

## Education Reports

### Wildlife Week celebrated by Wildlife SOS at Bannerghatta Biological Park

We conducted a programme on 5 October 2011 at Bannerghatta Biological Park, Bangalore, organized by Wildlife SOS Staff and a few other volunteers. The objective of our programme was to increase awareness of wildlife in children. The first programme was "Bear Awareness" in front of the bear enclosure in the zoo. Wildlife SOS team and volunteers went across the zoo and spread the word of the programme to many visitors, especially children, and brought them before the bear enclosure. Dr. Arun V. Sha shared many facts about bears with the children. Then we issued ZOO's new Bear Kit to all participants and both parents and children were happy to learn more about bears. A drama was conducted by the children about "Dancing Bears" at the end of the bear awareness programme.

Our next programme featured Primates and it was conducted in front of the primate enclosures in the zoo. We shared much information such as ecological balance, survival threats, and habitat of primates especially Lion-tailed Macaque, ending the program by distributing attractive posters of LTM.

After lunch break, we conducted programs on amphibians and bats and took the program also to the play area. We told about different frogs and their part in environment ecology and issued the "Amphibian Kit and Amphibian posters" to the children. Then we instructed them to act like frogs, wearing the mask and jump like frogs. They did it very well and their parents as well as other zoo visitors enjoyed their antics.

The last awareness programme was on bats, given to a final batch of children and other participants. We told them about varieties of bats and their ecological role. We announced the United Nations and Bat Conservation International "International Year of Bats". Children were very eager to know about bats and they asked various questions about them. Then we issued the "Bat kit" to the children so they could find many of the answers to their questions in the "Bat Kit". At



Dr. Arun V. Sha sharing bear facts



Bear awareness programme is being conducted in front of Bear enclosure

the end of programme all children and other participants took pledge to save wildlife and conserving nature.

Children and their parents appreciated the programme organized in a zoo, which they never experienced in their previous visits. All the credit goes to Zoo Outreach Organisation and the sponsors of the program kits and their continuous support to the wildlife volunteers. We wish ZOO to bring out more educational material to save wildlife in future also. Our special thanks are to Wildlife SOS & Staffs, Volunteers and Bannerghatta Biological Park Management. **Submitted by Gopi Janarthanan, Wildlife SOS Volunteer, Bangalore, Karnataka. gopi.janarthanan@gmail.com**

### GEER Foundation, Gujarat and their special event during Wildlife Week

Wildlife Week is an opportunity to reach many, many people during the first week of October. It is the most participatory wildlife event in India. All types of institutions throughout India celebrate and an enormous number of people of all ages attend specially arranged events. We, as an institute with the basic motto of ecological education, have also arranged special activities and events during the Wildlife Week 2011.

This year in association with Zoo Outreach Organization (ZOO), Wildlife Information Liaison Development, (WILD) Society, Chester Zoo, UK,





**Participants learning about biodiversity at Indroda Nature Park**



**Eco Ambassadors interacting with Indroda Nature park visitors**



**Young Eco Ambassadors with dignitaries**

during the Wildlife Week 2011 celebration at Indroda Nature Park, Gandhinagar. In this event Young Eco Ambassadors of Gujarat were given education packets containing education materials about biodiversity, biodiversity loss, climate change, human over-use of natural resources and other materials like rakhi, face mask with the message of Biodiversity is Life – our lives and wildlife’ during a specially designed workshop for Young Eco Ambassadors, organized at GEER Foundation, Gandhinagar. There were three different educational packets i.e. Amphibians, Bats and Bears.

After the distribution of educational packets, we explained the importance of Biodiversity Conservation by Shri S.P. Patel, Dy. Director, GEER Foundation in first session, emphasizing equilibrium of humanity and natural biodiversity. Children put on different masks they got from the packets. In session two, the children explored Indroda Nature Park with the aim of conserving biodiversity. They also interacted with the visitors of the Park to make them aware of biodiversity and its importance. They accompanied the visitors during their visit to the park and told them what they had learned about the importance of wildlife. All participants highly appreciated the educational materials kits supplied by Zoo Outreach Organization. **Submitted by S.P. Patel, Dy. Director (E.E), GEER Foundation, Gandhinagar, Gujarat. dydir-geer@gujarat.gov.in**

### **Amphibians Conservation Awareness programme at ARRS, Karnataka**

‘Amphibians’ was held on the 6 November 2011 at the Agumbe Rainforest Research Station. The programme was targeted at the 8-9 std students of the Agumbe English medium school. The programme was a success during which twenty-two selected students were exposed to a broad introduction of amphibian ecology with a detailed focus on frog biology. The programme began with a classroom introduction to Wildlife Week and the programme selection process. A questionnaire was distributed to all students and it addressed general wildlife terms, human-animal conflict issues and deforestation in an objective type format. One essay type question addressing human dependency on forests was included for final



selections. Since students were on vacation for Diwali the school staff was requested to accompany the selected students to the programme venue on their return. Of the twenty-five selected students, twenty-two along with three staff members attended the program. The programme began with an interactive presentation on Amphibians with a primary focus on frogs. The backbone of the presentation was created using the 'Frogs are a part of our biodiversity' package sent to us by the Zoo Outreach Organization. Also included in the presentation was: a talk and video clip on the "United Nations Decade on Biodiversity"; types of amphibians; an introduction to frogs, their importance and their current status in South Asia; possible conservation strategies and their implementation; a basic checklist of common found frogs and toads in Agumbe along with video clips and pictures of them.

The next phase of the programme was an interactive session with the students wherein students were encouraged to express their experiences with amphibians. Concepts such as habitat loss, climate change, biodiversity and endemism were brought up in an interactive manner. Focus was given to frogs in explaining the importance of food chains and food webs, the uses of frogs as bio indicators to detect the health of ecosystems was thoroughly presented. Prior to lunch a field exposure to frogs was conducted. Students were trained in identifying frogs to genus level and some to species level in addition to safety protocols. On their request, a challenge of sighting 13 of the common found species in one hour was taken up. The site selected was optimum for practical exposure to differential habitat use of different species of frogs. All frogs found and their numbers were noted down by the students. Seven of the 13 listed species of frogs were found which then raised a conversation on nocturnal and diurnal lifestyles in animals.

The programme ended with a talk on the importance of wildlife education and how every single person can contribute in his or her own way to protecting forests. Students and faculty members were given the education packages and instructed in ways of involving and educating their



**Students, teachers and ARRS staff with amphibian education kit**



**South Asia Amphibian poster being introduced to the students**



**Students looking at a Cacelian which was found during field exposure**





**Mrs. Aruna Negi teaching the concepts of biodiversity**



**Himalayan public school students celebrating wildlife week with zeal**



**Students taking a rally insisting anti-poaching of Bears**

classmates in what they had learnt through the day. The group dispersed after lunch wearing the materials provided in the education packages, they walk back to the Agumbe School formed a small procession through the Agumbe town. The program was a big success and the students were very involved and interested in discussions. ARRS would like to acknowledge all sponsors and resource persons: IUCN/ SSC Conservation breeding specialist group (CBSG), World association of Zoos and Aquariums (WAZA), IUCN/ SSC Amphibian Specialist Group (ASG), Sally Walker and Sanjay Molur, Amphibian Ark, Zoo Outreach Organization and Wildlife Information Liaison Development. **Submitted by Naren Sreenivasan, Education Officer, ARRS, Karnataka. [naren.arrs@gmail.com](mailto:naren.arrs@gmail.com)**

### **Celebration of Wildlife Week 2011 by Conservation Himalayas, Chandigarh.**

Conservation Himalayas celebrated the Wildlife Week with students and teachers of the Himalayan Public School (HPS) at Reckong Peo in Kinnaur district of Himachal Pradesh. On 1 October 2011, the students of 4-10 standard and teachers joined the team of the Conservation Himalayas in a small gathering to celebrate the Wildlife Week enthusiastically. Conservation Himalayas is indebted to the Zoo Outreach Organization for supplying WLW educational resource materials for this programme.

The theme of the programme was 'Understanding and Saving Biodiversity'. Mrs. Aruna Negi, the field programme officer of the Conservation Himalayas taught the kids about the basic concept of biodiversity by a play way method in which a few students played the role of wild animals wearing paper masks of a variety of wildlife. Thirteen students participated in this role-play activity to understand and make the audience to understand the meaning of biodiversity. With the help of this play way method the students were taught how living organisms in an ecosystem depend on each other for survival. Aruna Negi explained to the students the role of frogs and bats in the environment. The ZOO kits on Amphibians and Bats were used to teach the facts about the frogs and bats and their ecological roles in the environment. In another session,



Santosh Sahoo taught the participating students about the Bears and the threats they face due to human-induced damage to their natural habitats. Examples of Human-Bear conflicts in the black bear ranging areas in Shimla district were illustrated to explain why bears enter into human habitation areas and pose serious threats to the human lives and crops.

A game activity on "Threats to Bears" was conducted in which some of the students participated in a role-play to display how Himalayan black bears and human beings are in conflict due to gradual destruction to their natural habitats by the human beings. At the end of this play, the participants went on a rally insisting audience to give habitat protection and support bear anti-poaching. At the end of the programme, ZOO educational resource materials on amphibians, bats and bears were distributed to all the teachers and students and the contents were explained in detail. Conservation Himalayas is especially thankful to the ZOO Outreach Organization for the resource materials. We are also thankful to the Principal of the Himalayan Public School for giving permission to the students. **Submitted by Santhosh Kumar Sahoo, Conservation Himalayas, Chandigarh.** [chimalayas@yahoo.com](mailto:chimalayas@yahoo.com)

### Wildlife Week Celebrations at the American College, Madurai, Tamil Nadu

The Department of Zoology, The American College has organized Wildlife Week Celebrations on 4.10.2011 to commemorate the culmination of United Nations Decade on Biodiversity (2011-2020), International Year of Forests (2011), World Animal Welfare Day (Oct.4<sup>th</sup>) and Wildlife Week Celebrations (Oct.1-7). More than 200 students belonging to various Departments of the college participated. Various inter-departmental competitions like essay writing, pencil sketching and slogan writing were conducted on the theme of Wildlife Conservation. Dr. A. Joseph Thatheyus, Asst. Professor of Zoology department welcomed the gathering. Acting Principal & Secretary Dr. R. Mohan presided over the function. Dr. M. Davamani Christofer, Bursar elaborates about the India's wildlife resources and list out the species



**Students committing their support for the conservation of amphibian**



**On the spot pencil sketching competition is going on....**

found only in India and the importance of conservation in his felicitation. Dr. C.M. Jeyachandra, Head (In-charge), Zoology Department introduced the chief guest. District Forest Officer Thiru. Rakesh Kumar Jagenia, I.F.S., Chief Guest of the function emphasized the importance of conserving Wildlife and aim & significance of these celebrations. He also distributed the prizes and certificates to the winners of various competitions. Zoo Outreach Organization distributed the materials for Wildlife Week with species and conservation themes. Students were benefitted by the materials.

Dr. P. Velladurai, Assistant Professor administered the wildlife protection pledge. Ms. J. Judith Caroline, Convener proposed the vote of thanks. Prof. M. Rajesh distributed the materials sent by the Zoo Outreach Organization to the students and instruct them to take pledge to protect the animals after wearing the mask and rakhis. **Submitted by M.Rajesh, American College, Madurai, TN.** [lillyrajesh@yahoo.com](mailto:lillyrajesh@yahoo.com).