

MADRAS NATURALISTS' SOCIETY

BULLETIN

Vol.33 No.7, July 2010

Programme: July 11th at 9.00 am

Venue: "Koodam", Play Coop, (Behind Malar Hospital), 12 (83), 4th Main Road, Gandhinagar, Adyar, Chennai - 600 020

Topic: "The Truth about Tigers" - A Film

Speaker: Mr. Shekar Dattatri, renowned Wildlife and Conservation Filmmaker

Change in Venue of the Monthly Meeting: Please note the change in the monthly meeting Venue.

Directions: When you enter 4th Main Road, Gandhinagar from Malar Hospital side, take the first right turn. It is a *cul de sac*. Play Coop is on the right at the very end. If you enter from old Cancer Institute side, the turn is the last left.

AGM Report and new Office Bearers

The Annual General Body Meeting: The annual general body meeting was held on the 13th June, at the Olcott Memorial School, Besant Nagar. About 30 Members attended the meeting and the following office bearers were elected for the coming year.

Office Bearers

President: Mr. K Raghunathan
Vice President: Dr. A Rajaram
Hony. Secretary: Mr. G Vijaya Kumar
Joint Secretary: Mr. M Chandrasekhan
Treasurer: Mr. E E Sundaramurthy

Committee Members

Dr. Geetha Jaikumar
Dr. R Bhanumathi
Dr. Aravind Venkataraman
Mr. Kumaran Sathasivam
Dr. T P Alaganantham

Mr C Ramakrishna and Mr K V Sudhakar were co-opted as Committee Members.

Members' Reports

Sprint of the Blackbuck - Book Release

The release of the Sprint of the Blackbuck yesterday at the Gandhi Nagar Club was attended by about 50 members. We started off with refreshments (excellent Vadais and Khichidi followed by pudding and coffee). We were all then called to order and the function began with a welcome by Mr. Sudhakar. Mr. Kumaran Sathasivam gave us a brief on the genesis of the Blackbuck and MNS activities which was followed by Ms. Kamini Mahadevan of Penguin who talked about Penguin's association with MNS and the book.

Mr. Gopal Krishna Gandhi, Chief Guest, released the book and gave the first copy to Mr. B. Vijayaraghavan. This was followed by the chief guest's address when Mr. Gandhi recalled anecdotes from his interactions with Mr. M Krishnan. Mr. Vijayaraghavan and Mr. Theodore Bhaskaran also addressed the gathering. The whole program was MC-ed ably by Vijay Kumar.



Pictures taken by Bhanu.

- Chithra

Kotagiri

I had taken a trip to Kotagiri in the last week of May. The places of interest in Kotagiri are Longwood Shola, Kodanad view point and Sullivan Museum. The Longwood Shola is surrounded by tea plantations and abuts some roads in many places so that it is somewhat degraded. The normal entrance from Kotagiri town to the shola is through a road controlled by the Forest Dept. The problem is one has to get permission from the DFO at Ooty to enter and that is very difficult since Ooty is 40km away. The shola is under the charge of a Forest Range Officer and you have to try your luck with him. He allowed two of us to go but no guide was available and we couldn't explore much. We were able to see the Nilgiri laughing thrush, southern blackbird and black bulbul. There was an albino pond heron as well. The thrushes and blackbird were having a bath. Without the Forest Dept's permission one may explore the shola from other regions for example from the road on the way to Kodanad viewpoint. The Kodanad view point is on the southern side of the Moyar valley and you can see the forests of Talamalai across and the fields of Thengumarahada below. The Bhavanisagar dam is to the East. Another must see place is the Sullivan museum, the renovated house of the Britisher who first developed Nilgiris. There is a caretaker nearby who is most obliging in opening the museum for visitors in spite of slightly odd hours. The museum is at a place called Keenerimukku where only mini buses ply now. Ooty was most crowded. Interestingly, grey tits are doing the job of house sparrows coming for picking up tidbits and ice cream remains at Doddbeta. This place is best avoided at the peak season! Though crowded, the Ooty botanical gardens gave some breathing space and the grey headed flycatcher is most obliging to be photographed just behind the model toda hut on the right of the entrance!

- Dr. A Rajaram

Sightings

- Short toed Snake Eagle by Gnana Ksandan (GK) , Varun, Sripad and Kailash on June 13th at Siruthavoor
- Greater Flamingo by GK at Pallikaranai on June 20th
- White bellied Sea Eagle by Preston Ahimaz over the Adyar Poonga more than once in June
- Pied Kingfisher by Hariharah Sivakumar and Ramanan at Pallikaranai on June 27th.

Events

Basic Photography Workshop: A basic photography workshop is being organized on the 31st July and 1st August by Dr. T P Alaganantham. The cost for the Workshop covering meals, etc. will approx. be between Rs.1,000 - 1,200/-.

News

1. *Indian Skimmer* - Article in Birding Asia. - One of our younger members Vikas has written an article on Indian Skimmer in Issue BA13 of Birding Asia. He is the youngest author to be published in Birding Asia.
2. *BBC-Veolia Photography Contest* - 3 images of Sripad Sridhar reached semifinals, 5 images of Vikas reached semifinals and 1 image the final round.
3. Mr. Raju Kasumbe of the Indian Bird Conservation Network (IBCN) is drawing up a list of nodal persons for the Important Bird Areas (IBAs) of Tamilnadu. A nodal person should visit the IBA frequently to be personally aware of the happenings in that area. Be willing to share the information with the BNHS or the IBA office. Be available/accessible on phone and/or e-mail. Be or become a member of the IBCN. The post of a nodal person is totally voluntary and does not involve payment of any honorarium. The IBCN will help nodal persons: In raising funds for conservation-related activities. By providing new information received by them regarding IBAs. Could those wishing to participate please mail Santharam or Kumaran Sathasivam.
4. There seem to be lil groups or loners of black winged stilts the year around in diff marshes scattered across the city right from North chennai to diff scatered marshes throughout pallikarnai!!! Today evenin i went birding at Pallikarnai and saw a total of 100 or more black winged stilts all across the area right before CWET to the Chrompet pallavaram road and beyond and in patch there were about 20 black winged stilts with about 7 or more brooding clearly on their mound nests and 3 parents with clutch size of 3,4 &5 were seen!!! And purple Moorhens were all over the place with their chicks..however these were a bit grown up and due to sudden pour and dip in the lighting i could not continue the watch!!

- Hopeland from Tamilbirds

5. Care4nature is a new environmental magazine. It is currently looking for articles, stories, etc. Have attached file with details. Look forward to many contributions from this group. Please forward this to any other **relevant** groups or individuals you know who might be able to contribute for the same. **Immediate requirement is for articles related to fungi for the next issue. Other topics are also welcome.** For article submissions or queries, contact: content@care4nature.org For submission of photographs or images contact: photos@care4nature.org For a look at current and previous issues, please check the link: www.care4nature.org

6. I would like to invite you to share the information on Bustard species in India through Bustard Forum launched on www.bnhsenviis.nic.in website of ENVIS Centre on Avian ecology, BNHS (link - <http://www.bnhsenviis.nic.in/bustardforum.html>). The above activity will be carried out under supervision of Dr. Asad Rahmani, Director, BNHS and Project Coordinator, ENVIS Centre. The successful bustard conservation management needs collective efforts by all of us. Therefore I request you to kindly get involved in bustard forum and inform all your friends about it I shall be happy to receive your feedback for further improvement of the Bustard Forum. - Raju Kasumbe

7. ATREE's Academy for Conservation Science and Sustainability Studies presents --15-day Field-based Course in Conservation Science For young professionals, Senior Graduate and Post-Graduate students check out Atree.org

8. There are a couple of online courses being conducted by the CEC of BNHS on entomology and biodiversity. Those interested can check out <http://www.BNHS.org>

Resources

1. Dr. Rahmani provided this link--this impressive site has a digital bird library with videos, photographs and sound recordings: <http://ibc.lynxeds.com>

2. This article lists the birds found in the Indian state of Tamil Nadu. Over 300 species of birds have been spotted in Tamil Nadu. The list accompanies the local Tamil name. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_birds_of_Tamil_Nadu

3. Work on Tamil names of birds: http://karkanirka.wordpress.com/2010/06/04/tamil_wordlist_14/

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