

Wildlife Week Celebrations at Madras Crocodile Bank

Kundhavi devi*

Sunday, October 3, 2004:

Wildlife Week celebrations were kicked off at the Madras Crocodile Bank Trust with a painting competition for 18 children from Vadanemelli village. Activities using Welfare of Daily Life Wildlife kits sponsored by Zoo Outreach Organisation were conducted followed by the painting competition. The children used only natural materials like mud, leaves, flowers, charcoal and indigo for their paintings. Three prizes were awarded for the best paintings by the judges.

Tuesday, October 5, 2004

A quiz competition was held for government primary and high schools. A total of 32 children representing 12 schools on the East Coast Road participated in the day's activities. The high school children went on a treasure hunt based on clues pertaining to the different reptiles found in the Croc Bank. The all girl team from Govt Middle School from Alathur won the treasure hunt. While the treasure hunt was in progress the teams from the primary schools went through a qualification round for the quiz. The team from Panchayat Union Primary School, Chemenjeri won the primary school quiz and the team from Nemelli Govt. High School emerged as the winners of the high school quiz.

Wednesday, October 6, 2004

A half-day program for 23 children of class 11 from St. Mary's Kellambakkam was organized at the Croc Bank. They were taken for a tour of the Croc Bank and then activities were conducted using reptile kits sponsored by Zoo Outreach Organisation. Activities were conducted using the Turtle & Tortoise Kit and the Go Gharial kit.

The afternoon session was attended by 22 students from BKMS Higher Secondary School, Kelambakkam. Mr. Marimuthu from Zoo Outreach Organisation, Mr. Manimozhi, Biologist and Mr. Kalyanamorthy, Forest Ranger both from Vandalur Zoo also attended this session. The session followed the same schedule as the morning program. The students were taken for a tour of Croc Bank followed by activities using the Turtle & Tortoise Kit.

Nature Camps

August 25, 26 & 27, 2004: Kodaikanal International School

A nature camp was conducted for the Environment Science students Kodaikanal International School for 2 ½ days. Bat watching, a visit to a sacred grove, visit to the medicinal plants nursery and herbal center at the Irula Womens Welfare Society, talk by Romulus Whitaker about snakes, snake hunt, trip to the backwaters at Odiyur near Marakkanam for a boat ride, bird watching, a tour of Croc Bank and cleaning of a croc pit were the activities conducted for these students.

A nature camp was organized for the 18 members of the Friends of the Croc Bank Club at the Periyar Tiger Reserve in Thekaddy. It was a three-day camp organized with the forest department at PTR from 24th – 26th September 2004.

A half day nature camp was conducted for 30 students from La Chatlene school. They were taken for a tour of Croc Bank and

activities were conducted using the Tiger Kit. The resource round up game was also played.

Program at Infosys Technologies:

July 7, 2004: A show and tell was conducted for the employees of Infosys in the campus at Sholinganalur. Two sessions were done for a group of around 100 employees each session. At the end of the first session there was a game of Resource Round up for 35 volunteers.

Nature Quest:

NatureQuest, a joint effort of Orient Longman Pvt. Ltd., the Madras Crocodile Bank Trust and the Trust for Environmental Education (TREE), is a programme to raise awareness about wildlife and conservation. Apart from raising awareness, the programme also aims to create a meeting ground for children and adults interested in conservation. Talks, discussions, screening of slide, video and film shows with wildlife filmmakers, researchers, photographers, artists and musicians have been conducted so far.

July 16, 2004: Irulas and Herbal Medicines for a healthy life

Botany departments from various city colleges were invited to attend a presentation and exhibition on Irula herbal and medicinal plants. Six colleges attended the exhibition, which was open from morning 9:30am till 7:30pm. The last session was held for NatureQuest members. Mr. Krishnan, Director of Projects made a presentation on ITWWS and herbal plants. There was also a film on the Irulas that was screened for the audience.

August 7, 2004: Launch of Rom Whitaker's and Ashok Captains book "Snakes of India"

August 28, 2004: Launch of book "Birds: Beyond Watching" and talk by Dr. V. Shantharam

September 18, 2004: Dr. Ravi Chellam talked about his work on the lions of Gir there was a Q&A session with the audience after the presentation.

Activities for Vadanemelli village children

Weekend activities were mainly focused on the puppet theater. Some of the kids- Dinesh, Kandasamy and Satish staged a street play. Children from the nearby villages have begun participating the programs on Sunday after the inauguration of the nature clubs. Games were played to introduce the new comers. Some theatre games were conducted by Raja, Guha and Dorairaj – the puppeteers, for the children to increase focus and attention.

August 17, 2004: Indian Turtle and Tortoise Conservation Practices Workshop

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D. Basu, of the U.P. Forest Department, conducted a workshop on Indian Tortoises and Turtles. Participants were invited from WWF, Madras Snake Park and Vandalur Zoo. Preston Ahimaz, WWF and Kalaiarasan, Madras Snake Park attended the daylong workshop along with 4 students, Shaswat, Vijay Anand, Nishant and Ammolya and the staff at MCBT. The workshop covered all aspects of turtle and tortoise conservation. A resource kit was made for all participants with relevant papers and information.



Turtles



Filling in Turtle Poster



Village kids with masks frm daily life wildlife kits



Gharial pit



Quiz participants



Go Gharial

Detail Report of 50th Wildlife Week executed by APOWA, (Action for Protection of Wild Animals) At Hatapatana, Orissa

Bijaya Kumar*

This year we celebrated wildlife week in a different manner. The program was more colourful interesting and learnable with inputs of educational materials provided by Coimbatore based Zoo Outreach Organisation. Daywise celebration report is given below.

Day one: 1st October 2004

Inauguration of Wildlife Week

The week long program was inaugurated by Prof. G.C. Tripathy, OES, Retd. at the Office premises of APOWA. In his talk he insisted on to be more practical than theoretical especially in the field of wildlife. On this inaugural ceremony President of APOWA stressed on the conservation and protection of endangered species and wildlife. And the volunteers, students, guests and others tie rakhi to each other with a pledge to protect wildlife. The animal printed rakhi was provided by Zoo Outreach Organisation, Coimbatore. And a rare photo exhibition on wildlife was displayed. It was a very interesting program for all viewers.

Day two: 2nd October 2004 - Gandhi Jayanti and Ahimasadiwas

On this occasion a meeting was arranged at Keshpur M.E. School. An elocution competition was held among students of 8 different schools on "Gandhi & Ahimsa". Attending the meeting the Headmaster of this School Sri Raghunath Sahoo gave a talk on importance on non- violence to all, starting from insects to human beings. Mr. B.K. Kabi, Director, APOWA said one's thought and action should be ahimsa oriented. The Chief guest distributed prizes and T-shirt to the winners. Sri Gopabnadh Parida gave vote of thanks.

Veterinary Camp:

On the eve of wildlife week and Ahimsa Diwas a Veterinary Camp was organized by APOWA at Nikirei under Kendrapara block. De-worming treatment was conducted by the organisers Dr. Ashutosh Mohanty, and Dr. Prasant Behure. 217 large & small animals were treated in this camp.



Meeting on the eve of Wildlife Week 2004

Day three: 3rd October 2004

Venue: N.C. High School, Badamulabasanta

The third day celebration of wildlife week 2004 was inaugurated by S.J. Bhagabat Kund, the Head Master of N.C. High School Badamulasanta in Pattamundai Block. In his talk he said one must realize the life of living being. On this occasion various competitions were held amongst school students from 12 schools of Kendrapara Dist. The following competitions were organised for student.

a) Essay competition

The essay competition was held on the topic "Wild Life Conservation and the role of the students". Sixty students from 12 schools participated in the competition. The essays were evaluated by our experts, according to the evaluator the essay was high ranking & factual.



Essay Competition

b) Know your Wildlife Welfare? ABCs?

The competition on "ABC of Wildlife" was held on this occasion. There were 46 students who participated in the program and filled the blanks (the name of animals) booklet provided by Zoo Outreach Organisation, Coimbatore. It was seen that student were very happy to attend such programme.

c) Bat – Count Competition

"Bat Count competition" was more appreciated by students and teachers. There were 52 students who counted the number of bats. Most of the students gave the right answer.

Second Session: "Meeting"

On the occasion of wildlife week 2004, a meeting was organized under the presidentship of Mr. Bhagabat Prasad Kund, Headmaster N.C. High School, Badamulabasanta. First the student tied rakhi to the Guests. Mr. Bijaya Kumar Kabi, Director, APOWA gave welcome address to the guests and participants. S.J. Rabindranath Routray, Forest Officer,

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Bhitarkanika National Park, Rajnagar, Kendrapara was the Chief Guest. In his talk he spoke about importance on solutions of present man-animal conflict and also said the conservation of wildlife is essential for ecological balance. Sj. Ashok Kumar Bal, Zoologist spoke about importance on preservation of eco system. Dr. Natabar Dash, Veterinarian told the present miserable health condition of animals and future prospects.

In the session of prize ceremony Chief Guest distributed Prize articles of APOWA and T-shirts of ZOO to the winners. Mr. Satyaranajan Das gave vote of thanks.

Day Four: 4th October 2004 - World Animal Day

On the 4th day celebration of wildlife week and world Animal Day a rally was Organised by APOWA alongwith students of Phokhariapara M.E. School in Pattamundai town.

The students started a rally wearing masks of different animals provided by ZOO and holding placards. Dr. Laxman Behera, Deputy Director AH & Dairy, Govt. of Orissa flagged off the rally and the whole atmosphere echoed with the sounds of "Jiva Daya". It was a wonderful experience and every one appreciated the programme.

In this context a drawing competition was held among the students of Pokharapara M .E. School. And the program "Dare to Care Bears" also conducted by 38 school Students. Resource materials of Zoo were distributed to the children. In a meeting Sj. Ashis Senapati, environmentalist distributed prize materials to the winners.

Day Five: 5th October 2004

A quiz competition was organized by APOWA at U.S. High School on the topic "Wildlife of Orissa". There were 27 students who participated in this competition. The quiz master Sj. Akhaya Nanda conducted the program with a great enthusiasm. And a short play was performed by the

students of USAK High School. It was highly commendable.

Day Six: 6th October 2004

Various game were organized by APOWA in relation to wildlife at Hatapatana School. Children wearing big T-shirts and walked on the road which was a wonderful & interesting game. The games like "Fire in the forest", "My Daily life Wildlife", "Amphibian art and activities", "Turtle size and shapes activity" were conducted among students.

Day Seven: 7th October 2004 - Valedictory Function

The Valedictory function of Wildlife week was organized at APOWA Conference Hall. Sj. Nigamanada Tripathy, Vice – President of APOWA presided the meeting where all the volunteers of APOWA, local – club members, village headman, were present. Every one appreciated the educational materials provided by Zoo Outreach Organization. This was most informative, interesting & attractive for school students. The week long program was evaluated and assessed and the responses from students were evaluated by Prof. G.C. Tripathy. The responses were satisfactory.

Evaluation & Comments of the program

- i) Celebration of wildlife week was very important & useful.
- ii) Education materials of Zoo Outreach Organisation was most informative, attractive & interesting.
- iii) Education materials for students must be in regional language for easy understanding
- iv) School & Colleges should be informed well before the week observation by the state forest department.
- v) Eco-cum-kindness club should be given importance.



Students wearing Mask



Prize Distribution

50th Wildlife Week Celebration - 2004 at Nandankanan

Manoj Mahapatra*

The golden Jubile year of celebration for Wildlife Week was in a different note. The weekdays were celebrated for different species. This time the lesser-known species like Vulture, Turtle and Bats formed the major species for conservation education. Fact sheets on these animals and Zoo Ethics are given to each participants. Two hundred and eighty five school children from 9 schools, 10 graduate students from Department of Forestry and 20 teachers were participated in the endeavour. The artist of the Zoo drew drawings of animals in front of enclosure and taught them how to draw animal sketches. The masks, placards, rakhi tying was enjoyed and appreciated by all. The T-shirt provided by Zoo Outreach Organization was awarded to winners of Quiz competition and naming competition. What steal the show was naming of tiger cub and leopard cub. The Zoo had 4 tiger cub and one rescued Leopard cub. Students were asked to provide names to the cub, the winner was to be photograph with the cub. What was most revealing is that two of the names selected was the name of the boys themselves. It was touching that they identify themselves with the cubs. Rhishi was given by Rishipal Singh while Sitesh was given by Sitesh Kumar Behera for naming the cubs.



Puchika School on naming leopard cub

The students were educated about the conservation efforts taken for the endangered species by the State. The status of various schedule animals as per classification of IUCN in our country was explained to the participants. The role of zoos for housing and captive breeding for critically endangered species was given due thrust. "Extinction was forever" was explained by citing example of three species of tigers from the earth in the last century. The paucity in sighting Vultures in and around in the recent past is a glaring example how common species can become critically endangered in a short time which the students realize on their own.

The endeavour for showing students about Bats has resulted in identification of cave dwellings for insectivorous Bats in the Zoo. One at Bear enclosure and other at entrance of Lion Safari. Similarly during explaining about turtles and tortoises it was found two are actually Elongated tortoise which is a different species altogether from that of Star Tortoise. The ecological role of scavengers was

highlighted, which are thought provoking for students. The very purpose of sensitizing students was fruitful through animal exhibits, interactions, educative kits by Zoo Outreach Organisation.



Ruehika School winner on Oral Quiz test



DAV School- a Tiger



Renhika Group

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Entrance for Nandankanan Zoo



Daruthenya School on Zoo Patrol & Primate Primer



DAV. School on Tiger Winner of naming tiger cub & written Quiz in English



St. Xavier on Bats



Rinehika School on Primate