



Nature is our Password, Conservation the Creed

Monsoon 2013

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Just Checking...

Barasingha Rucervus duvaucelii

S. Sen

Current Protected Area Network of India

Position as on September, 2013

National Parks: 102; Area 40075.00 sq km, (1.22%)
Wildlife Sanctuaries: 526; Area 124239.00 sq km, (3.78%)
Conservation Reserves: 57; Area 2018.00 sq km, (0.06%)
Community Reserves: 4; Area 21.00 sq km, (0.0%)
Total Protected Areas: 689; Area 166353.00 sq km, (5.06%)

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Around the Campus

One Week Compulsory Training Course on “Human-Wildlife Conflict: Issues and Mitigation”, Dehradun, *July 22-26, 2013*. This course was conducted at Wildlife Institute of India, Dehradun as per the instructions from the Ministry of Environment & Forests, Govt. of India. The course was for in-service IFS Officers, of various seniorities. A total of 21 officers, from various states, attended the course. The inputs were provided by WII faculty and eminent resource persons like Shri S.S. Bist, Dr. Vidhya Athreya, Dr. Shrikant Chandola, Shri Ajai Saxena and Shri D.V.S. Khati. The participants also shared their experiences and case studies from the field.

A field trip to Narendra Nagar Forest Division was also organized to familiarize the participants with some of the approaches being tried out in the field. Overall the programme could sensitize the officers about their role in Human Wildlife Conflict. The course ended with a panel discussion on the topic “Improvement in the working of Forest Department – Need for career development through training and improvement of skills”.

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School in Herpetology, Dehradun, August 17-31, 2013. An intensive course in Herpetology (study of amphibians and reptiles) called the “School in Herpetology” was conducted at the Wildlife Institute of India. It was sixth course in the series conducted since 2007 in different parts of the country. This unique programme was supported by the Science Engineering and Research Board, Department of Science and Technology, Government of India. This course targeted doctoral students and young faculty in Universities in India and neighbouring SAARC countries. The course was designed to assist the students pursue careers in Herpetology. In all 25 participants, comprising of 21 students from India, two from Sri Lanka, two from Nepal were selected the course. The selection of these participants was made after advertising the course and screening from 223 online applications received.

The Inaugural lecture was made by Prof. K.S. Krishnan, National Centre for Biological Sciences, Bangalore. Apart from eminent herpetologists from India, some herpetologists from USA, France and Japan were invited as resource persons. During the course, alumni of the course were also invited to provide evening talks. Eight such alumni participated in the course. The students were also trained in laboratory techniques such as preservation, curation, morphometry, behavioural observation of larvae and regeneration experiments. A field trip was organized at Dhanaulti. The participants were exposed to field techniques in herpetology and photo-documentation. During the field trip, the participants used various field techniques and recorded amphibians and reptiles in the field.

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XXXV P.G. Diploma Course in Advanced Wildlife Management

To train the officials in the field of Wildlife Management, XXXV P.G. Diploma Course in Advanced Wildlife Management commenced at the Institute on September 1, 2013. Twenty officer trainees of the rank of Deputy Conservator of Forests/Assistant Conservator of Forests/Assistant Veterinary Surgeon and equivalent levels joined the 10-month course. Fourteen of them represented different States of the country viz. one each from Kerala, Himachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, Tripura and Uttar Pradesh; two each from Mizoram and Odisha; and four from Andhra Pradesh. Two IFS officers of 2011-13 batch, who completed their professional forestry training of two years at Indira Gandhi National Forest Academy, Dehradun in August 2013, joined the course as Hari Singh Fellows. They were deputed by the Govt. of India to undergo training in the aforesaid course at Wildlife Institute of India. In addition, there are 6 foreign nationals (one from Vietnam sponsored by the Global Tiger Forum and 5 from Peoples' Republic of Bangladesh, sponsored by their own Govt.) also joined the prestigious course.

The syllabus adopted for the present P.G. Diploma Course is based on revised modular pattern. The course is divided into four sub-components viz. Conservation Biology, Tools and Techniques for Conserving Wildlife, Advanced Wildlife Management Practices and Integrated Wildlife Management Planning and it had 16 distinct modules.

Prior to start of the module, the registration formalities of officer trainees, familiarisation with Institute's facilities and course inaugural/interaction session was held on September 2, 2013. The officer trainees undertook their Orientation Tour at Kalagarh, Corbett Tiger Reserve and adjoining areas during September 23-28, 2013. They also attended the Annual Research Seminar of the Institute during September 30-October 1, 2013.

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Discussion Forum on Himalayan Day, Dehradun, September 9, 2013. A discussion forum was held at the Institute on the Mountain Day on 'Challenges for Conservation and Development in Indian Himalayas'. A total of 70 participants including Institute's faculty, researchers, officer trainees of P.G. Diploma course, M.Sc. students and representatives of four Non-Governmental Organisations, namely HIMMOTHAN, SAMVEDI, AAGAAS Federation and WWF-India participated.

Shri V.K. Uniyal, IFS and faculty member of the Institute moderated the discussion, welcoming the participants. He gave a background of why the Mountain Day is celebrated. He briefed about the efforts made by Chipko Movement leader Shri Sunderlal Bahuguna. Dr. S. Sathyakumar talked about the research initiatives of the Wildlife Institute of India in the Himalayas. He mentioned that the Institute is working on species, ecosystem and climate change for the last two decades. Dr. Dhananjai Mohan, CCF (WL), Uttarakhand Forest Department spoke on 'Why the dams were being built'. In his personal opinion, Dr. Mohan mentioned that we all have been driven by emotions rather than the real issues while reporting about the latest Himalayan tragedy. He further suggested that we should all look inwards on our need of electricity and other supplies.

Dr. Malvika Chauhan spoke about Himmothan's initiatives in working with the resource dependent communities in the Garhwal Himalaya region. Dr. Chauhan emphasized that for making livelihood sustainable in the mountain region, despite geographical and physical difficulties, requires coordinated effort by one and all. Dr. Kishor Nautiyal made the participants aware of the initiatives of SAMVEDI in the disaster affected region. Dr. Nautiyal also briefed about government policies. He urged everyone to work towards the sensitization of the local community so that conservation and development can go hand in hand.

Shri J.P. Maithani presented a slide show on the recent disaster and apprised the gathering about the work being done by AAGAAS Federation in the recently disaster affected areas. Dr. Jatinder Kaur described the initiatives of WWF- India on responsible tourism in the Himalayas. Dr. Kaur informed the gathering about the initiatives of WWF in the disaster affected wetlands of Uttarakhand. The participants expressed their appreciation on the celebration on the celebration of Mountain Day and deliberated on how to make the initiative meaningful.

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Around the Campus

VIII-Internal Annual Research Seminar (IARS) and XXVI Annual Research Seminar (ARS)

IX Internal Annual Research Seminar September 24, 2013. The IX Internal Annual Research Seminar (IARS) was conducted on September 24, 2013. The IARS was chaired by Shri Vinod Rishi, Former, ADG (WL), MoEF, Govt. of India, New Delhi. During IARS, a total of 14 presentations were made in 3 technical sessions, viz., Diversity, Distribution, and Population Assessment; Molecular Genetics and Captive Management and Animal-Habitat Interactions and Impacts of Climate Change. The presentations were based on recently initiated and ongoing research studies and were made by research fellows of the Institute. The following were adjudged as the 'three best' oral presentations and the research personnel were awarded book prizes:

Best Presentation Awards

- I Shivam Shrotriya Predicting distribution of wolves in Trans-Himalayan and Himalayan Landscape, India.
- II Preeti Shirish Virkar Pollinator diversity in three selected forest types of Dehradun Forest Division, Uttarakhand.
- III Pritha Dey Preliminary study on diversity of Moth Lepidoptera: Heterocera in Nanda Devi Biosphere Reserve, Uttarakhand.
- III Nilofer Begum Pedigree analysis for captive management of select threatened primates.

XXVII Annual Research Seminar (ARS), September 30-01 October, 2013. Prof. R. Sukumar, Chairman, Training, Research and Academic Council (TRAC), chaired the ARS. A total of 22 presentations were made in 4 technical sessions viz.,

Landscape Ecology; Tools and Techniques in Wildlife Conservation; Conservation Breeding and Phylogenetics and Species Ecology. The presentations were based on the ongoing or completed research studies. They were made by research fellows and faculty members of the Institute. In addition, 18 poster presentations were also made by the researchers. The oral and poster presentations were evaluated by a panel of judges.

About 330 delegates attended the ARS that included the Principal Chief Conservators of Forests, Chief Wildlife Wardens and other senior officials representing State Forest Departments, delegates representing NGOs, scientists, wildlife experts, faculty members, researchers, students, P.G. Diploma Course officer trainees of WII and IFS probationers from the Indira Gandhi National Forest Academy, Dehradun.

A panel of eminent scientists and wildlife managers evaluated the relevance and quality of research made through oral and poster presentations. The following presentations were adjudged the 'best presentations' and researchers were awarded the book prize:

Poster Presentation Award

- I Anility, A.S. Effect of habitat structure on odonate species richness in streams of Kalakad Mundanthurai Tiger Reserve, Tamilnadu
- I Subish Sebastian Recreational value of Periyar Tiger Reserve.





- II Anupya D. Baburam Age estimation of Olive Ridley sea turtle *Lepidochelys olivacea* using skeletochronology
- II Nishant Kumar A study of resource selection by the black kites in the urban landscape of National Capital Region, India.
- III Pooja Chourasia Ecology of leopard *Panthera pardus fusca* in Sariska Tiger Reserve, Rajasthan.

Best Presentation Awards

- I Laskhminarasimha, R. Conservation breeding of Western tragopan in Himachal Pradesh: towards establishing a reserve and model population.
- II Stotra Chakrabarti Scats, information in disguise: Computing biomass consumption from prey occurrences in scats of tropical felids.
- III Hari Krishnan, S. Patterns in body-size, species co-occurrence and distribution of terrestrial herpetofauna of Andaman and Nicobar Islands.

- IV Parabita Basu Potential lion habitat and connectivity in Gujarat.
- V Manjari Malviya Correlates of physiological stress in reintroduced tiger: preliminary findings from Sariska and Panna Tiger Reserves.

In the concluding session, Dr. R. Sukumar, Chairman, TRAC, said that the quality of work and presentations made during the ARS were commendable. He said that the suggestions made by colleagues at ARS would be appropriately discussed in the TRAC meeting. He observed that the science profile of WII was being raised and the quality of work had further improved. He reiterated that there is a need to move from describing pattern to understanding processes in their research work. Although patterns are useful for short term conservation, for sensible conservation policy, there is a need for long-term research on understanding ecological processes.

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Farewell...

Dr. Dhananjai Mohan

Dr. Dhananjai Mohan is a member of 1988 batch of Indian Forest Service, Uttarakhand cadre. He is a graduate in Electrical Engineering from IIT, Kanpur. He served in the high Himalayan Protected Areas in the initial part of his service in Uttar Pradesh and later worked in Forestry Research Division and in Katarniaghat Sanctuary in the terai region of the State. He did his Post-Graduate Diploma in Wildlife Management in the year 1992. He served as an Associate Professor in the Indira Gandhi National Forest Academy, Dehradun from 1998 to 2004. He underwent a short course on 'Biodiversity Conservation and Management'

in 2003 at the Centre of Arid Zone Studies, University of Wales, Bangor. He completed his doctoral research work on 'Habitat selection of birds in New Forest, Dehradun, India' in 2007.

He joined Wildlife Institute of India on August 7, 2006 on deputation. He worked on research projects on avifauna particularly of Himalayan region. He is a keen bird-watcher and travels to places in pursuit of his hobby. He also loves trekking and music. On completion of his deputation period at WII, Dr. Dhananjai Mohan was repatriated to his parent department on August 6, 2013. WII wishes him and his family members good health and happiness.

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"The poetry of the earth is never dead."

— John Keats