



BOMBAY NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

From the DIRECTOR DESK



Dear Members,

Our country is blessed with diverse ecosystems, including wetlands, rivers, forests, deserts, and mountains. However, not all of these ecosystems receive the attention they deserve, and this lack of awareness often leads to their degradation and destruction. For instance, the destruction of the Aravalli Mountains went largely unnoticed until several NGOs highlighted their importance to the sustainable development of northern India's landscape before the courts. Similarly, very little attention has been paid to the Satpura Range, one of the oldest mountain systems in India.

I was fortunate to spend three decades of my life in the Satpura Mountains. Over the past few years, I have documented the natural history of this remarkable mountain range in my Marathi book, *SATPUDYACHA SAATBAARA (Natural History of the Satpura Mountains)*, which was published in December 2025 by Padmagandha Publications, Pune.

This 647-page volume received the Lokmat Sahitya Award in March 2026 in recognition of being the best-researched book of the year. More recently, it was honoured with the prestigious Sharadchandra Manohar Bhalerao Memorial Award 2026 by the 121-year-old Maharashtra Sahitya Parishad as a 'Noteworthy Literary Work'. The credit for these accolades undoubtedly belongs to the extraordinary richness and diversity of the Satpura Mountains, which inspired and shaped this work. In many ways, it is the mountain itself that has earned these two distinguished awards.

We are delighted to share the good news that our long-awaited dream book, *MAMMALS OF INDIA* by Dr A.J.T. Johnsingh and Dr P.O. Nameer, has received an overwhelming response from readers and well-wishers across the country. Thanks to your enthusiastic support, we have already sold more than 300 copies through the pre-publication offer. We are now planning to release the book at a grand launch event in the near future. If you have not yet reserved your copy, this is the perfect opportunity to do so. The book is currently available at a special discounted pre-publication price:

https://shop.bnhs.org/product_details/341.

Thank you for your encouragement and support. We look forward to bringing this landmark publication to you very soon.

As you know, BNHS has not only achieved remarkable success in breeding vultures, but has also released 110 vultures into the wild since 2021. The release of captive-bred vultures in Maharashtra, Haryana, West Bengal, and Assam, has brought immense joy to the entire BNHS family. The released birds are adapting well, and many are thriving in their new environments. Encouragingly, the mortality rate among released birds declined significantly during 2025–26.

In this issue, you will read the inspiring story of a rescued White-rumped Vulture (Ring No. X96). After being rescued in Karnataka's Koppal district, the bird was transferred to the Zoological Park at Hampi for observation and rehabilitation. It was later successfully rehabilitated and released near Sanapur, Karnataka. This remarkable journey highlights the effectiveness of collaborative conservation efforts, and the growing success of vulture recovery programmes in India.

I would like to acknowledge the dedicated efforts of our field teams, who not only monitor and track the released vultures, but also invest significant time and energy in conducting capacity-building workshops for various stakeholders.

On May 22, such workshops were organised for 66 frontline forest personnel in the Pench Tiger Reserve and for 30 community leaders representing villages across all seven forest ranges of the Tadoba-Andhari Tiger Reserve. These initiatives play a crucial role in strengthening local conservation efforts, enhancing awareness, and fostering greater community participation in wildlife protection and vulture conservation.

I must also commend the efforts of all our Vulture Conservation Breeding Centres (VCBCs), which have evolved into important training institutions in addition to their conservation role. These centres regularly host forest officers and frontline staff from various states, providing valuable exposure to vulture conservation and breeding programmes.

This month, the VCBC at Pinjore hosted several batches of forestry personnel, including 38 Range Forest Officers (RFOs) from the Odisha Forest Rangers College, trainee RFOs from the Forest Training Academy at Kundal, Maharashtra, and 34 Forest Guard trainees from the Forest Academy, Gandhigram, Tripura. Such training programmes help strengthen conservation capacity and promote the exchange of knowledge and best practices across the country.

Another noteworthy tradition at BNHS is the organisation of training, awareness, and capacity-building programmes for students of all age groups on important national and international observance days. On the International Day for Biological Diversity, the BNHS Rajasthan team conducted an interactive session for students, researchers, and faculty members of Maharshi Dayanand Saraswati (MDS) University, Ajmer, Rajasthan. Similarly, on World Migratory Bird Day, the BNHS Point Calimere team, in collaboration with the Forest Department, organised a training programme on bird migration studies for students, local communities, and conservation practitioners.

Such initiatives play an important role in nurturing environmental awareness, fostering scientific curiosity, and encouraging active participation in biodiversity conservation among diverse sections of society.

I regularly keep you updated on BNHS's path breaking, research-based conservation work at the Ujani Reservoir in Maharashtra. The BNHS team at Ujani continues to encounter various challenges. Such challenges are inevitable in any conservation project, but success lies in understanding local realities and identifying solutions tailored to the specific needs and circumstances of the area.

This month, the BNHS team at Ujani visited the Ambaghat Hatchery in Kolhapur, Maharashtra, to learn about and document best practices in the breeding of native freshwater fish species. The visit provided valuable insights into brood stock management, larval rearing, fish seed production, water quality monitoring, disease management, conservation breeding, sustainable aquaculture practices, and fisheries development. The knowledge gained will help strengthen ongoing conservation efforts at Ujani, contributing to healthier wetland ecosystems and improved livelihood opportunities for local communities.

The team also conducted fish market monitoring and biometric evaluation surveys at the Bhigwan Fish Market to better understand freshwater fish populations, including the diversity, size structure, and conservation status of species being traded in the region.

In addition, our team undertook a major habitat restoration initiative in the Ujani-Bhigwan wetland landscape by removing invasive aquatic and semi-aquatic plant species from wetland areas around Madanwadi. This month, more than five tonnes of invasive suckermouth catfish were removed from the reservoir ecosystem. Continued removal of this invasive species will help reduce ecological pressure on native fish populations and enhance the productivity and sustainability of local fisheries. Is this not a remarkable example of how research, conservation, and community-oriented action can work together to restore and protect our precious wetland ecosystems?

I would also like to acknowledge the innovative efforts of the BNHS field team in Karnataka. The team has supported the Forest Department in establishing an artificial island habitat at Ankasamudra Lake to enhance bird conservation. Artificial islands are widely recognised as an effective conservation tool in wetland ecosystems

because they create isolated and protected spaces that provide birds with safer nesting, roosting, and breeding sites while reducing pressures from habitat loss and human disturbance.

What I particularly appreciate is the team's strong partnership with the local NGO GreenHBH and its focus on multiple small, targeted conservation actions. In collaboration with the Karnataka Forest Department, the team has successfully reintroduced a native plant species, *Pandanus odorifer* (locally known as Kedige), to restore the lake's banks and improve habitat quality at Ankasamudra. You will also be pleased to know that during these field operations, the team documented two nesting colonies of Blue-tailed Bee-eaters, with 175 active nesting burrows, including a thriving breeding site near Ankasamudra village. This discovery further highlights the ecological significance of the landscape and the success of ongoing conservation efforts.

On the coastal front, the efforts under BNHS's marine project are yielding encouraging results. Our Seahorse Project team has spent the past year building a strong network with fishing communities in the Ratnagiri and Sindhudurg districts. As a result, fishermen have begun actively sharing information on bycatch and reporting marine animals affected by ghost nets. In May, three seahorses were successfully rescued and treated at the BNHS Rescue and Rehabilitation Centre in Ratnagiri. These timely interventions highlight the growing effectiveness of community-based marine conservation efforts.

Recently, a World Bank delegation visited the field station and was impressed by the range of research and conservation initiatives focused on marine biodiversity and coastal ecosystems, including ongoing efforts to study and address the spread of the Green Mussel (*Perna viridis*), locally referred to as the 'Charu Mussel'.

This month, the national media took note of BNHS's first-ever telemetry study of River Lapwings in the Ganga River system in Bhagalpur, Bihar. The study was initiated by the BNHS Bird Ringing and Monitoring Station (BRMS), Bhagalpur, where researchers successfully deployed GSM-GPS transmitters on four River Lapwings on a sandbar near Barari Ghat in Bhagalpur district.

The BNHS-Conservation Education Centre (CEC) continued its mission of fostering environmental awareness and biodiversity appreciation through a series of engaging educational and outreach programmes during May.

For Mumbaikars, every flamingo-watching season brings great joy. This year, BNHS concluded the season with a special Flamingo Walk at NRI Lake, Nerul, offering members an opportunity to witness the last congregations of flamingos before their annual departure from the Mumbai region. BNHS's Central Marketing Department (CMD) also supported outreach efforts by engaging new audiences and promoting the organisation's conservation work, publications, and nature-inspired products.

Please take note of the appeal published in this issue for our library, where we are seeking support to digitise E.P. Gee's films, a project that requires funding. And yes, have you already purchased the "Anytime Planner" and "Undated Diary available through the CMD?

If you are not already following us on social media, please do so to receive the latest daily updates from BNHS.

Finally, I encourage you to read the BNHS Blog (<http://blog.bnhs.org>) for more inspiring stories from the field. Please feel free to contribute articles in any language. We also encourage academic institutions to subscribe to *JBNHS* (<https://bnhsjournal.in/index.php/bnhs/ga>), one of India's oldest scientific journals, which can also help institutions earn NAAC accreditation credits.

If you have not yet completed the Yearbook form for Life Members, you can do so here: <https://forms.gle/12gPTSyTs9P2khue7>

For assistance, feel free to reach out: Central Marketing: cmd@bnhs.org; Membership: membership@bnhs.org
Programmes: programmes@bnhs.org; Conservation Education Centre: cec-mumbai@bnhs.org

For event reservations and content submissions, please send your photos and write-ups to Mr Gopi Naidu at g.naidu@bnhs.org.

Thank you for staying connected with us. For any suggestions or queries, I am always available at director@bnhs.org.

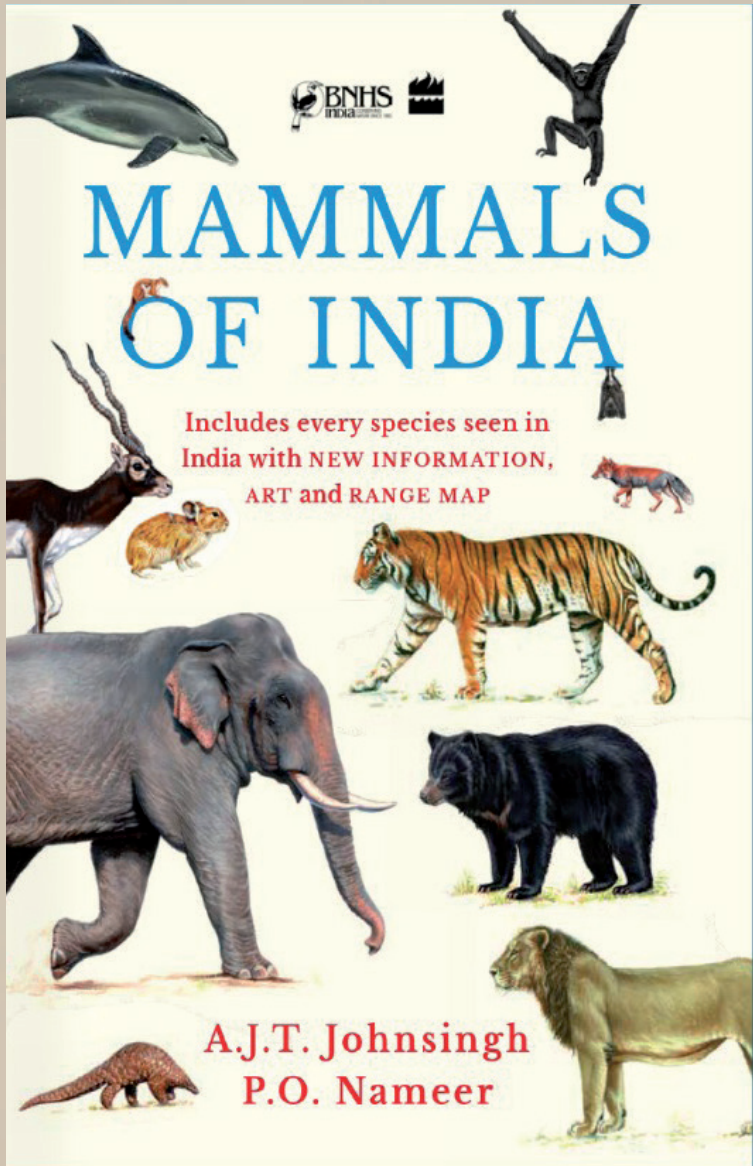
Kishor Rithe

Director, Bombay Natural History Society

MAMMALS OF INDIA

(Co-published by BNHS & HarperCollins)

By A.J.T. Johnsingh and P.O. Nameer



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BNHS Director Kishor Rithe Honoured by Maharashtra Sahitya Parishad

The Bombay Natural History Society (BNHS) is delighted to announce that its Director, Mr Kishor Rithe, has received the prestigious Sharadchandra Manohar Bhalerao Memorial Award 2026 from Maharashtra Sahitya Parishad. The award recognises his acclaimed book *SATPUDYACHA SAATBAARA* as a 'Noteworthy Literary Work', highlighting the important role that literature can play in advancing environmental awareness and conservation.

Presented at a ceremony held on May 26, 2026, at Pune's Bal Gandharva Rangmandir, the award is one of Maharashtra's respected literary honours, celebrating excellence across a range of literary genres. This recognition follows the book's earlier success in receiving the widely regarded *Lokmat Sahitya Puraskar*, further highlighting its impact and appeal among readers.

Drawing on a lifetime dedicated to nature conservation and wildlife research, *SATPUDYACHA SAATBAARA* offers readers a rich and insightful exploration of the Satpuda landscape. Published in 2025 by Padmagandha Prakashan, the 647-page volume reflects extensive knowledge gained through years of work in some of India's most ecologically significant regions.

The recognition of *SATPUDYACHA SAATBAARA* highlights the growing importance of conservation narratives in contemporary literature. By documenting landscapes, wildlife, and the relationship between people and nature, such works help build public understanding of environmental challenges and inspire greater appreciation for India's natural heritage.

BNHS congratulates its Director on this remarkable achievement. His contribution demonstrates how science, conservation, and storytelling can come together to engage wider audiences and strengthen support for protecting biodiversity for future generations. ■



Vulture awareness workshop in Pench on World Biodiversity Day

Strengthening Vulture Conservation Network in Pench Tiger Reserve: A workshop was conducted on May 22nd, on vulture conservation at the Amaltas Tourism Complex, Sillari, bringing together frontline forest personnel from across Pench Tiger Reserve. The session, led by BNHS Conservation Biologist Manan Mahadev, was attended by 66 field staff members, including three Range Forest Officers (RFOs), six Round Officers, and 57 Forest Guards. The programme achieved complete representation from all seven forest ranges of the Reserve.

Designed as a strategic capacity-building initiative, the workshop focused on equipping frontline staff with the knowledge and skills needed to support vulture monitoring and conservation efforts. Participants received training on tracking vulture movements and dispersal patterns, identifying and addressing threats to populations, and promoting practices that support the recovery of these critically important scavengers. Particular emphasis was placed on mitigating the threat posed by harmful veterinary Non-Steroidal Anti-Inflammatory Drugs (NSAIDs), which have been a major factor in vulture declines across the Indian subcontinent. The workshop also highlighted the importance of identifying and promoting vulture-safe gaushalas and livestock management practices within the broader landscape.

By strengthening the capacity of field personnel, the initiative has effectively expanded Pench Tiger Reserve's on-ground conservation network, creating a more informed and responsive system for monitoring and protecting vultures.

Engaging Community Leaders at Tadoba-Andhari Tiger Reserve: A workshop was organised at the Tadoba-Andhari Tiger Reserve Auditorium in Camping Site Madanapur on May 22nd, to strengthen community participation in conservation efforts. The programme brought together Eco-Development Committee (EDC) leaders from villages surrounding the Reserve, highlighting the crucial role local communities play in safeguarding biodiversity. A total of 29 EDC Chairmen representing the Khadsangi, Palasgaon, and Shivni

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buffer ranges participated in the workshop. Forest Guards M.S. Date and P.N. Jarare from the Palasgaon range also attended and supported the programme.

The workshop was conducted under the guidance of Ms Rajeshwari Dayalwar, Education Officer, Tadoba-Andhari Tiger Reserve, and Mr Saurabh Dande, Education Officer, BNHS. Discussions focused on biodiversity conservation, wildlife protection, and the importance of community-led stewardship in maintaining healthy ecosystems. Participants explored how biodiversity conservation serves as a foundation for sustainable development and contributes to the long-term well-being of both nature and local communities. The session also highlighted the ecological significance of Tadoba-Andhari Tiger Reserve, emphasising that its conservation value extends beyond its renowned tiger population to encompass a complex and interconnected ecosystem supporting diverse forms of life.

The interactive programme encouraged active dialogue and participation, providing community leaders with an opportunity to reflect on their role in conservation initiatives within the landscape.

The workshop concluded with a collective commitment to strengthen efforts towards protecting the region's natural heritage, reinforcing the importance of partnerships between local communities, forest authorities, and conservation organisations in achieving long-term conservation goals. ■



BNHS Highlights Lesser Florican Conservation at International Biodiversity Day Celebrations in Ajmer, Rajasthan

International Biodiversity Day 2026 was celebrated at Maharshi Dayanand Saraswati (MDS) University, Ajmer, bringing together students, researchers, and faculty members to promote awareness of biodiversity conservation and the importance of protecting natural ecosystems.

A key highlight of the programme was a special lecture delivered by Dr Sujit Narwade, Deputy Director of the BNHS, who spoke on the conservation of the Critically Endangered Lesser Florican in Rajasthan. The Lesser Florican, one of India's most threatened grassland birds, has experienced significant population declines due to habitat loss and changing land-use practices, making conservation efforts increasingly important. During his presentation, Dr Narwade shared insights into ongoing ecological monitoring and conservation initiatives being undertaken to safeguard the species and its grassland habitats. He also emphasised the importance of community participation in conservation efforts, highlighting collaborative work being carried out with the Rajasthan State Biodiversity Board (RSBB) under the Biodiversity Heritage Site (BHS) initiative. These efforts aim to strengthen habitat protection while fostering greater stewardship among local communities.

The event also showcased the university's commitment to biodiversity awareness and research. Faculty members highlighted the importance of collective responsibility in conserving biodiversity and underscored the ecological value of local plant species and natural habitats. Adding to the institution's growing knowledge resources, two illustrated publications documenting the rich biodiversity of the university campus were formally released during the programme.

Students participated enthusiastically in a range of activities, including infographic design, photography, and bird and flora trivia competitions. These events provided opportunities for young people to explore biodiversity in creative and engaging ways, reflecting a growing interest in environmental conservation among the next generation.

The celebration concluded with a pledge for collective action to protect biodiversity and promote sustainable practices. The programme reinforced the shared commitment of academic institutions, conservation organisations, and local stakeholders to safeguarding India's natural heritage. ■



World Migratory Bird Day 2026 Brings Communities Together at Point Calimere, Tamilnadu

World Migratory Bird Day 2026 was celebrated with enthusiasm at Point Calimere Wildlife and Bird Sanctuary, bringing together students, local communities, and conservation practitioners to highlight the importance of protecting migratory birds and the habitats they depend on. The event highlighted the vital role that wetlands and coastal ecosystems play in supporting millions of birds that travel across continents each year.

The programme was organised by the Vedaranyam Forest Range in collaboration with the BNHS Bird Migration Study Centre. Held on May 9, 2026, the celebration focused on raising awareness about migratory bird conservation while encouraging greater public participation in monitoring and protecting bird populations.

This year's global theme, "Every Bird Counts – Your Observations Matter!", emphasised the value of citizen engagement in conservation. Through birdwatching activities at the Kodiakarai saltpan pump house, nature education sessions, and interactive discussions at the BNHS Bird Migration Study Centre, participants gained first-hand insight into the fascinating journeys of migratory birds and the challenges they face. The awareness session introduced participants to the rich diversity of birdlife found in Tamil Nadu and highlighted the international importance of Point Calimere as a key stopover and wintering site for migratory shorebirds. These birds rely on healthy coastal habitats for feeding and resting during their long-distance migrations, making habitat conservation essential for their survival.

Participants also learned about the role of scientific research in bird conservation. Demonstrations of bird ringing equipment, field data collection techniques, and ongoing migration studies provided a glimpse into the methods used by researchers to track bird movements and better understand their ecology. The session showcased BNHS's long-standing contribution to bird research and conservation in India. ■



BNHS fishery Team Gains Hands-On Insights at Ambaghat Hatchery, Kolhapur, Maharashtra

As part of the Wetland Eco-restoration and Fisheries Development Programme, a team from the BNHS conducted a field visit to the Ambaghat Hatchery in Kolhapur, Maharashtra, on May 12, 2026. The visit provided valuable practical insights into native freshwater fish conservation, sustainable aquaculture practices, and fisheries development, and also key components of strengthening wetland ecosystems and supporting local livelihoods.

The hatchery, managed by Mr Pramod Mali, is recognised for its work in fish breeding and conservation. With more than nine years of experience in hatchery management, Mr Mali shared his expertise with the BNHS team, offering hands-on exposure to a range of techniques including induced breeding, broodstock management, larval rearing, fish seed production, water quality monitoring, disease management, and conservation breeding of native freshwater fishes.

The facility maintains approximately 48 freshwater fish species, with active breeding programmes focused on nearly 15 ecologically and economically important native species sourced from the nearby Kadvi and Warna rivers. During the visit, the team closely observed key stages of hatchery operations, including broodstock conditioning, spawning induction, egg incubation, larval feeding, and fish seed production.

A major focus of the visit was understanding the role of water quality in successful fish breeding and survival. The hatchery maintains strict monitoring of critical parameters such as temperature, dissolved oxygen, pH, alkalinity, hardness, and ammonia levels. Regular aeration, water exchange, and waste management practices help reduce stress on fish and minimise the risk of disease outbreaks. Participants also observed specialised systems used for quarantine, broodstock conditioning, co-culture experiments, and disease treatment.

Among the native species observed were Mahseer (*Tor khudree*), an iconic river fish of conservation importance, along with Nukta fish, Catla, Kalbasu, Loach, Bhagna, Mohri, and several other freshwater species. The team gained detailed knowledge of breeding, incubation, and larval development processes, particularly for Mahseer and other native fishes that play important ecological and economic roles in riverine ecosystems.

The visit also highlighted innovative approaches such as integrated rice–fish farming and conservation breeding programmes for rare and threatened species. These practices demonstrate how fisheries development can be aligned with biodiversity conservation while creating opportunities for sustainable livelihoods. ■



Water Filtration System Installed at Ambika Fisheries Hatchery, Bhigwan, Maharashtra

A significant step towards improving sustainable fish breeding and hatchery management was achieved with the successful installation of a water filtration system at Ambika Fisheries Hatchery in Bhigwan. Maintaining high water quality is critical for every stage of hatchery operations, including fish breeding, egg incubation, larval rearing, and seed production. The newly installed filtration system has been designed to improve water quality before it enters culture tanks, helping to create a healthier and more stable environment for fish development.

The filtration set-up incorporates multiple stages of treatment to address different water quality challenges. Mechanical filtration removes suspended particles and solid waste, while biological filtration supports beneficial bacteria that convert toxic ammonia into less harmful compounds. Where necessary, chemical filtration can also be used to reduce dissolved impurities and unwanted odours, further enhancing water quality.

By improving the quality of water supplied to hatchery tanks, the system is expected to deliver several important benefits. These include increased survival and growth rates of fish, reduced risk of disease outbreaks, and greater stability in key water quality parameters. Improved water management can also enhance breeding success and overall hatchery productivity. An additional advantage of the system is its contribution to more efficient water use. By supporting water recirculation and reuse, the filtration set-up helps conserve valuable water resources while reducing operational costs. ■

DONATE TO HELP PRESERVE E. P. GEE'S

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India's conservation history.



The Bombay Natural History Society (BNHS) Library & Archives has initiated the urgent digitization and preservation of E. P. Gee's wildlife film legacy.



Edward Pritchard Gee was a pioneering naturalist, tea planter, and dedicated conservationist. He served on the Indian Board for Wildlife and was a key member of the BNHS Advisory Committee, where he actively championed the Society's mission.



Currently, 31 films have been identified as requiring immediate digitization to prevent further degradation. The estimated cost for this project is ₹500,000.



We have already secured an initial donation of ₹50,000 from a dedicated wildlife enthusiast, but we need your help to bridge the gap.



Your contribution will play a vital role in safeguarding this invaluable conservation heritage, ensuring it remains accessible for future generations.



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for tomorrow.

These films are fragile,
but their stories
are timeless.
Help us preserve them.





Monitoring Fish Diversity and Population Trends at Bhigwan Fish Market, Maharashtra

As part of ongoing efforts to better understand freshwater fish populations and support sustainable fisheries management, a fish market monitoring and biometric evaluation survey was conducted at the Bhigwan Fish Market on May 21, 2026. The survey provided valuable information on the diversity, size structure, and status of fish species being traded in the region.

The activity focused on collecting length-based biometric data from fish available in the market. Fish market surveys serve as an important tool for understanding the condition of fish populations in nearby rivers, reservoirs, and wetlands. By analysing the size and composition of fish catches, researchers can gain insights into growth patterns, recruitment, and the overall health of fish stocks. Such information is essential for identifying trends that may influence fisheries productivity and biodiversity conservation. ■



BNHS Undertakes Invasive Plant Removal at Madanwadi, Bhigwan (Ujani wetland), Maharashtra

As part of the Wetland Eco-restoration and Fisheries Development Project, the BNHS carried out a major habitat restoration initiative in the Bhigwan wetland landscape between May 23–25, 2026. The activity focused on the removal of invasive aquatic and semi-aquatic plant species from wetland areas in Madanwadi.

Prior to the intervention, the BNHS team conducted a detailed field survey across the wetlands of Bhigwan and Madanwadi to assess the distribution and extent of invasive vegetation. These non-native plant species can spread rapidly, disrupting natural wetland processes by restricting water flow, degrading fish habitats, reducing native plant diversity, and affecting the overall productivity of aquatic ecosystems. Based on the survey findings, large-scale removal activities were undertaken in heavily infested areas with the support of JCB machinery. This approach enabled the efficient clearance of dense vegetation and accelerated restoration efforts across affected wetland habitats.

The removal of invasive plants is expected to significantly improve water circulation and restore natural ecological functions within the wetland. Healthier water flow and reduced habitat degradation will create more favourable conditions for native aquatic plants to regenerate, strengthening the resilience of the ecosystem. The initiative is also expected to benefit a wide range of wetland-dependent species. Improved habitat quality can enhance breeding, feeding, and shelter opportunities for native fish populations while supporting migratory and resident bird species that rely on the Bhigwan wetlands. By restoring critical habitats, the intervention contributes to both biodiversity conservation and the sustainability of local fisheries resources. ■

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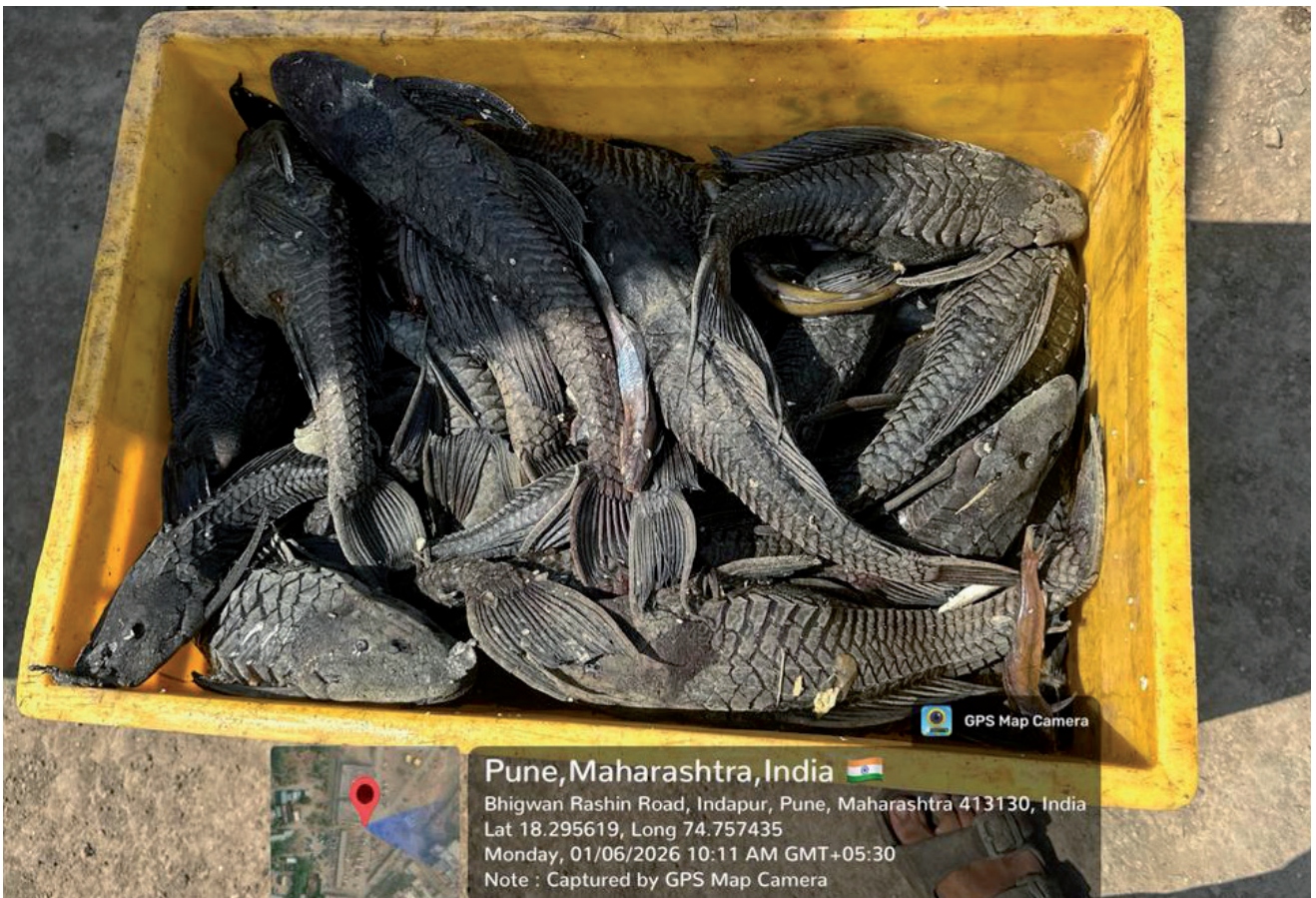
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Over Five Tonnes of Invasive Suckermouth Catfish Removed from Ujani Reservoir, Maharashtra

Following the inauguration of the Suckermouth Catfish Collection Centre in April 2026, the BNHS initiated daily documentation of catches at the Bhigwan Fish Market to support the management of this rapidly spreading invasive species. The monitoring programme focused on catches brought in from the Bhigwan and Daund regions, where suckermouth catfish have become firmly established within the reservoir ecosystem. The species poses a growing challenge to native aquatic biodiversity and fisheries by competing with indigenous fish, altering habitats, and affecting ecosystem balance.

To better understand the scale of the invasion and evaluate ongoing control efforts, daily collection data were systematically recorded throughout May 2026. During the monitoring period from May 1–25, a total of approximately 5,116 kg (5.1 tonnes) of suckermouth catfish was removed from the reservoir ecosystem, demonstrating the substantial scale of the management effort.

The removal of invasive suckermouth catfish is an important component of wetland restoration and fisheries conservation efforts in the Ujani Reservoir landscape. Continuous extraction helps reduce ecological pressure on native fish populations, supports the recovery of aquatic habitats, and contributes to improving the productivity and sustainability of local fisheries. Beyond facilitating fish removal, the collection centre serves as a valuable platform for organised monitoring, data management, and evidence-based decision-making.

The successful removal of more than five tonnes of invasive suckermouth catfish in a single month highlights the importance of sustained management efforts and collaborative action in restoring the ecological balance of the Ujani Reservoir and safeguarding its native biodiversity. ■



World Bank Delegation Visits BNHS

The BNHS recently hosted a delegation of World Bank officials at its headquarters, Hornbill House in Mumbai, and the BNHS Ratnagiri Field Station, providing an opportunity to showcase ongoing research and conservation initiatives focused on marine biodiversity and coastal ecosystems.

Ahead of the visit, Dr Tejal Vijapure delivered an online presentation highlighting the objectives, progress, and key achievements of the Charu Mussel Project and the Seahorse Conservation Project. The presentation offered an overview of BNHS's efforts to strengthen marine conservation through research, community engagement, and species recovery programmes.

During their visit to Hornbill House on May 26, 2026, the World Bank delegation engaged in discussions with BNHS scientists and researchers. Dr P. Sathiyaselvam, Dr Unmesh Katwate, and Dr Tejal Vijapure, shared updates on their respective projects, highlighting recent scientific findings, conservation outcomes, and future priorities. The visit also included a tour of BNHS's Natural History Collection, providing insights into the organisation's long-standing contributions to biodiversity research and documentation.

The delegation subsequently visited the BNHS Ratnagiri Field Station on May 28, 2026, to gain a deeper understanding of the organisation's field-based conservation and research activities. The team was introduced to the station's infrastructure and facilities, which support a range of marine conservation programmes along India's western coast. ■



Artificial Islands Enhance Bird Habitats at Ankasamudra Lake, Karnataka

A major habitat enhancement initiative has been undertaken at Ankasamudra Lake by the BNHS, local conservation organisation GreenHBH, and the Karnataka Forest Department to improve bird habitats within the Ankasamudra Conservation Reserve. As part of this initiative, the Karnataka Forest Department has constructed six artificial islands within Ankasamudra Lake following the lake's draining. Each island measures approximately 15 × 15 feet and rises about 9 feet above the surrounding area. These elevated structures have been designed to provide secure nesting sites for wetland-dependent birds, reducing the risk of disturbance from human activity and improving breeding opportunities for sensitive species.

Artificial islands are widely recognised as an effective conservation tool in wetland ecosystems. By creating isolated and protected spaces, they offer birds safer areas for nesting, roosting, and raising young, while helping reduce pressures associated with habitat loss and disturbance.

To further strengthen habitat quality and ecological resilience, Dr Rajeev Gejje of Team GreenHBH has recommended the creation of larger islands, measuring approximately 80–100 metres in length and width and up to 15 feet in height. Such structures could support a greater diversity of wildlife and provide more stable habitats for breeding bird populations over the long term.

While the new islands represent a significant conservation achievement, emerging challenges highlight the need for continued habitat protection. As water levels receded, local residents began accessing portions of the lakebed to collect firewood, raising concerns about potential disturbance to nesting and foraging birds. Conservationists have therefore emphasised the importance of installing protective fencing around key areas of the lake to prevent unauthorised entry and safeguard sensitive habitats. ■

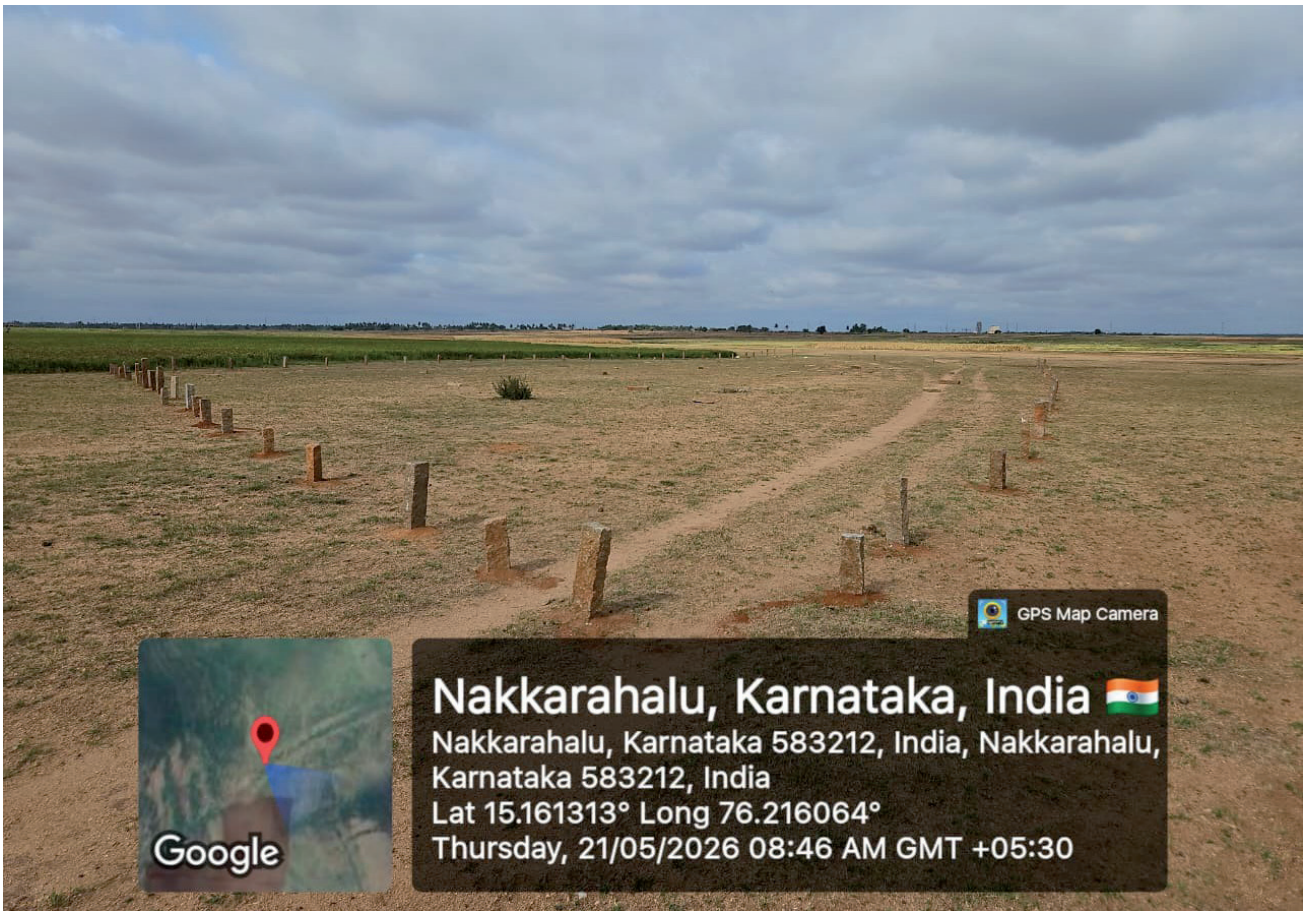


Restoring Wetland Biodiversity Through Collaborative Conservation Effort

GreenHBH, in partnership with the BNHS and the Karnataka Forest Department, has successfully reintroduced *Pandanus odorifer*, locally known as Kedige, along the Ankasamudra lake's banks. As part of the initiative, GreenHBH organised a field visit to Kudligi taluka to collect healthy *Pandanus* seedlings. The saplings were subsequently transported and planted along the banks of Ankasamudra Lake with the support of the BNHS team and Karnataka Forest Department staff, ensuring a coordinated approach to habitat restoration.

Historically, *Pandanus odorifer*, a perennial shrub, was a common feature of streams and wetlands across the region. Its extensive root system helps stabilise soil and reduce erosion along shorelines, while its dense foliage offers shelter and nesting opportunities for a variety of wildlife. The species also contributes to overall habitat complexity, supporting greater biodiversity within wetland ecosystems. However, habitat modification and ecological degradation have led to a decline in its natural populations over time. Recognising the species' ecological importance and its role in maintaining healthy wetland ecosystems, the project partners undertook a focused effort to restore its presence at Ankasamudra.

The reintroduction of *Pandanus* is expected to help restore elements of the lake's original ecological character while improving habitat quality for both plant and animal communities. Such restoration measures are particularly important in wetlands, where native vegetation plays a critical role in maintaining ecosystem functions, supporting wildlife, and enhancing resilience to environmental change. ■



Conservation Action Supports Blue-tailed Bee-eaters Near Ankasamudra, Karnataka

During recent field surveys, teams from the BNHS and GreenHBH documented two nesting colonies of Blue-tailed Bee-eaters, including a thriving breeding site near Ankasamudra village. The colony was found to contain nearly 175 active nesting burrows, underscoring its importance as a key breeding habitat for the species.

Blue-tailed Bee-eaters are colourful migratory birds that nest in burrows excavated into sandy or earthen banks. These colonies are often vulnerable to disturbance from human activities, particularly in areas where agricultural expansion and land-use changes occur close to nesting sites. The Ankasamudra colony had begun facing increasing pressure from nearby agricultural activity, creating an urgent need for protective measures.

Recognising the ecological significance of the site, the Karnataka Forest Department, BNHS, and Team GreenHBH joined forces to implement a conservation intervention. Over a period of three days, a protective stone boundary was carefully installed around the nesting area. The work was carried out with great care to minimise disturbance to the breeding birds while ensuring effective long-term protection of the colony.

The newly established boundary has reduced the risk of accidental disturbance and habitat degradation, creating a safer environment for nesting birds. With the protective measures now in place, the Blue-tailed Bee-eater colony is better positioned to thrive in the coming breeding seasons. The intervention further strengthens Ankasamudra's importance as a refuge for birdlife and contributes to broader efforts to conserve wetland and riverine ecosystems across the region. ■



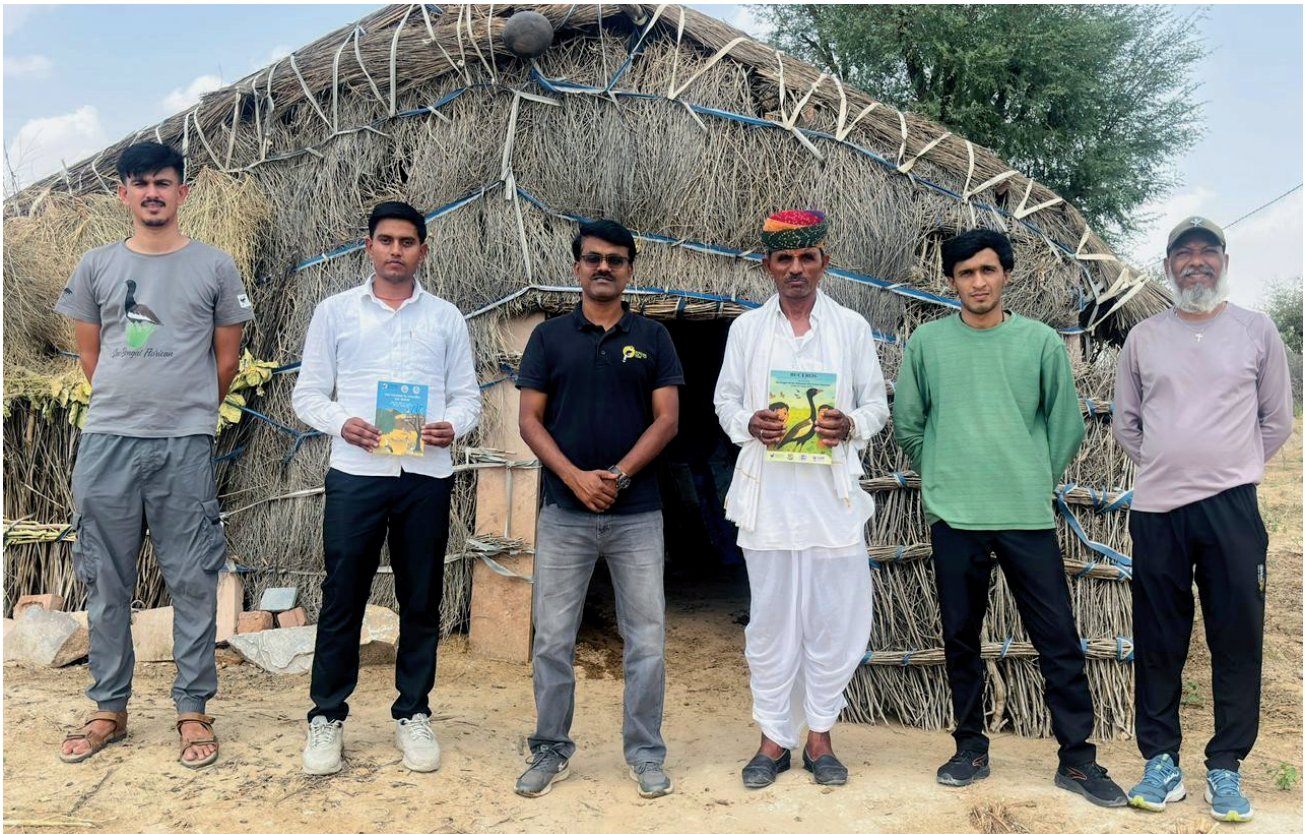
BNHS Launches First-Ever Telemetry Study of River Lapwings in the Ganga River System

On May 31, 2025, the BNHS Bird Ringing and Monitoring Station (BRMS) team in Bhagalpur, Bihar, successfully deployed GSM-GPS transmitters on four River Lapwings on a sandbar near Barari Ghat in Bhagalpur district. The first tagged bird was released by Mr Ashutosh Raj, IFS, Divisional Forest Officer, Bhagalpur Division, who joined the field team during this landmark conservation effort.

The River Lapwing is a resident riverine specialist that depends on dynamic sandbar habitats for breeding and survival. Despite its close association with large river systems, relatively little is known about its movement ecology, habitat use, and seasonal behaviour. The new telemetry initiative aims to bridge these knowledge gaps and generate scientific data that can inform long-term conservation planning.

By tracking the movements of tagged individuals, researchers will gain valuable insights into habitat preferences, breeding-site fidelity, seasonal dispersal patterns, and the challenges faced by the species across its range. The information collected will help identify critical habitats and assess factors influencing the survival of river-dependent bird populations.

The study is expected to contribute significantly to the conservation of River Lapwings and the fragile sandbar ecosystems they inhabit – habitats that are increasingly threatened by river regulation, habitat alteration, and human disturbance. ■



BNHS Recognises Grassroots Conservation Leadership in Nagaur, Rajasthan

On May 7, 2026, a BNHS team visited Shri Balaji village in Nagaur district to engage with Mr Purab Chaudhary, a postgraduate student whose dedication to biodiversity documentation and environmental awareness has inspired conservation action within his community.

Through his grassroots initiatives, Mr Chaudhary has worked actively to document local wildlife and promote ecological stewardship among residents. His efforts reflect the growing contribution of young conservation champions in fostering awareness and encouraging community participation in protecting natural heritage.

Responding to his invitation, Dr Sujit Narwade, Deputy Director of BNHS, visited Unthwalia Oran, a traditional sacred grove of significant ecological and cultural value. The interaction highlighted the importance of community-led conservation planning. It was suggested that Mr Chaudhary work closely with the Gram Panchayat and Gram Sabha to develop a biodiversity inventory and management plan for Unthwalia Oran. Such an initiative would help document the area's ecological resources and support informed conservation actions for the future.

In recognition of his commitment to biodiversity conservation and public engagement, the BNHS team felicitated Mr Chaudhary with the publication "थार मरुस्थल के वन्य जीव: एक झलक" (WILDLIFE OF THE THAR DESERT: A GLIMPSE). The gesture acknowledged his contribution to environmental awareness and his efforts to encourage community involvement in conservation.

The visit also provided an opportunity to highlight the ecological significance of traditional conservation landscapes such as Orans, which continue to support wildlife, protect natural resources, and sustain ecological processes in arid regions. Preserving these community-managed habitats remains an important component of broader biodiversity conservation efforts across Rajasthan.



BNHS seahorse team Rescued three seahorses at Ratnagiri coast, Maharashtra

The Ratnagiri coast is home to populations of seahorses, a Schedule I protected species that is currently vulnerable to threats such as incidental bycatch and illegal trade. Many seahorses are accidentally caught in fishing nets, resulting in entanglement-related stress, injury, and often death.

In May 2026, three seahorses that had become accidentally entangled in a fishing net along the Ratnagiri coast were successfully rescued through the timely intervention of the BNHS team. Following their rescue, the individuals were transferred to the captive-care facility established at the BNHS Ratnagiri Field Station, where they are currently being maintained under carefully monitored conditions.

This rescue forms part of the ongoing seahorse conservation programme, which focuses on the rescue, rehabilitation, and conservation of these charismatic yet vulnerable marine species. The successful rescue and subsequent captive care of the seahorses highlight the importance of sustained conservation efforts and collaborative action. Such initiatives also help strengthen community engagement in safeguarding the future of these threatened marine species along the Maharashtra coast.

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Rescued White-rumped Vulture Successfully Released Near Sanapur, Karnataka

A rescued White-rumped Vulture has been successfully rehabilitated and released near Sanapur in Karnataka. The bird, a captive-bred White-rumped Vulture bearing Ring No. X96, was originally released by the BNHS as part of its vulture conservation programme in the Tadoba–Andhari Tiger Reserve landscape in Maharashtra. Earlier this month, the vulture was rescued in Karnataka’s Koppal district and transferred to the Atal Bihari Vajpayee Zoological Park, Hampi, for observation and rehabilitation.

During its seven-day stay at the facility, veterinarians closely monitored the bird’s health and behaviour while providing a regular diet to support its recovery. Observations confirmed that the vulture remained active and responsive, indicating that it was fit for release back into the wild. Following consultations between the BNHS Vulture Team and the Forest Department, X96 was released in a suitable rocky habitat near Sanapur. The selected site offers a combination of semi-arid agricultural landscapes, mango and pomegranate plantations, dense tree cover, and rocky outcrops that can provide important roosting opportunities for vultures.

As X96 continues to adapt to its new environment, conservationists remain hopeful that the bird will thrive in the landscape and contribute to the future recovery of this ecologically important species. ■



Building Capacity for Vulture Conservation In Pinjore (Haryana)

The Jatayu Conservation Breeding Centre (JCBC), Pinjore, hosted several batches of forest trainees in May 2026 as part of educational exposure visits aimed at enhancing understanding of vulture conservation and wildlife management. The programmes offered future forest officers and frontline staff valuable insights into India's efforts to recover critically endangered vulture populations.

The visits included 38 Forest Ranger Officer Trainees from the Odisha Forest Rangers College on May 14, 41 Forest Ranger Officer Trainees from the Kundal Academy of Development, Administration and Management, Maharashtra, on May 28, and 34 Forest Guard Trainees from the Forest Academy, Gandhigram, Tripura, on May 29.

Organised jointly by the BNHS and the Haryana Forest and Wildlife Department, the programmes combined classroom sessions with practical exposure to conservation breeding and species recovery initiatives at JCBC. The objective was to strengthen trainees' knowledge of vulture conservation and equip them with skills relevant to field-based biodiversity management.

Participants attended presentations on the status of vultures in India, the threats driving their decline, and the conservation measures being implemented to protect and recover the country's three Critically Endangered Gyps vulture species. Particular emphasis was placed on the impact of toxic veterinary non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs), which have caused severe population declines across the Indian subcontinent.

The trainees were introduced to various aspects of captive breeding and conservation management, including enclosure design, feeding protocols, veterinary care, health monitoring, artificial incubation, and vulture recovery and reintroduction programmes. Audio-visual presentations highlighted the centre's work and provided updates on the Vulture Safe Zone initiative and reintroduction efforts in different states.

Interactive discussions formed a key component of the visits, enabling trainees to engage directly with experts and centre staff. Topics included vulture population census techniques, monitoring and tracking methods, identification of nesting and roosting sites, field survey protocols, and strategies to reduce threats such as toxic veterinary drugs, habitat disturbance, and unsafe feeding conditions.

By exposing participants to both the scientific and operational aspects of species recovery programmes, the visits helped bridge the gap between academic learning and practical wildlife management. Such capacity-building initiatives play an important role in strengthening conservation expertise and supporting long-term biodiversity conservation efforts across India. ■



BNHS–VCBC Bhopal Showcases Vulture Conservation Success Through High-Level and Training Visits

The BNHS Vulture Conservation Breeding Centre (VCBC), Bhopal, continued its efforts to promote vulture conservation and strengthen stakeholder engagement through two significant visits in May 2026. The centre hosted Mr Ajay Kumar Yadav, IFS, Additional Principal Chief Conservator of Forests (Vigilance and Complaint), Madhya Pradesh Forest Department, on May 17, 2026, followed by an educational visit by two Forest Range Officer (FRO) probationary trainees on May 28, 2026.

During both visits, the BNHS team showcased the centre’s ongoing work in vulture conservation breeding, rescue and rehabilitation, scientific monitoring, and the post-release management of endangered vulture species. Visitors were introduced to the daily husbandry practices, aviary management, health-monitoring protocols, artificial incubation techniques, and hand-rearing methods employed to ensure the successful breeding and survival of vultures under human care.

A major highlight of the visits was the demonstration of GPS-GSM-based post-release monitoring technology, which enables conservationists to track rehabilitated vultures after their release into the wild. The visitors also learned about the threats facing vultures in India, particularly the impact of harmful veterinary drugs such as diclofenac and other non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs), as well as the critical role played by Vulture Conservation Breeding Centres in species recovery.

The centre also highlighted its successful rescue, rehabilitation, and release programme, under which seven vultures, including two Cinereous Vultures, one Eurasian Griffon Vulture, and four Long-billed Vultures, have been released back into the wild. These efforts contribute directly to strengthening wild populations and advancing long-term conservation objectives.

Both visits emphasized the importance of collaborative conservation, scientific management, and capacity building in safeguarding India’s threatened vulture species. The programmes provided valuable exposure to ongoing conservation initiatives and reinforced the role of forest officials and conservation practitioners in ensuring the survival of these ecologically important scavengers. ■



Forest Range Officer Trainees from Maharashtra and Tripura visit JCBC, Pinjore

The Jatayu Conservation Breeding Centre (JCBC), Pinjore, hosted 41 Forest Range Officer Trainees from the Kundal Academy of Development, Administration & Management, Maharashtra, on May 28, 2026, and 34 Forest Guard trainees from Forest Academy Gandhigram, Tripura, on May 29, 2026 as part of a wildlife educational exposure tour.

The programme began with an introductory presentation by Mr Hemant Bajpai, Research Biologist, who outlined the status of vultures in India and the major threats driving their decline. Participants learned about the devastating impact of toxic veterinary non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) and the conservation measures being implemented by the BNHS and State Forest Departments to support vulture recovery.

Trainees were introduced to key aspects of conservation breeding, including captive breeding techniques, enclosure management, feeding protocols, veterinary care, health monitoring, and artificial incubation. Presentations also highlighted ongoing vulture recovery and reintroduction initiatives, demonstrating how science-based interventions are aiding the revival of endangered vulture populations.

Through audio-visual sessions, participants gained insight into the centre's activities, as well as the Vulture Safe Zone initiative and reintroduction programmes being implemented across different states.

An interactive discussion session provided trainees with an opportunity to engage directly with experts on practical conservation issues. Topics included vulture population census methods, monitoring and tracking techniques, identification of nesting and roosting sites, field survey protocols, and approaches to conserving wild populations. Guidance was also provided on documenting sightings, tracking movements, and addressing threats such as harmful veterinary drugs, habitat disturbance, and unsafe feeding conditions.

The visit helped bridge the gap between academic training and field-based conservation practice, strengthening participants' understanding of wildlife management and species recovery programmes. It concluded with a vote of thanks and a group photograph, marking the successful completion of an enriching learning experience that contributed to building future conservation leadership. ■



VCBC Rani Expands Vulture Awareness Efforts Across Assam

The VCBC-Rani, continued to strengthen vulture conservation efforts throughout May 2026 through a series of awareness, training, and outreach programmes across Assam. By engaging students, local communities, forest personnel, and young conservationists, the centre advanced its mission of promoting awareness about vulture conservation, reducing threats from harmful veterinary drugs, and encouraging wider stakeholder participation in species recovery efforts.

Awareness Programmes at Educational Institutes: A major focus of the month's activities was environmental education. VCBC-Rani conducted 11 awareness programmes in schools and colleges across the districts of Biswanath, Sivasagar, and Kamrup. These sessions introduced students and educators to the ecological importance of vultures, the challenges facing their survival, and the role that communities can play in protecting these essential scavengers. Interactive discussions, educational materials, and awareness activities helped foster a deeper understanding of biodiversity conservation among participants.

Internship Programme at VCBC, Rani: Capacity-building was further strengthened through a one-week internship programme for B.Sc. Forestry students from Guru Ghasidas Vishwavidyalay, Chhattisgarh. The internship provided hands-on exposure to vulture conservation initiatives and field-based research methodologies. Participants received training in post-release monitoring and telemetry techniques, pharmacy surveys to assess the availability of harmful veterinary drugs, and approaches to stakeholder engagement in conservation. The students will continue field activities and data collection in their home districts, extending the programme's impact beyond the training period.

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Community Awareness: Community engagement remained a key component of the centre’s outreach efforts. Two awareness programmes were organised in Sivasagar and Kamrup districts to encourage local participation in vulture conservation and promote the use of safe veterinary practices. In addition, a drawing competition was held for schoolchildren in Majpara village during Bihu celebrations, using art and creativity to inspire curiosity about nature and local biodiversity. The event also included educational talks that encouraged young participants to develop a stronger appreciation for wildlife and conservation.

Training Programmes for Forest Department: Recognising the critical role of frontline staff in species protection, VCBC Rani also organised a specialised training programme for Forest Department personnel in Sivasagar. The training focused on vulture ecology, conservation challenges, rescue protocols, nest monitoring, and awareness-building strategies. By strengthening field-level knowledge and coordination between forest staff and conservation teams, the programme enhanced the capacity of participants to support long-term vulture conservation efforts effectively.

Collectively, the month’s activities reached approximately 1,500 participants, demonstrating the centre’s commitment to expanding conservation awareness and building local support for species recovery. Through education, training, and community engagement, VCBC Rani continues to foster a broad network of stakeholders dedicated to protecting vultures and their habitats.

Table 1: Awareness programmes at Educational Institutes

Sl. No.	Date	Name of the Institute	Attendee	District
1	02-05-2026	DN Five Star School	80	Biswanath
2	04-05-2026	Moran Jatiya Vidyalaya	30	Sivasagar
3	06-05-2026	Dindayal upadhyaya college	108	Biswanath
4	11-05-2026	Bondapara Anchalik H S School, Boko	72	Kamrup
5	14-05-2026	Diring pathar hs school	361	Biswanath
6	14-05-2026	Rohidoi High School	35	Charaideo
7	20-05-2026	Kumolia HS School	107	Biswanath
8	20-05-2026	Su Ka Pha High School	48	Charaideo
9	21-05-2026	Tengapukhuri High School	50	Charaideo
10	22-05-2026	North jamugurihat HS School	406	Biswanath
11	23-05-2026	Tupia Panchgaon Academy	47	Biswanath
12	27-05-2026	1 week training program, Guru Ghasidas Viswavidyalay, Chattisgarh	5	Kamrup

Table 2: Community awareness meetings

Sl. No.	Date	Place (Village/community, District)	Attendee	District
1	07-05-2026	Kokilamari	20	Sivasagar
2	10-05-2026	Drawing competition at Majpara Patgaon	26	Kamrup

Table 3: Trainings for Forest Department

Sl. No.	Date	Place	Attendee	District
1	02-05-2026	Moran Forest Range	15	Dibrugarh



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Connecting People with Nature Through Outreach Programmes at CEC Mumbai

The BNHS's Conservation Education Centre (CEC) continued its mission of fostering environmental awareness and meaningful connections with nature through a series of engaging educational and outreach programmes during May 2026. From school nature trails and corporate cultural workshops to inclusive outdoor experiences, these initiatives encouraged participants of all ages and backgrounds to explore, appreciate, and learn from the natural world.



The "Patterns in Nature" trail organised for Grade 2 students from Oberoi International School on May 4. A total of 101 students and 14 teachers participated in the outdoor learning programme, which introduced young learners to the fascinating patterns found throughout nature. As they explored the surroundings, students observed the shapes, textures, and designs present in leaves, flowers, insects, and other natural elements, gaining a deeper understanding of how patterns occur across different ecosystems. The trail concluded with an interactive presentation that further explored the significance of natural patterns and their role in the environment. By combining observation with hands-on learning, the programme encouraged curiosity and helped students develop a greater appreciation for biodiversity and ecological processes.



On May 11, BNHS-CEC organised a Warli painting workshop as part of a Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) engagement with BlackRock. The workshop brought together 35 employees for an immersive introduction to one of Maharashtra's most celebrated indigenous art forms. Conducted by renowned

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Warli artist Prakash Sathe, the session explored the history, symbolism, and cultural significance of Warli art, highlighting its close connection to nature, community life, and tribal traditions. Participants not only learned about the artistic techniques involved but also created their own Warli paintings, gaining first-hand experience of this rich cultural heritage. The workshop offered a unique opportunity to connect environmental awareness with traditional knowledge systems and cultural expression.



Promoting inclusion through nature-based experiences, BNHS-CEC assisted in organising a special nature trail for young adults with autism and ADHD on May 18. Fourteen participants joined the trail, which was designed to provide a calm, engaging, and sensory-rich experience in a natural setting. Through guided exploration of plants, flowers, and bird sounds, participants were encouraged to observe and interact with nature at their own pace. The trail created opportunities for sensory discovery, shared learning, and positive social interaction. Filled with curiosity, enthusiasm, and joyful moments, the experience highlighted the value of nature as an inclusive space for learning, well-being, and personal connection. The programme was led by Ms Anusha and supported by Dilip Giri. ■



Exploring Mumbai's Hidden Marine World

The BNHS Programmes Department organised a Marine Walk along the shores of Juhu on May 17 2026, offering participants a unique opportunity to explore the rich marine biodiversity that exists within Mumbai's urban coastline. Conducted during low tide, the programme highlighted the ecological importance of intertidal habitats and the remarkable variety of life they support.

Guided by a BNHS naturalist, participants ventured across exposed rocky outcrops and sandy stretches revealed by the receding tide. The walk provided close encounters with a range of marine organisms specially adapted to survive the challenging conditions of the intertidal zone, where changing tides regularly transform the environment.

Among the species observed were hermit crabs, sea snails, bivalves, shore crabs, and other intertidal fauna. Participants learned how these organisms have evolved unique adaptations to cope with fluctuating temperatures, salinity levels, wave action, and periodic exposure to air. The programme also explored the ecological relationships that sustain these habitats and contribute to the overall health of coastal ecosystems.

Beyond species identification, the walk emphasised the broader ecological significance of Mumbai's shoreline. Coastal habitats serve as important feeding grounds, nursery areas, and refuges for a wide range of marine life, playing a crucial role in maintaining biodiversity and ecosystem balance. Despite facing increasing pressures from urbanisation, pollution, and habitat disturbance, these ecosystems continue to support a surprising diversity of organisms. ■



BNHS Concludes Flamingo Season with Final Wetland Walk at Navi Mumbai

The BNHS concluded its flamingo-watching season with a special Flamingo Walk at NRI Lake, Nerul, offering members an opportunity to witness the last congregations of flamingos before their annual departure from the Mumbai region.

The walk attracted bird enthusiasts' eager to observe both Lesser Flamingos and Greater Flamingos, many of which were still adorned in their vibrant breeding plumage. In addition to the flamingos, participants recorded a variety of resident and migratory bird species, including Black-winged Stilts, Painted Storks, White-eared Bulbuls, Green Bee-eaters, Indian Reed Warblers, and White-tailed Swallows. The diversity of birdlife added to the richness of the experience and highlighted the ecological value of the wetland.

Beyond birdwatching, the event served as an opportunity to raise awareness about the importance of Navi Mumbai's wetlands, which provide critical feeding and roosting habitats for thousands of migratory birds each year. Discussions during the walk focused on the remarkable migration cycle of flamingos, their dependence on coastal wetlands, and the conservation challenges facing these increasingly threatened urban ecosystems.

As the flamingos begin their journey back to their breeding grounds in Gujarat, the walk marked the close of another successful season of observations and public engagement. It also served as a timely reminder of the need to protect and conserve Mumbai's wetlands, which continue to play a vital role in supporting migratory birds and maintaining ecological balance in the region. ■



BNHS Expands Outreach Through Corporate Engagement

The BNHS Central Marketing Department (CMD) continued its outreach efforts during May 2026 by engaging new audiences and promoting the organisation's conservation work, publications, and nature-inspired products.

On May 26, 2026, the Axis Bank Foundation organised an exhibition at its Worli office, providing an opportunity for organisations to showcase their initiatives to employees and visitors. As part of the event, the BNHS-CMD set up an exhibition stall featuring the Society's conservation programmes, educational activities, publications, and merchandise.

The stall attracted considerable interest, allowing participants to learn more about BNHS's long-standing contributions to biodiversity conservation, research, and environmental education. Visitors also had the opportunity to explore and purchase a range of BNHS publications and products, helping strengthen awareness and support for conservation initiatives. ■

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