

Indian Pangolin Conservation

Outreach Programmes held in Western Ghats districts of Tamil Nadu, India during Wildlife Week 2017

The Mohamed bin Zayed Species Conservation Fund awarded a project to Zoo Outreach Organization titled “Survey on species threats and Conservation Outreach Programmes for Indian Pangolin (*Manis crassicaudata*) in Western Ghats of Tamil Nadu, India”.

The mammal is very little known in its ranges and one of the most trafficked animals in the world for its scales and other body parts and extensively utilized in Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM). Perhaps it could go extinct before most people realize its existence at their area. Eight species of pangolins are found in the world and four each in Africa and Asia. According to IUCN Red List all are under threatened categories such



Ayya Nadar Janaki Ammal College Zoology students at the school extension programme



Government High School, Ponmanai, Kanyakumari



Government Higher Secondary School, Thottipatti, Theni

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للمحافظة على الكائنات الحية
The Mohamed bin Zayed SPECIES CONSERVATION FUND





Sri Athiri Kala Nilaya Middle School, Siva Sailam



Veeramamunivar High School

as Critically Endangered, Endangered and Vulnerable.

In India, not much research studies were conducted on pangolins and even most of the people living in the forest fringe areas not aware of the species presence at their areas. Hence, in order to understand the Indian Pangolin distribution and threats a survey was conducted by using a questionnaire in nine Western Ghats districts of Tamil Nadu. The districts are Nagercoil, Tirunelveli, Virudhunagar, Theni, Dindugul, Tirupur, Coimbatore, The Nilgiris and Erode. To involve more people in this

initiative, coordination was sought from colleges located in the areas, NGO's and forest department personnel to carry out the surveys. College students, volunteers and biologists took the surveys. This was also a kind of promotion for the species in this region.

The persons coordinated the projects are: Dr. L. Isai Arasu, Head, Department of Zoology, Ayya Nadar Janaki Ammal College, Sivakasi; Dr. K.R. Narayanan, Head, Department of Zoology, Paramakalyani College, Alwarkurichi; Dr. S. Suthakar Isaac, Asso. Professor of Zoology, St. John's College, Palayamkottai;





ool, Krishnaperi, Virudhunagar

Mr. Ramesh, Netaji Snake Trust, Usilampatti; Dr. B. Ramakrishnan, Asst. Professor, Dept. of Zoology and Wildlife Biology, Govt. Arts College, Ooty; Mr. Peter Prem Chakravarthy Jayam, Biologist, Anamalai Tiger Reserve, Udumalapet.

The surveys were completed and the data analysis under the process. In the meantime to create awareness on Pangolin conservation, education materials were developed. It includes a booklet, placard, sticker and posters. The booklet contains information such as its morphology, kinds, behaviour, prey, lifespan, major threats, and conservation measures by national and international agencies, the significance of World Pangolin Day and how could they engage themselves in pangolin conservation. The other materials are carrying the messages on Pangolin conservation and illegal wildlife trade.

By using these education materials we planned few awareness programmes

Sri Paramakalyani College, Alwarkurichi

covering Kanyakumari, Tirunelveli, Virudhunagar and Theni districts during Wildlife Week in October 2017. The programmes were arranged at Government High School, Ponmanai, Kanyakumari; Sri Athiri Kala Nilaya Middle School, Sivasailam, Tirunelveli; Veeramamunivar High School, Krishnaperi, Virudhunagar and Government Higher Secondary School, Thottipatti, Theni from 3 – 6 October 2017. Fifty to sixty students and their teachers participated in each programme.

In each school a powerpoint presentation on Pangolin was given. Following to this the education materials were distributed. Enough time was given to them to explore the materials one by one. Then asked the students to read aloud the booklet information one by one. Based on the information they learned from the talk and education materials, they were asked questions and most of them given appropriate answers. In few places cross word puzzle on pangolin also conducted.

At the end using the placard and posters they went for a rally shouting a slogan such as “Save Pangolin from extinction” and Save pangolin from Illegal Wildlife trade. The students and teachers enjoyed the programme.

Apart from the school programme, two special talks on Pangolin Conservation were given to the Zoology students of both Ayya Nadar Janaki Ammal College, Sivakasi and Sri Paramakalyani College, Alwarkurichi. About 200 students were took part. In addition, the Ayya Nadar Janaki Ammal College, Zoology (UG & PG) students witnessed the Krishnaperi school awareness programme as an extension programme and learned how to conduct a species awareness programme. There are few more awareness programmes to be conducted in the rest of the Western Ghats districts soon.

Thanks to Mohamed bin Zayed Species Conservation Fund for the funding and all our coordinators for made it possible. Special thanks to our volunteers Mr. Joel Revington and Mrs. Rani Joel, Retd. Teachers, Tirunelveli, Mr. Sagaya Dass, District Eco-club Coordinator, Kanyakumari, Mrs. Sri. Kumari, Headmistress, Mrs. Sri Devi, School NGC Coordinator, Government High School, Ponmanai; Mr. S. Nallasivan, Headmaster, Sri Athiri Kala Nilaya Middle School, Sivasailam; Mr. Panneer Selvam, Veeramamunivar High School, Krishnaperi and Mr. Srinivasan, Headmaster, Government Higher Secondary School, Thottipatti.



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