

NEW ZOO WILD CBSG, South Asia Websites and Projects

Zoo Outreach Organisation ZOO and Wildlife Information Liaison Division WILD have put up two new websites, each with a specific purpose. They are TTMS, or, Threatened Taxa Monitoring System for south asian fauna, flora and fungi <www.southasiantaxa.org> which will be very new to readers and Project PteroCount <http://www.pterocount.org> which has been announced earlier as a project, but not a website. Here is a little information on both. Please check them out and check frequently as more and more information will be made available in phases.

TTMS — Threatened Taxa Monitoring System for south asian fauna, flora and fungi <www.southasiantaxa.org>



Many of our professional colleagues have commented on the amount of information we have collected as a result of CAMP and PHVA workshops, ZOOS' PRINT publications and through the experts in our various taxon networks. After repeated urging from our friends, finally we have created an appropriate "container" where we can share this information and also go on building upon it. This is TTMS.

TTMS is a dynamic online data system of the three kingdoms of biodiversity of South Asia. The region of South Asia with eight countries including Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka is a distinct biogeographic unit in itself with rich and unique fauna, flora and fungi. Since 1995, there have been a series of exercises called Conservation Assessment and Management Plan (CAMP) Workshops organised and facilitated by Zoo Outreach Organisation and the IUCN SSC Conservation Breeding Specialist Group's South Asian network, which have helped determine the status of more than 2,500 faunal and floral taxa in the region. Since 1991 itself we have conducted nine Population and Habitat Viability Assessment Workshop on specific taxa, which also generate a wealth of information, both by trying to collect all literature as briefing material before the workshop, and in a Report which is the combined "heads together" of taxon experts and a brilliant computer programme (VORTEX).

The reports, summaries and publications which have emanated from these workshops have been circulated widely within the region and abroad. The status of taxa which were derived using the IUCN Red List Criteria and Categories have had wide application in several national and international conservation and taxonomic decisions. The assessments have helped global databases such as the Global Assessment Programme (GAP) of SSC IUCN.

SSC IUCN maintains a database of globally assessed taxa of the world, however, regional and national assessments

are an important aspect of understanding the status of wildlife taxa and for conservation action at the national, provincial and local level. The TTMS website is dedicated to South Asian taxa and will display national assessments of many fauna and flora derived using the IUCN Regional Guidelines. As ZOO/WILD/CBSG, South Asia assesses taxa using IUCN regional and national guidelines with rigorous integrity within the region, the status of a particular taxa may differ from the global status. This will, however, provide more accurate guidance to local managers and policy makers in their attempts to protect and sustain wildlife.

Project PteroCount South Asian Bat Monitoring Programme

Pteropus giganteus
Population Monitoring Project
(PteroCount)
<<http://www.pterocount.org>>



Short Overview

The South Asian Bat Monitoring Programme aims to create awareness about bat conservation issues, involve and educate biologists and nature-lovers in studies about the biology of bats, and establish a conservation action plan. The Programme will initially focus on one species, the Indian flying fox (*Pteropus giganteus*) as it is the most known and recognizable bat species in South Asia. The Program is based on a volunteers from different backgrounds who have identified *Pteropus* roosts in their area and have committed to studying the roost and obtaining population information on a regular basis. It is the first such network to monitor the population of a species in South Asia. Site informati will be compiled and analyzed for trends in the population of *Pteropus giganteus*, identify key threats to roosts and provide recommendations for their conservation. Little is known about the population status of *Pteropus* or any other bat species in any country of South Asia. While we have a good idea of number of species, and limited information about distribution, actual numbers of individuals of each species remain unknown.

Pteropus giganteus is the largest fruit bat and fruit bats do many "favours" for ecosystems ... dispersing seed and pollen, encouraging new growth in old forests, enhancing the vitality of seeds which pass through their intestinal tract, etc. Certain areas would feel the effect if we lost fruit bats. The PteroCount will make it possible to identify declines in time to take action and protect localities and ecosystems from the impact which would accompany extinction of this very important species.

The success of this projects depends entirely on volunteers. If you know a giant fruit bat roosting site in your locality, please join our effort. Check the website for more information, instructions and contact details.

Pterocount is a project of ZOO, WILD, CCINSA, sponsored as part of CCINSA by Chester Zoo.