

## International Vulture Awareness Day celebration at the Nilgiris

International Vulture Awareness Day (IVAD) is celebrated every year on the first Saturday of September to make the people aware the ecological importance of vultures. IVAD was celebrated on 2 September 2017, at Government Tribal Residential Primary School, Anaikatty, Udthagamandalam in collaboration with Tamil Nadu Forest Department, The Nature Trust, Indo American Wildlife Society and Zoo Outreach Organization.

The celebration started with vulture conservation rally followed by vulture chain performed by the school students to showcase the importance of vulture's role in the ecosystem and its conservation. This was followed by series of presentations.

Dr. B. Ramakrishnan, Assistant professor, Government Arts College delivered a lecture on "**Role of Vultures in the Ecosystem**". He emphasized that vultures play a significant role in keeping our ecosystem healthy and clean. Vultures do not hunt live prey but act as natural scavengers feeding on the carcasses of dead animals. Dr.C. Arivazhagan, Trustee, Indo American Wildlife Society, Chennai talked about "**Diclofenac and their impact on vulture population**". He



Students formed vulture chain to attract public



Rally attracted public attention

said that Diclofenac is a widely available veterinary drug in the Indian subcontinent. He explained how vultures are exposed to the drug when they consume carcasses of cattle leading to mortality. KVRK. Thirunaranan, Founder, The Nature Trust, Chennai gave a talk on "**Vulture conservation**

**initiatives in India**". He mentioned that in 2006, the Government of India banned the formulation, manufacture, and import of veterinary diclofenac in order to save vultures. Meloxicam was promoted as a substitute anti-inflammatory drug.



Colour drawings from drawing competition

A. Samson, Research Scholar gave a presentation on “**Ecology and Conservation threats of vultures in Nilgiris Landscape**”. He shared his research experiences on vulture ecology, breeding and threats in Nilgiri Landscape which has distribution of six species of vultures, three of them residential and they are White-rumped vulture, Long billed vulture and Red headed Vulture and three of them migratory namely Egyptian Vulture, Cinereous Vulture, Himalayan Vulture. He further added how anthropogenic activities such as honey hunting on nesting trees, livestock grazing and bamboo cutting around the nesting habitat create disturbances to the vultures during the breeding seasons.

After the presentation, drawing

and colouring competitions were conducted with various themes.

The students from class 2-5 participated. They were divided into 3 categories. Class 2-3

students did the colouring activity using a kit provided by Zoo Outreach Organization. Class 4 students were asked to draw any vulture species and class 5 students were asked to draw a vulture picture with a theme “Role of vultures in environment”. The winners received prizes and certificates. Through this event we targeted 63 students and 500 peoples in the Anaikatty tribal settlement area for vulture conservation.

At the valedictory, Ms. J. Latha, gave vote of thanks. We thank KVRK. Thirunanaran from The Nature Trust, Dr. C. Arivazhagan, Trustee form Indo American Wildlife Society and Mr. R. Marimuthu and Dr. B. A. Daniel from Zoo Outreach Organization for the support. We like to thank the press for wide publicity of the event.



Winners receive prize as a token of appreciation from the organisers

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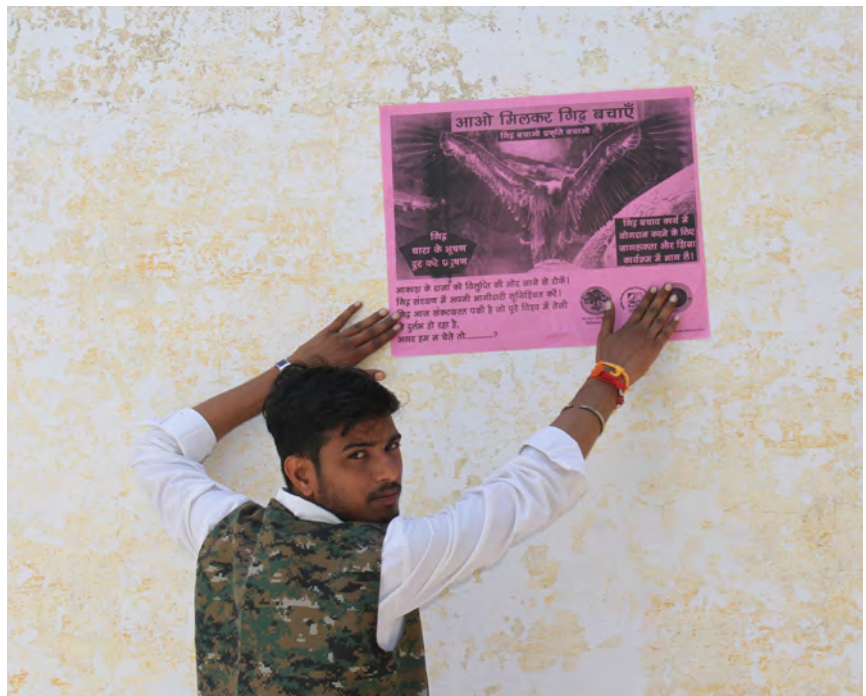
## International Vulture Awareness Day celebration in Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh, India

International Vulture Awareness Day (IVAD) was felt on seeing the pressure on vulture species and some species heading towards extinction. Vultures have vital ecological role that cannot be replaced by other scavengers. The International Vulture Awareness Day runs the Birds of Prey Programme of the Endangered Wildlife Trust in South Africa and the Hawk Conservancy Trust in England, who decided to work together and expand the initiative into an international event.

There are several natural habitats of vultures in Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh of India. The rational conservational approach seeks to involve the population dwelling near the natural habitats of vultures. So the focus of this year IVAD was on schools and villages in close proximity of vulture habitats. The students participated in various activities such as painting, preparing bookmarks and pebble art (as paper weights), all based on vultures. The students gifted the handmade paper weights to their teachers on Teacher's Day. The students also helped in sticking the wall posters on vultures in their schools and neighborhood. Awareness initiatives were also taken in



Bookmarks prepared by the student



Wall posters put up by team members

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**Students preparing paperweights through pebble art**



**Participation of students in vulture conservation awareness initiatives**

schools away from vulture sites. Effective conservation aims to combine, rather than struggle with, the needs of the human communities that share landscapes with biological communities. Therefore, effective outreach programs headed to address knowledge about the vulture's habitat needs as well as the value of conserving the animal and its habitat to support human needs. People were also motivated to participate. They like feeling needed and that they can make a difference.

They were provided with the awareness material in local language i.e. Hindi. The vulture identifying booklet in Hindi is a great help for them to know the vulture species in their area. The local people were also guided as to how to monitor the vulture population and maintain the data sheets. Vulture conservation is a collaborative effort. So there is proper co-ordination between the local people, Forest Department and Indian Biodiversity Conservation Society. In this one week

celebration, Wild Geo Excursion (Orchha, Madhya Pradesh) and Sarthak Pragati Prayas Sansthan (Jhansi, Uttar Pradesh) collaborated in the initiatives. The volunteers, Akhilesh, Abhishek, Sahib Singh Sachin, Shivam, Rakesh, Amit, Nikhil, Pankaj, Dilip, Shailesh, interacted and took the initiatives to spread the message of International Vulture Awareness Day. Besides this the press media (Dainik Jagran) assisted in spreading the message to wider audience.

## Save the Frogs day: 29th April 2017



**Awareness amongst students of various colleges in District Lucknow**

Save The Frogs Day was started by Scientific Community. It is an international team of scientists, educators, policymakers and naturalists. It is devoted to protecting the world's amphibian species: the frogs, toads, newts, salamanders, and caecilians through environmental education, scientific research, and legal defense. Firstly, founded by Ecologist Dr. Kerry Kriger in May 2008. Save the Frogs Day was first time Celebrated in 2009, on last Saturday of April. It is the world's largest day of amphibian education and conservation action.

The Biodiversity and Wildlife Conservation lab, Department of Zoology, University of Lucknow in collaboration with Uttar Pradesh State Biodiversity Board and

Regional Science City, Aliganj is continuously celebrating Save the frog's day from 2011. During this period Biodiversity and Wildlife Conservation Lab completed a project "Annotated and coloured checklist of reptiles and amphibians of Uttar Pradesh" Prepared a checklist of 24 frog species. This year also

celebrated, Save the Frogs Day on 29<sup>th</sup>April 2017.

Like every year this year also students from different schools and colleges of Lucknow have been invited to take part in the events like poster, power point presentation and quiz competition based on frogs and amphibians.



**Participants taking parts in poster competition**



How to instruct or breed frogs at home - Instruction pamphlet



Group photographs with the winners of competitions

On the occasion of Save the Frogs Day a mass awareness campaign was organised from, 27-28 April in which a mass awareness car has been flagged off, University of Lucknow with Volunteers of Biodiversity and Wildlife Conservation Lab, to create awareness regarding conservation of frogs and amphibians. Around 200 schools and a large number of common people were benefited. Aim of mass awareness was to brief about

the extinction crisis faced by amphibians around the world.

On 29<sup>th</sup> April 2017, day started with Poster competition on “**Draw a Pond for your Frogs**”. The activities such as Open Quiz on “**Frogs**”, PowerPoint presentation on “**Population Decline of frogs: causes and remedy**” were organised. In gratitude of Save the Frogs Day, Prof Amita Kanaujia delivered a lecture on “**How to construct or breed frogs at your home**” to schools, zoos and

community groups. Things that should be remembered while constructing a pond: pond should have sufficient space, shape, size, running water, plants for frogs, management of pond, frog pond should be attractive, attracting amphibians easily, making the pond safe for children, control of algae and creating winter habitats.

About 450 students from more than 20 schools (Gurukul academy, Lucknow public school, Green way school, C. M. S Indira nagar, La Martiniere Girls’ college, Mount fort inter College, Seth M.R. Jaipuria School, Mount Carmel School, Awadh Academy Inter College, Sri Ayodhya Singh Memorial Inter College, Tagore Memorial School, MLM School, Kendriya Vidyalaya, etc) participated in the events with great enthusiasm. The winners were felicitated by prizes. On this occasion Prof. Amita Kanaujia, Prof. Omkar (Head), Dept. of Zoology, Prof. Madhu Tripathi, Coordinator, Regional Science City were present.

The event was co-ordinated by Prof Amita Kanaujia with Adesh Kumar, Shivangi Mishra, Ruby Yadav, Ankit Sinha, Daya Shanker Sharma and volunteers Asif Ahmad Siddiqui, Abhishek Shukla, Deepti Verma, Kamal and many more.

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## World Environment Day celebration at Madurai

On 5 June, WED was celebrated at O.C.P.M. G.H.S.S. Madurai. About 150 participants from different schools and churches from in and around Madurai attended the programme. M. Joseph, Bishop and Chairman of C.S.I.- S.E.C.C graced the event. He delivered a talk on the theme I'm with Nature. Mrs. Leela Manohari, Vice-President, Women Fellowship inaugurated the Green school programme.



**Understanding marine diversity in the field**

years to learn about sea and its denizen. On this day they shared the knowledge to the public about the importance of sea, requested them to keep the shore clean and take over the message to the friends and relatives.

**Students at Kovalam beach on field trip**



The author addressed the relationship between man and nature and highlighted to admire, to admit and to adore the nature at home, school and in public places. As a coordinator, she gave a brief note on environmental activities follow-up done by the school for a year. The participants took an oath on saving environment and they all received saplings. The tree plantation was done at the campus by the chief guests and others.

Another event was held at Chennai for the students of Murray Rabindra Matric School, Padupakkam, They were taken to Kovalam beach. These students are visiting this beach for the past three

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## World Nature Conservation Day



**Promoting Human elephant coexistence through poster reading**

World Nature Conservation day is celebrated every year on July 28th. This year to celebrate this, a student awareness programme was organized at YWCA Matriculation Higher Secondary School, Madurai. Mrs. Joy Devasagayam, Principal in her keynote address explained about the importance of the day, the forest and wildlife conservation in India and the need for tree plantation. As part of it she initiated “Campus Ecology” programme to students for them to learn more about plants and animals at the campus and naming plant species.



**Students donating tree saplings for the school**

Students were instructed that wise usage of water, paper should be practised as the paper pulp come from cutting of tree. Then students were briefed about wild animals, its protection and how they are affected by illegal wildlife trade. Animal flashcards, posters and masks were used to explain this. Drawing competition was also conducted on themes related to nature conservation. Now a days it is a practice that students donate saplings to the school on their birthdays. Mrs. Radha (teacher coordinator), Mrs. Pandilakshmi and Ms. Gayathiri arranged the event.

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