.

An exposure visit to Chakrasilla Wildlife Sanctuary with 62 school children was organized to make the students a first hand experience with wilderness, interaction with forests, its resources wildlife and its habitats. Awareness was generated among the participants on biodiversity conservation, wildlife, forests conservation, identification of mammals with particular reference to Golden langur (endangered primate), butterflies, birds, insects, plants etc. Nature games were conducted. Practical field

demonstration was also given on how to watch birds, identify them and how to keep records. A demonstration on the habitat of amphibians and how habitats are being threatened by human interference was given. Different conservation games were performed using education tool kits on tiger, bat, and amphibian. It was a daylong programme.

We are very much thankful to Zoo Outreach Organisation for providing education materials and also those organizations who supported the programme; Chester Zoo, WAZA, CBSG, ANSA, SAZARC and Sri Kampa Borgoyari, Hon'ble Deputy Chief, BTC, Principal Govt. Higher Secondary & MP School, Kokrajhar, Divisional Forest Officer, Wildlife Division, Kokrajhar, Head Master, Fakiragram Bengali High School and members of Green Heart Nature Club, Kokrajhar. *Submitted by: Bablu Dey, Director, Green Heart Nature Club, Kokrajhar, BTC, Assam. E-mail: ghnc@rediffmail.com*

Desert National Park, Rajasthan celebrates Wildlife Week 2007

Wildlife week celebrations at DNP began with a Wildlife awareness rally on 1 October 2007, flagged off by Sh. Shale Mohamad, Zila Pramukh of Jaisalmer. In the rally more than 200 students participated. The rally ended at the District Information Centre, where Sh. Vinod Pandya IAS District Collector, inaugurated a week long wildlife exhibition. This was followed by painting competition for students.

From 2-7 October various programmes such as introduction to tiger and bears, drawing, essay



writing in Hindi and English, debate in Hindi on the topics of "Role of youth in wildlife conservation" and "Need for conservation of desert wildlife", and quiz were held. Students of Std. 3-12 aged between 8-17 attended.

For the tiger and bear programmes the materials supplied by Zoo Outreach Organisation was used. The students were taken to the National Park for study tour and they observed endangered and rare bird the Great Indian Bustard and delighted to see other wildlife too. The prize winners were awarded certificates along with books on wildlife and mementoes on 8 October at the closing function. The Principal of the government college was the



chief guest. Submitted by: Deputy Director, Desert National Park, Jaisalmer, Rajasthan.

Wildlife Week Celebration at Surat Zoo
Dr. Shyamaprasad Mukherji Zoological Garden celebrated Wildlife Week throughout the week by using the educational material provided by Zoo Outreach Organization which proved to be very useful and informative in furnishing correct scientific information to the visitors and by active participation of Gujarat based Wildlife Welfare NGO's-Nature Club-Surat, Prayas-Team Environment, Bird Conservation Society of Surat and Beauty Without Brutality. The volunteers of all above NGOs and the staff of the zoo had worked together to make this celebration a great success. School students from different schools of Surat were the target groups and did various activities. All school children were given free entry during Wildlife Week. On the first day, zoo provided well furnished exhibition tent to all participants for display their artifacts and other educational materials. Shri Bhusan Pandya, a Gujarat based renowned wildlife photographer displayed his rare photographs on wildlife and environment and interacted with the visitors. This exhibition was kept open for visitors till 8 October 2007.

After the inauguration, children were divided into school-wise groups of 30 students each. Then the children were made to play an interesting game to find out the difference between wild and domestic animals. From each group, 5 children were selected. After the game was over, pictures of common wild animals kept in the zoo were shown and explained to make them understand the differences between wild and domestic animals. Material such as *rakhis*, posters, books, stickers and masks etc., provided by the Zoo Outreach Organisation were distributed among the students and found very helpful to enhance the environmental information to conserve the nature. During this program, Zoo Outreach Organization was very much acknowledged and appreciated for providing very valuable educational materials.

On the second day many school students had visited the zoo in groups. Some of the students and the teacher from the group were selected and the zoo officials explained them about the act of vandalism in the zoo i.e., about teasing and feeding

captive animals. Zoo staff had also arranged a theme based drama to understand the act of vandalism in the zoo by the visitors, its demerits and the punishment involved in it. All the students were given mask of different characters which they had to play. Their teachers helped zoo official in preparing the dialogues for the students. All these selected students took two hours to understand the theme and the whole drama of animal teasing and feeding in the zoo was played in the open area in the presence of visitors. This theme based drama was enjoyed by all audience and the efforts put in by such small children were highly appreciated.

On the third day students of std. 8-10 visited the zoo in large numbers. Among them, who were interested with the zoo activity were divided in to small groups of 20 and 25 each. Then they were given the information about tiger and bears of India. One group of students received a tiger packet and the other group received bear packets and they were allowed to read the content of the packet in groups. Later an objective type quiz contest was organized for each group based on the content of the information in the packet. The participants found it very interesting and around seventy percent students gave correct answers of the questions asked to them. By this type of activity, we could really arouse curiosity among students not only about tiger or bear but all wildlife.

On fourth day audio-visual clips of untoward behaviour of the people who tease the sloth bear and make them dance on the streets were shown to the visitors. How people separated their young ones from their mothers for their own vested interest. Then these young ones are kept in the small cages without food and water for many days to restrain and domesticate them. Sometimes they have been tortured very badly if they don't perform according to their master's voice/command. All children among the visitors were given the bear masks and were asked to wear it and dance like a bear in front of so many people. They really felt regret for pitiful condition of the bears. The students took an oath to make all efforts to put an end to bear shows on the streets by informing police or zoos or forest officials, as and when they come across bear dance performers on the streets.

On fifth day various activities regarding the awareness about snakes were arranged. The NGOs played very active role in this by performing live snake shows and giving correct scientific information about reptiles in order to avoid the misconceptions about the snakes. The students were made aware about the types of the crocodiles and the gharial, which is found only in India. Population of the gharials has been declined in recent past and the programs undertaken to make their population viable in nature. How crocodiles and gharials are different from each other and why gharials are more vulnerable to environmental pollution was also explained to the students.

On sixth and seventh day we organized many activities like essay writing on Global Warming, extempore speech on "Harmful effect of polyethylene on the environment and its health hazards on the life of the animals and birds", wildlife quiz and drawing competition on "Save Wildlife-Save Planet" for the students. At the end, the students pledged to restrict the use of plastic bags and spread this message among their friends. Also, resource persons shared their views with visitors on "Melting Ice"- a hot topic. They explained about climate change and its effect on human being. Visitors have been convinced to protect and plant more and more trees to fight out the problem of the global warming.

Various instruments and equipments which are used by the zoo for restraining wild animals and reptiles such as dart gun, blow-pip, jab-stick, and tong were displayed to all the children for their knowledge. Besides these guided tours was also arranged on daily basis for the students and visitors in group. The wildlife week was concluded in a memorable way with the distribution of prizes and certificates to the winners by dignitaries.

Acknowledgement: Surat Municipal Zoo is very much thankful to the ZOO for providing educational material, which helped us to not only to conduct the programs successfully but also to create mass awareness among the students and visitors. We also extend our sincere thanks to the Nature Club-Surat, Shri Bhusan Pandya (wildlife photographer), Prayas, Bird Conservation Society of Surat, Beauty Without Brutality and their volunteers to make this venue a great success and memorable. Submitted by: Dr. Prafull C. Mehta, Zoo Director, Surat Zoo, Maharashtra. Email: mehtadrprafull@yahoo.co.in

Wildlife Week Celebration at R. C. A. L. P School, Kerala

This year, wildlife week celebration was conducted at R. C. A. L. P School, Chandrapuram, Walayar, Palakkad, Kerala on 6 October 2007. Walayar is a small town in the border between Kerala and Tamil Nadu with teak and moist deciduous forests. Bonnet Macaque (*Macaca radiata*) and Nilgiri Langur (*Trachypitecus johnii*) are often sighted here and



used to forage on either side of National Highway (NH-47) and there are many incidences where these monkeys singly or in small groups enter the neighbouring villages which results in man-animal conflict. They routinely attack for food, threaten humans especially children, tear clothes and cause other damage. To deal this problem in a positive



way, an awareness programme was planned with school children and sought the educational material "Monkey Manners" from Zoo Outreach Organisation, Coimbatore.

Seventy one students of class IV participated. The programme started with interactive session with the children by raising the issue of recent monkey's visit to the village. Students happily took part in the discussion and concluded the following events as heroism. 1. Injured the monkey by throwing stones 2. Teased and pretended them with sticks 3. Chased the monkeys 4. Fed them with eatables.

This was followed by a general introduction about the forest, wildlife and elaborately about the monkeys of the region, their life at forest, their habitats, reason for the entry into residential areas and its effect to humans. Then each student was provided with the Monkey Manners educational packet sponsored by Zoo Outreach Organization. Students tied *Rakhis* to each other and took oath to save wildlife and not to feed any monkeys hereafter. Then, each material was explained with illustrations and students were asked to read the material carefully and discussions were made in-between which was followed by a drama using masks and drama kit. Finally the students came to know about the types of monkeys and the reason for entering the human habitation and also promised that they will never disturb or feed any monkeys.

Thanks to the Head Mistress, R.C.A.L.P School, and SACON for the opportunities to conduct the programme and Zoo Outreach Organisation, South Asian Primate Network, IUCN/SSC Primate specialist Group and WILD for providing us the educational

material which made the programme live and informative. Submitted by: Vinny R. Peter & L. Joseph Reginald, Salim Ali Centre for Ornithology and Natural History (SACON), CBE, TN. Email: vinnyrpeter@yahoo.com, ljosephreginald@yahoo.com

Wildlife Week Celebration at Eravikulam NP and Chinnar WLS, Kerala
We have conducted nature camps for school children in Eravikulam National Park and Chinnar Wildlife Sanctuary for twenty schools and special groups students of ten schools. The materials supplied by ZOO was distributed to participants. They appreciated the content and quality of the materials. They would like to get this type of material in future also. We are anticipating your co-operation in this regard in future. Thank you for the kindness to spare materials for our efforts in Environmental Education. Submitted by Roy. P. Thomas, Wildlife Warden, Wildlife Division, Munnar, Kerala. Email: enpmunnar@sify.com

Samrakshan Trust Report on Wildlife Week Celebrations - 2007
Samrakshan Trust has been working in Rongara block of South Garo Hills since 2004 with an objective to conserve the rich biodiversity (floral and faunal) of the region through the active involvement of the local community.

In an effort to create greater awareness and pride within the community towards the rare flora and fauna that are found in the Garo Hills and the need to protect these programme at the Aking level was held between October 1-4. We began on 1st October with Rewak Aking, followed by Panda on 2nd October, Halwa Atong on 3rd October and ended with Bulawe on 4th October. A small programme was also organized in Baghmara town on October 9, representatives of all government departments at the district level, non-government organizations and some schoolteachers from Baghmara town were invited. The Project Director, District Rural Development Agency and a few other invitees participated in the meet.

The programme for the children was held from 9.30 am to 12.30pm. Four schools were selected as the main venue for the programme, Rewak Government Lower Primary School for all the primary Schools from Rewak Aking, Panda Chikasin Government Lower Primary School for all primary schools from Panda Aking, Halwa Atong Government Lower Primary School for the primary schools from Halwa Atong, Gongrot and Halwa Ambeng Akings, Bulawe Government Lower Primary School for Naweram EGS, Rongru Asim Government Lower Primary School and Bulawe Government Lower Primary School students.

Similarly for the programme with the elders, team members met with all the Self Help Groups (SHG) in the Aking as also with non-SHG members informing them of the time and venue, this in all cases being a large field or a playground that could accommodate

around 300 people, the time being between 5.00pm and 7.00pm.

Celebrating Wildlife Week: The programme for the children started with a small introduction by one of the team members on why we were conducting the programme; this was followed by a sketching event. For the event, special pages showcasing four species occurring locally were developed; these were the Asian Elephant, the Hoolock Gibbon, the Bengal Tiger, and the Black Rumped Flameback Woodpecker. Each child received any one of the pages, which had a picture of the animal, a small write-up on it in Garo and an outline for the child to colour. A box of crayons was also provided to each child. It took around half an hour for the children to finish, after which they were shown the sketch of each animal on screen and each point in the write-up was explained to them. This done the children settled down to watch an animated film—Brother Bear, about a human child who upon killing a Bear is transformed into a Bear himself, and learns to see and understand the world from a Bear's perspective. A small talk about the film and its message preceded the screening. At the end of the programme one of the teachers was invited to speak a few words on the occasion, and most of them spoke animatedly about the need to conserve nature. Around 700 children and their teachers participated in the programme over the four days.



The elders started gathering at the designated venue by around 5.00pm in the evening, and after a brief introduction the programme would begin with a presentation on the data and information gathered by informants appointed from within the community on Elephant presence and movement in their Aking. The information was gathered as part of the Participatory Elephant Monitoring Programme being implemented by Samrakshan Trust across 11 Akings over the past three years. Simple graphs depicting the number of times Elephants had visited the Aking each year between 2005 to 2007, the months in which Elephant presence and activity in the Aking peaked and ebbed, and the number of occasions when the animals had just passed through and the number of times they had caused damage to farms and orchards was shared. It was thought necessary to share this information with the community as they are the primary information providers, and also to convey to them that while Elephants are causing damage they do not do so on all occasions when they are within Aking boundaries, and that if their behaviour was better understood through such exercises in information gathering it would help in minimizing conflict between Humans and Elephants.

The North East Region Community Resource Management Project (NERCORMP) is a North East Council and IFAD project being implemented in six districts across the North-Eastern Region and West Garo Hills district is one such project district. The second presentation was one that showcased the landscape and biodiversity of South Garo Hills. Using images taken by team members, and of landscapes and species that are from the region a narrative was woven together on the need to conserve to protect the forests and rich biodiversity of the region.

The presentations were followed by screening of a short film titled 'Wilderness Nepal', which was on the forests and biodiversity of the Terai region of Nepal. At the end of the programme in each Aking the concerned Nokma was invited to come and speak a few words on the event. Close to 1500 persons, around 1000 elders and 500 children attended the evening programmes in all the four locations.

On 9th October the programme held at the Circuit House in Baghmara, the presentation on the Participatory Elephant Monitoring Programme was modified and further information added on the Garo Hills Elephant Reserve, Elephant behaviour, and the need to factor these into all development planning for the region. Also presented were the findings from a Participatory Wildlife Assessment exercise undertaken by the organization last year. This was followed by a film show Silent Valley – An Indian Rainforest was screened. Though the participation in the programme in Baghmara town was lower than what we would have liked, a beginning was made and the presence of a senior District level official was encouragement enough for a follow-up to be attempted sometime in the near future.

Acknowledgements: The community of Rewak, Panda, Halwa Atong, Halwa Ambeng, Gibngrot and Bulawe. Six teachers from all Aking, U.S.Fish and Wildlife Service, The District Administration-South Garo Hills, Zoo Outreach Organisation, Coimbatore, NERCORMP, Tura, West Garo Hills. *Submitted by: Yash Shethia, Samrakshan Trust, Meghalaya Field Office. Email: yash.sethia@gmail.com*

Wildlife Week 2007 celebrated by National Green Corps, Palayamkottai, Tamil Nadu
Every year, our nature club celebrates Wildlife Week. This year, we organised a field trip on 25th October to Kuttralam and Achankovil. There students were taught how to behave with free-ranging monkeys. They also learned how to behave with other wild animals using Zoo Outreach Organisation's education materials.

On 26th October, we conducted composition writing and drawing competition in our school campus. Many students participated in these competitions. Then students were taught about the frog and they came to know about the different kinds of frogs. The students were taken to Kumbaruti falls and Manalar in Kerala. There they came to know about different kinds of bats.

All students eagerly participated in these programmes with enthusiasm. They had gained knowledge about nature and different animals. They will remember these experiences always. I am happy that all our students committed that they will



follow the things which they learnt through this programme. It is a great success for our eco club. *Submitted by K. Packianathan, Eco club co-ordinator, St. Xavier's Higher Secondary School, Palayamkottai, Tamil Nadu. Email: kpackia@gmail.com*

Animal Welfare Fortnight 2008

Observance report of Animal Welfare Fortnight 2008 at Aizawl Zoological Park

For the first time, Animal Welfare Fortnight 2008 was observed in befitting manner on 14-28 January at the newly developed Aizawl Zoological Park. During this period the zoo offered free entry to school children by doing wide publicity in advance. As per invitation received from Zoo Outreach Organisation for the supply of education materials, timely order was placed and we received the materials for the fortnight on time.

The programme started with a welcome for the gathering particularly the school authorities. During this programme more than 200 school children and their teachers participated. The celebration was





organised by a team of zoo officials. The school children were given lectures by DCF (WL), ACF (WL) and R.O. (Zoo). We distributed different animal masks to all children that we received from Zoo Outreach Organisation. Later we conducted frog jump activity. The group was taken around to the zoo to see the animals. Submitted by Liankima Lailung, Deputy Conservator of Forests (WL), Wildlife Division, Aizawl, Mizoram. Email: llailung@yahoo.co.in

Report on Observation of Animal Welfare Fortnight by APOWA, Orissa

Animal Welfare Fortnight is celebrated every year in India from 14-30 January. Every year APOWA observe AWF in association with schools, colleges, and local youth clubs in Kendrapara district.



Each year, we try to add either a new service, or a new thrust to the movement. The primary objectives of the event was to create an awareness and action amongst local community, especially school students to boost up their feelings of love, kindness and compassion towards all living beings.

The activities like free animal treatment camp, feeding camps, rescue works, animal cruelty check up, formation of new *karuna* clubs in schools, awareness programmes on animal welfare, distribution of resource materials, display of placards, slogans at major places of the district, students rally, competitions like essay, debate,



quiz and art were conducted among school and college students.

The following schools participated in the above programmes in various activities such as debate, painting and quiz competitions: SVMSV College, Choudakulat, Pattamundai Women's College, Pattamundai, Keshpur UGME School, Keshpur, Hatapatana UP School, Hatapatana, Nilakanthapur UP School, Nilakanthapur and Totasahi UP School, Totasahi.

Our special thanks to the Zoo Outreach Organisation, Coimbatore for supply of educational materials on animal welfare. Submitted by: Shri. Bijaya Kumar Kabi, Director, APOWA, Orissa. Email: apowa1999@yahoo.co.in

OASIS Report of Animal Welfare Fortnight - 2008
OASIS celebrated National Youth Day in January 2008 and on this occasion students from ten schools were trained with the help of Zoo Outreach



Organisation's material. The session started with giving different types of masks and asking what they think about importance of the animals. In the conversation the importance of amphibians was highlighted and in the icebreaker, a frog jumping



exercise was done. "Frogs Matter" packets were given and the *rakhi* tying ceremony was done as the warm up session. Later they were asked to go through the packets and there by the foci of main points were established. In the next session they were asked to wear masks and to march in single file making

sound to rivet and sing the 'frogs are good' poem. They concluded the session after taking oath along with their younger counterparts and pledged to fulfil their obligation as the eco saviour. After the training they presented a show to *aam janta* to pass the message of conservation to them at the Carter Road Promenade Amphitheatre. *Submitted by: Dr. Puja Vijay Sukhija, Executive Director, OASIS, Mumbai - 400 007, Maharashtra. E-mail: oasis.ngo@gmail.com*

AWF, 2008 celebration by Conservation of Nature Society, Calicut, Kerala

The Animal Welfare Fortnight programme was organised in Calicut at different locations. On 14 & 15 January 2008 a programme was organised on the subject of Amphibian Ark & Bats. On 16 January



a bat programme was conducted in the civil station area in connection with the formation of the new District Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. A short programme was organised in Malabar Christian College on 19 January after the International Seminar on ethical basis of environment education and awareness. The extensive fear created in the name of Bird Flu and its threat to the migratory birds was a subject for discussions on the day. The bat awareness programme was also a part of the programme in the centre. The huge number of shade trees recently felled by the Government and private parties were raised as a concern and the increasing number of coconut trees fall effecting wild Bat were raised by the organizers itself.

A programme on monkey manners also was organised on 21 January at the Kalpetta in Wayanad District. Here also the amphibian programme suggested the discovery of the Shrub frog in Kakkayam Wildlife sanctuary should be studied in detail.

On 25 January a programme for Teachers & students was organised in the RSC, Calicut. Amphibian and monkey manners were the subjects discussed. The function began by the handing over the ZOO sponsored materials to the Calicut Police Commissioner who inaugurated the programme. On

28 January an amphibian awareness programme was organised in NIT campus. The campus had witnessed huge felling of trees effecting amphibians in the campus in the name of development. We also organised awareness programmes on monkey manners and bat in the campus. A press release on amphibian circulated in the occasion. *Submitted by: Sri. Vinod Kumar Damodar, Joint Secretary, Conservation of Nature Society, Calicut, Kerala. Email: mspca3@hotmail.com*

Samrakshan Trust Mizoram -Animal Welfare Fortnight, 2008-Report

Samrakshan's Mizoram field base initiated its activities pertaining to conservation education and awareness during the Animal Welfare Fortnight 2008. The program was conducted from 17 January-07 February, 2008 in Tuipang and Phura areas. The participants were from forest department staff, village council members, office bearers of MTP, teachers and students.

The design was to interact with educational institutions and institutions which took decisions or influenced them at the local level. The efforts with the educational institutions consisted of our briefly introducing Samrakshan and that we planned to work with them on a sustained basis on conservation education and awareness. Then we moved to film screening. The film being Point Calimere-Little Kingdom by the Coast by Sekhar Dattatri. During the screenings we kept pitching in with translations and comparisons to local conditions.

This was followed by an energizer named body writing which we enjoyed as much by the children. Then we showed them a few photographs of bats that we had taken in course of survey undertaken in the landscape. While most children said that they had seen the Lesser false vampire bat and one of them, however, said he had seen the Andersons leaf nosed bat in the bamboo groove near the school.

We then moved on to giving them bat colouring books prepared





and supplied by Zoo Outreach Organization and crayons to colour. While colouring we shared sweets with the children and teachers and after colouring suggested the children to select some of the coloured bat pictures and put them up on the school walls. These interactions with students were usually followed by tea with teachers where we discussed our approach and plan for the coming months with the schools in the landscape. At a couple of schools the teachers made us aware of Eco Club programme, the efforts undertaken till date and the problems encountered. While we were primarily interacting with students in classes 5, 6 and 7 at one school the principal had all students from nursery to class 8 waiting for us. Sending children with such anticipated looks on their faces back would have been silly and we tuned the programme towards meeting needs of all of them. We also spoke about a myth in the region about bats eaten as cure for diseases saying that this was absolutely baseless and to be stopped.

With the elders we interacted with people representing the local youth club, the forest department and the village councils. Here the introduction to Samrakshan was in greater detail and also met with questions on our immediate plans to set up base out of Saiha or expand the team. While interacting with some of them at the tea stall and also in course of inviting them we felt the need to present a detailed introduction on what we meant by conservation education and awareness. Towards this we discussed the recent training attended by us, shared some material including masks and booklets with them as also our experiences on the subject besides what we proposed to work on in the landscape. People did come up with questions which were satisfying – they were interested and responding.

Acknowledgements: People of Phura and Tuipang, Schools, Forest department, Village councils, MTP, Mara Student Organization at Phura and Tuipang, Block Development Office, Tuipang, Mara Autonomous District Council and Zoo Outreach Organization. Submitted by: Nimesh Ved & S. Lalramnuna, Samrakshan Trust, Meghalaya Field Office. Email: nimesh.ved@gmail.com, manuna_s@yahoo.co.in

Animal Welfare Fortnight 2008 & World Wetland Day celebrated by Paribesh Unnayan Parishad, Kolkata, West Bengal

AWF 2008 was observed from 16-30 January in seven schools of Kolkata & South 24 Parganas districts of West Bengal, with the involvement of more than 25 teachers, 5000 students and 10 dignitaries. Ananda Ashram Balika Vidyapith, Young Horizons School, Mahendraganj High School, Bamankhali M.P.P. High School, Sree Ramakrishna Ananda Ashram Girls High School, Garia Bina Balika Vidyalaya, Sakhawat Memorial Govt. Girls High School students participated in these programmes. Classroom discussion was held with informative education pack having been received from Zoo Outreach Organisation, and posters/booklets received from Wildlife Wing, Forest Department



Government of West Bengal. On 2 February, World Wetland Day was also observed. Ananda Ashram Balika Vidyapith participated in this event. Workshop, group activity, discussion, quiz, short lectures, and classroom visits for meeting all students were conducted on that day.



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Animal Welfare Fortnight 2008 celebration at Indira Gandhi Park Zoo and Deer Park, Rourkela Animal Welfare Fortnight 2008 was observed at Indira Gandhi Park Zoo and Deer Park during 14-28 January, 2008. Various awareness and zoo education programmes were arranged during this fortnight. On 15 January 2008, the zoo education unit conducted a special awareness programme under the zoo education programme on amphibian conservation for the students of Delhi Public School, Rourkela. Forty eight students of class VI of the same age group along with teachers participated in the program. The students were told about the importance of herpetofauna and causes of their decline. The information regarding the 2008 Year of The Frog was given to the children as declared by Amphibian Ark. The study materials were distributed among the participants provided by Zoo Outreach Organisation. All participants took oath by tying a friendship band on others wrist and taking a pledge to save amphibians. Petition forms were filled by all participants, teachers and guests to become a part of global mission for amphibians.

One grand wildlife awareness program was conducted on 22 January. Sri. R.N. Panda, DGM (Sports and Horticulture) graced the occasion as chief guest with Sri A.S. Sarangi (AGM Horticulture), who was present as an invited guest for the occasion. A total of sixty two students from Deepika English Medium School, Delhi Public School, and Vajirout English School, Rourkela attended this program. All participants belonged to eco-clubs of their respective schools and were accompanied with their biology teachers. Mr. Bijoy B. Mathur and Mrs. Tanuja Panda from DPS and Mrs. K.S. Hyme were invited as resource persons for a talk on wildlife conservation. During the program education materials on primates, bats and amphibians were distributed among the children. The education packets contained booklets, masks, stickers and *rakhi* provided by the ZOO. Two drama kits (monkey and bat) were presented to eco-club head of Deepika English Medium and Delhi Public School for the play by the invited guests. The importance and other related information regarding primates, chiropterans and amphibians discussed in detail by our resource persons with the participants. During the program, talk shows were arranged and four participants of class V from these three schools delivered an informative speech on importance of vultures, penguins, sloth bears and chimpanzee in our ecosystem and need of their conservation. An education tour was conducted to the students inside the zoo, to give them detailed information about different species in front of its enclosures. Students visited aquarium, aviary, and doll museum and were also provided one toy train joy ride at the zoo to have a memorable experience of the program. Submitted by Dr. Ravi Kumar Singh, Curator, Indira Gandhi Park Zoo & Deer Park, Rourkela, Orissa. Email: ravi_dei@rediffmail.com

International Animal & Birds Welfare Society-Guttur, Anantapur Celebrated Animal Welfare Fortnight - 2008
IA&BWS and seven networks (a group of 7 Ngo's) jointly celebrated Animal Welfare Fortnight from 18-31 January, 2008 in seven Mandal schools. Zoo Outreach Organisation, Coimbatore provided educational packets for these programmes. About 135 students participated in various programmes.



The essay writing competition was held at Z.P.H School, Somandepalli on 18 January. Thirty five students from 7 different schools participated. The themes for the competitions were: importance of animal welfare, wildlife welfare and students role in animal welfare. On 19 January, an electoral competition was held at Z.P.H School, Palasamudram and 30 students from 6 schools participated. The themes for the competition were: my favorite wild animal, animal planet and types of bears.

Another essay writing & electoral competitions were held at Z.P. School, Parigi on 21 January. Twenty five students from 5 schools attended the programme. The themes for the competition were: Importance of animal welfare, wildlife welfare and students role in animal welfare. A quiz was conducted at Z.P.H. School, Bandlapalli on 24 January for 25 students of 7-9 standard from 5 schools. The quiz co-ordinator S. Basheer explained about importance of wildlife welfare and role of the students. He also explained about the wildlife and their present, past and future



status. The students were grouped into four teams and five members in each team namely monkey, dog, bear and bat. They had five rounds of questions all related to wildlife and welfare. The different types of rounds of questions were wildlife related single questions, showing picture and multiple choice. A drama programme was conducted

at Z.P.H. Girls School, Beedupalli, Puttaparthi on 28 January. Thirty students from 5 schools participated in this programme. The themes of the dramas were: importance of bats, dancing bears, importance of frogs & monkey manners.

Sanga Mitra Rural Development Society, Penukonda, ROSES Educational Society, Battalapalli VELANGINI Educational Society-Parigi, ACTION Rural Development Society, Penukonda and PremaSai Rural Development Society-Puttaparthi coordinated these programmes. Submitted by: S. Manjunath, Project Director, IA&BWS, Guttur, Anantapur District, Andhra Pradesh. Email: iaabws@yahoo.com

RMNH Bhopal celebrated AWF 2008 & World Wetland Day

AWF 2008 programme was held on 22 January for Orion International School, Bhopal. Fifty students from class 6-8 standard participated. Zoo Outreach Organisation's bat education packet was used in this programme. The programme lasted for an hour. Shri. Manik Lal Gupta, Educational Assistant, RMNH, Bhopal explained to the students about range, habit, habitat of fruit eating and insectivorous bats. While describing co-friendliness of bats, he said that one insectivorous bat can eat roughly about 600 mosquitoes and other insect pests in one night! He brought to the notice that they also kill other insects like bugs, which destroy fruit and other trees and small mammals such as rodents that destroy stored grains and other crops. Thus they play an active role in pest control. Bats living near your home could keep you free of insect bites and other troubles caused by flying insects. During this programme *Rakhi* were distributed and students sworn that they would take care of dwindling population of bats near to their school or home.

World Wetlands Programme was held on 2 February 2008 at World Way International School, Bhopal. Fifty Students (class 7-9) participated in this. Amphibian education packet was used in this programme. The programme lasts up to 80 minutes.

Mr. Gupta explained to the students about various types of wetlands and their importance. While explaining the biodiversity of wetlands, he narrated that 5000 species of amphibians are recognized



from whole world. However, 225 species of amphibians are found in India while 135 species are endemic. He also added information about the range, habit, habitat etc., of amphibians. Frogs, toads, newts, salamanders are members of amphibians. He further said that amphibians lay their eggs at the surface of water. They eat insects and pests, thus they do useful job such as pest control. He further added that frogs are facing threat due to drying up of streams, rivers, lakes, pond, deforestation, trapping for food, collection for lab experiment, pesticides, water pollution, road kills and diseases. During the distribution of *Rakhi*, students sworn that they will not chase or hurt them. Mr. Gupta suggested to students about better use of resource material kept in packet arranged by Zoo Outreach Organisation, Coimbatore. Submitted by Dr. S. Sethuramalingam, Scientist-in-Charge, Regional Museum of Natural History, Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh. Email: rmnhsethu@sancharnet.in

