

Celebrating Summer Zoo 2017 at Sundarvan

This summer Sundarvan was bustling with young inquisitive minds. What better way to spend the hot and sultry summer days than to explore the zoo! The learning experience in nature education can help children prosper in multidisciplinary field later in life. Keeping that in mind Sundarvan organised a unique programme called “Mom and Me Exploring the Zoo” for age group 4-7 years. This programme was to bring forward the essence of quality time between the mother and toddler while their eyes sparkle with interest. The session started with a nature trail telling them common stories so that they can relate. This was followed by animal interactions where toddlers along



Learning all about the turtle through hands-on activity

with their mother fed the ducks, hens, geese, rabbits and guinea pigs. Apart from animal interaction the session also focused on art activity strengthening the motor and cognitive skills in individuals. Each child with her mother created their customized handprint-bags and activities like microbe painting which help build their creativity and attention spell and offer them opportunities for self-expression. This programme received positive feedback and fairly good reach.

Sundarvan's one of the famous summer workshops is “Zoo Keeper for a Day” for the children

of age group 10-15 years who are immensely interested in nature and wildlife. This whole day activity focused generally on delivering an experience of Zookeeper's responsibilities while giving the child a feeling of stewardship. The participants excelled their talent in cage cleaning, chopping of vegetables for Sundarvan resident animals like tortoise, turtle, rabbits, and guinea pigs. They closely assisted our animal keepers for feeding of sensitive animals like hedgehog, porcupine, lovebirds, and cockatiel. The participants interacted with the animal keepers asking their experiences, wisdom and instincts they learn over the years. An interactive presentation followed after this where students were familiarised with the concept and importance of zoos, the importance of a team and pledge of individual members. The late afternoon session was mostly outdoors. The preparatory talk about importance of pugmark casts in art and science field covered the general information. Later the kids went out to find free ranging animals' footprint in the zoo on which they made casts. This programme is highly acclaimed, appreciated and widely reached letting us complete yet another four batches in the month of May this year.

Camping is always something special for Children. This summer Sundarvan organised two batches of Young Naturalists Programme for the inquisitive children of age 8-12 years. This workshop is a wholesome balanced introductory course on different animal groups like birds, mammals, reptiles and trees. The sessions are brief and are taken in a non-restricted amphitheatre. The animal sessions had on hand interactions and close observation with general information. The tree trail

was predominantly an activity based outdoor programme by seed library knowledge exchange, see-smell-feel-taste approach and games, which uses the sense of perception. The night camping had a movie screening in the amphitheatre and a nocturnal trail. The excited children enjoyed the unique experience of night walk and observed closely the movement/rhythm of the dark. The morning bird watch was very successful where the excitement continued to flow and they responsibly noted down



Participants engrossed in custom T-shirt printing

the bird name. The list had many names from raptors from black kites and shikra to sunbirds, small minivet, coppersmith barbets and the sweet-calling oriental magpie robins, flame back woodpeckers, pond heron. This programme gives a lifetime experience of thrill along with learning and is widely acknowledged by the parents and schools.



Young naturalists busy in making their cast

The summer programmes would not have been so successful without our dedicated and enthusiastic volunteers. Acknowledging the effort, interest and help of Mr. Neel Panchal, Ms. Kunj Joshi, Mr. Kunj Parmar, Mr. Umang Patel, Mr. Pavan Patel will be worthwhile.

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Campus Bird Count 2017 - Role of Sundarvan in Ahmedabad, Gujarat

Every February, Sundarvan participates in Campus Bird Count which is a sub-event of the global episode, the Great Backyard Bird Count. It is a coordinated effort to document the birdlife in multiple campuses across India.

This year, Sundarvan co-ordinated and organized people who are regularly involved in birdwatching, to upload their sighting. A workshop was conducted which included introduction to ebird (a global online citizen science platform), campus bird count, citizen science and its relevance and a chance to meet fellow birders from the city. On 12th February, around 40 birders from different parts of the city attended the workshop and were encouraged to maintain birding records, upload their data and contribute to the global database. A mock



Birdwatching at Vikramnagar housing colony

trail happened at Sundarvan to demonstrate data entering and the nitty gritty from opening an account to marking a birding hotspot and registering a campus. Post-workshop follow-up was carried out and support was provided wherever participants were stuck. Various area-wise groups were made that would go birdwatching to different campuses including school and college, public places such as parks and gardens as well as private campuses during



Orientation for Birders at Sundarvan

the Campus Bird Count (17 -20 February 2017).

The results were very encouraging – as opposed to last year (2016) when only 10 campuses registered from Ahmedabad, this year out of 41 registered campuses in Gujarat, 32 were from Ahmedabad. Sundarvan was also one of the registered campuses and we recorded 34 species of birds which also included winter migrants such as Grey-headed canary-flycatcher and Tickell's blue flycatcher.

Sundarvan organises one day birdwatching trips throughout the migratory season to create an interest and introduce birding etiquettes among members of the society. As our efforts for conservation education continue, it is indeed an inspiration to see amateur and professional birders come together and contribute to a global platform.

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Tata Steel Zoological Park, Jamshedpur

Celebration of World Environment Day- 2017



Children from Sanskriti and Aurobindo society participating in Awareness rally on theme **Connecting People to Nature**

World Environment Day is celebrated each year on June 5 to promote awareness on the importance of preserving our biodiversity. It is one of the principal vehicles through which the United Nations (UN) stimulates worldwide awareness of the environment and enhances political attention and action.

This year's campaign rallies us to take action by '*Connecting People to Nature*', the theme for World Environment Day 2017, which pleads us to get outdoors and into nature, to appreciate its beauty and its importance, and to take forward the call to protect the Earth that we share.

To achieve the above target this year Tata Zoo organized an awareness rally with the theme "*Connecting People to Nature*" and conducted a "Nukkar Natak." on the focal theme "*Save environment, Save yourself.*" Over 200 people attended the programme from different segments of the society that included NGOs, Schools/ Colleges students and general zoo visitors etc.

The programme began with an introductory talk given by Biologist cum education officer in which she stressed on the need for conservation of biodiversity. After that a rally was organized inside the zoo. Children of local NGOs Sanskriti and Aurobindo Society depicted their pledges to save the environment through slogans and banners. Children from local NGO's Pratibha Kendra camped at different places of zoo to make aware the visitors about the importance of the day and conserving nature by general activities through "**Nukkad Natak**" (Street play).

To fulfill our goal to encourage children and general public to think in favour of the environment we also organized several drives in which entry of plastic bottles or wrappers carried by visitors were strictly banned at Zoo main gate and the kiosk/ restaurant owner were instructed to use paper bags to initiate the Ban of use of plastic items. 10 children were deputed as volunteers to strictly monitor the visitors and kiosk owners. World Environment Day is also a day for people from all walks of life to come together to ensure a cleaner, greener and brighter outlook for themselves and future

generations. Let's pledge to make earth a better place to live in.



Children from Pratibha kendra performing Nukkad Natak on theme Save environment Save yourself during World Environment Day 2017

The session came to a close with working lunch for all the participants as a mark of hospitality. Present on the occasion were Ms. Sanjukta Choudhury, Secretary, Sanskriti Mr. Surendra Bhadur Singh, Secretary, Pratibha Kendra and Subir Kumar Das Secretary, Aurobindo Society, and other members.

Celebration of World Biodiversity Day 2017

Zoological parks did not start off with conservation being a primary focus, however as they evolved, the focus shifted from exhibition to prioritize research, education, and conservation. The main importance of zoos is their ability to educate visitors and impart a connection to wild animals.

Zoos world over are visited by 700 million people annually and are best placed to convey the message on conservation and preservation of biodiversity.

Tata Steel Zoological Park has chalked out various ways and means to carry home the message of conserving and preserving India's



Keeper Talk for participants



Lecture on Importance of Plants to humans and animals in everyday life

celebrated World Biodiversity day on 22 May, 2017 by organizing the programme- *a day in the Zoo for children*.

As part of the programme, the children were taken to a zoo visit and they were introduced to the management of animals in captivity through the programme "Keeper Talk". They were also explained about the general behavior of the animals and their natural habitat requirement.

Then, Dr. Seema Rani, gave a presentation on the "*Importance of Plants to humans and animals in every day's life*"

Both the programmes were coordinated by Dr. Seema Rani, Biologist and Education Officer alongwith her education team Mr. Pratap Singh Gill and Mrs. Sefali Das, Tata Steel Zoological Park.

Submitted by: Dr. Seema Rani, Biologist cum Education Officer, Tata Steel Zoological Park

precious wildlife, by involving the eco clubs of schools, like-minded NGO's and corporate houses of the city. Viewing above and to promote conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, this year in association with Pratibha Kendra, we