



BOMBAY NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY NEWSLETTER



OCTOBER, 2025

CONSERVATION NEWSLETTER

FROM THE DIRECTOR DESK



Dear Members,

Diwali greetings from all of us on this auspicious occasion! I hope you had a joyous and fulfilling festive season. Diwali, the festival of lights, reminds us that even in challenging times, hope and dedication can illuminate the path forward. I am confident that our newsletter will continue to serve as a beacon of hope and inspiration for conservation.

There is an English idiom, 'Easier said than done', meaning it is easy to promise action but much harder to deliver results. I have truly experienced the depth of this idiom while working to place BNHS at the forefront of several conservation challenges. Having spent over three decades as a conservation practitioner, the satisfaction of achieving conservation goals is not new to me. However, the vast and varied Indian landscapes where BNHS operates present unique challenges.

As our President and Governing Council have rightly emphasized, BNHS must take research-based action in every landscape. With this vision, we have reoriented the entire BNHS fraternity toward that mission – and the results are now visible.

Our Ladakh team successfully tackled the issue of free-ranging dogs (FRDs). Under the Animal Birth Control (ABC) programme, and with the support of the Animal Husbandry Department of Ladakh, over 2,000 FRDs were sterilized in and around wildlife habitats near Army establishments. Army officers have already observed positive behavioural changes in treated dogs.

Similarly, BNHS collaborated with Canine Control and Care, a Pune-based organization, to treat over 300 dogs in and around the Great Indian bustard (GIB) habitats in Pokhran, Jaisalmer (Rajasthan). The Bishnoi community has expressed happiness at seeing noticeable behavioural improvements in the FRDs post-surgery, and local forest staff have also conveyed their gratitude. These outcomes demonstrate that real change is possible when we work collaboratively with local communities and the right partners.

Adding to this success, an Army officer recently informed us that the two Organic Waste Composter (OWC) machines (50 kg/day capacity) installed at Army formations in Drass and Nyoma are now efficiently managing organic food waste. This initiative has also helped reduce the dependence of free-ranging dogs on discarded food. The OWC machines convert organic waste into high-quality compost within just 24 hours. We extend our gratitude to our donor partner, The Habitat Trust, for funding this project, and to the Indian Army for turning a challenge into an opportunity.

This brings to mind a belief: 'Courts are the last resort'. While cases concerning the FRD menace continue to await resolution in the Supreme Court and various High Courts, our field-level successes offer hope and a practical way forward for protecting endangered wildlife.

On the international front, the World Bank and BirdLife International have announced plans to scale up conservation across the African–Eurasian Flyway, home to nearly 2 billion migratory birds. BirdLife CEO Martin Harper and the World Bank's Juergen Voegelé highlighted that a network of over 50 national partners will implement integrated conservation actions for nature, birds, and people. This month, BNHS will participate in the Meeting of Partners (MOP 12) of the East Asian–Australasian Flyway Partnership in the Philippines to learn from global best practices and apply them to our Central Asian Flyway Programme in India.

Working in high-altitude landscapes is especially challenging, requiring physical fitness, endurance, and a spirit of adventure. I thank the Government of Sikkim for inviting me to speak on integrating adventure with biodiversity conservation. BNHS has also signed an MoU with the Indian Himalayan Centre of Adventure and Ecotourism (IHCAE) to incorporate biodiversity conservation values into IHCAE's training curriculum.

Our Annual General Meeting, held on October 10th at BNHS, was a resounding success. Members attended in large numbers and appreciated the Society's continued progress. During the meeting, the Honorary Secretary and President released the Anytime Planner and digital banners for the Omnibus Natural History Project, which aims to revise classic Indian natural history books on birds, mammals, reptiles and amphibians, and trees.

We are also delighted to share a long-awaited announcement. On the birth anniversary of eminent wildlife scientist Dr A.J.T. Johnsingh, HarperCollins India and BNHS announced the upcoming release of the first comprehensive guide to Indian mammals, covering over 450 recognized species, 400 distribution maps, and 50 pages of illustrations. The book is scheduled for release in March 2026 – we hope you will be among the first to reserve your copy!

At the end of this month, BNHS, in partnership with the EcoSikh Charitable Trust, launched the Sacred Fauna Mission during the Global Wildlife Fair in New Delhi. This collaboration aims to support in-situ and ex-situ conservation of the northern goshawk, shaheen falcon, and laggar falcon. BNHS has already initiated conservation breeding programmes for wild water buffalo, lesser florican, otters, and falcons at Gorewada Zoo. We extend our gratitude to the JSW Foundation, Tata Trusts, and MAHATRANSCO for their financial support toward these initiatives.

We were deeply saddened by the passing of actor Satish Shah, a strong admirer of BNHS's work. He helped connect the Society with influential members of the film industry. Our heartfelt condolences go out to his family.

Finally, I encourage you to visit the BNHS Blog (<http://blog.bnhs.org>), voluntarily curated by our member Ms Oishimaya Sen, for its rich and diverse conservation stories. We welcome your contributions in any language. I also urge academic institutions to subscribe to the *Journal of the Bombay Natural History Society (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, BNHS

BNHS–EcoSikh and Punjab Forest Department Launch “Sacred Fauna Mission” at Global Wildlife Fair 2025

BNHS–EcoSikh, in collaboration with the Punjab Forest Department, launched the ‘Sacred Fauna Mission’, an initiative focused on raptor conservation, at the Global Wildlife Fair (GWF) 2025 held at the Constitution Club of India, Rafi Marg, New Delhi. The Global Wildlife Fair featured several engaging stalls showcasing wildlife research and conservation efforts, which drew considerable interest from nature enthusiasts. Alongside the exhibitions, multiple side events attracted large audiences and highlighted some of India's most ambitious new conservation projects.

A key highlight of the event was a panel discussion featuring Mr Kishor Rithe, Director, BNHS; Dr Rajwant Singh, Founder President, EcoSikh; and Dr Rajiv Bhartari, former Field Director of Corbett National Park and former Head of Forest Force, Uttarakhand. The session was moderated by Dr Supreet Kaur, President, EcoSikh India.

During the discussion, Mr Rithe shared insights on BNHS's ongoing projects and emphasized the transformative role of citizen science in conservation. He showcased initiatives such as digitization efforts and bird migration studies, where public participation has been instrumental. He also encouraged attendees to join BNHS and contribute to its citizen science programmes. Mr Rithe further announced a new conservation

breeding project for the northern goshawk (*Accipiter gentilis*), shaheen (*Falco peregrinus peregrinator*), and laggar falcon in India.

Sh. Dharminder Sharma, Principal Chief Conservator of Forests and Head of Forest Force (PCCF/HoFF), Punjab, delivered the keynote address. He reaffirmed the government's commitment to protecting the northern goshawk, the State Bird of Punjab, and the shaheen falcon, highlighting that the collaboration with BNHS and EcoSikh will play a crucial role in the programme's success. Dr Rajwant Singh, Founder President, EcoSikh, expressed EcoSikh's deep commitment to raptor conservation and recited verses from Gurbani, underlining the spiritual and ecological importance of the “Baaz” (northern goshawk) and shaheen falcon in Sikh tradition.

Dr Rajiv Bhartari spoke about eco-tourism and its potential to drive positive change across India's diverse landscapes through community participation and sustainable practices. ■



Wildlife Week 2025

India observes National Wildlife Week every year from October 2 to 8 to promote awareness about the importance of wildlife conservation. Established in 1957, the initiative seeks to inspire public participation in conservation through educational programmes, community engagement, and a range of activities held in national parks and sanctuaries across the country. These efforts aim to safeguard India's diverse ecosystems and ensure the survival of its endangered species.

Wildlife Week Talk on Bird Migration Held at Keoladeo National Park

As part of the Wildlife Week celebrations, the staff of the Bharatpur Field Station organized a talk on "Bird Migration Studies" at Keoladeo National Park (KNP), Bharatpur. The event was held on October 7, 2025 and the session was delivered by Mr Omkar Joshi, Senior Project Fellow, BNHS.

A total of 32 participants attended the session, including staff members from the Forest Department and nature guides from KNP. The programme was addressed by Mr Bharat Lal Verma, Assistant Conservator of Forests (ACF), Keoladeo National Park, who appreciated the initiative and encouraged continued learning on the subject.

The talk covered an overview of bird migration, a summary of migration studies conducted in India, and various techniques used in studying migratory patterns – such as bird ringing, satellite tracking, and



behavioural observations. It also highlighted the significance of Keoladeo National Park as a critical wintering ground for migratory birds along the Central Asian Flyway.

The session concluded with an interactive question-and-answer segment, during which participants raised queries about migratory bird behavior and conservation efforts. ■

BNHS Awareness programme for MbPA staff's Children, Mumbai

As part of the Monthly Biodiversity Assessment Project at Sagar Upvan, BNHS conducted an awareness session for officers and families of the Mumbai Port Authority (MbPA) Colony on October 4, 2025. The programme began with a Biodiversity Awareness Walk, led by Ms Aqsa Majgaonkar, Senior Education Officer, CEC-Mumbai, who highlighted the garden's rich floral diversity. Ms Natasha Girkar (Information Officer, EIACP) and Mr Kiran Dalvi (SRF, BNHS) guided participants in observing and identifying local bird species, sharing insights into avian ecology and behaviour.

Following the walk, Ms Majgaonkar delivered a presentation on career paths in conservation, encouraging participants to explore opportunities in biodiversity research, fieldwork, and environmental education. Ms Girkar followed with an engaging session on bird migration patterns, illustrating the extraordinary journeys of migratory birds and the importance of preserving their flyways. The session effectively combined field learning,



expert presentations, and interactive discussions, fostering a deeper appreciation for Mumbai's urban biodiversity and the importance of its conservation. ■

Celebrations in Bhagalpur: Inspiring Young Minds for Conservation

To mark Wildlife Week 2025, the Bhagalpur Forest Division, in collaboration with the BNHS Bird Ringing and Monitoring Station (BRMS), organized a series of engaging activities to promote wildlife awareness and inspire conservation action among students. The celebrations began with a week-long pre-event phase (September 23–27), featuring drawing and quiz competitions across schools and colleges including IRHMTB School, DAV Public School, St. Teresa School, Marwari College, B.N. College, and T.M. Bhagalpur University. Over 300 students enthusiastically participated, with winners advancing to the inter-school and inter-college finals during Wildlife Week.

The official celebrations commenced on October 2 with a Ganga Cleaning Programme at Barari Ghat, focusing on the importance of conserving river ecosystems. This was followed by a series of interactive events including a drawing competition, wildlife photography contest, and bird walk, culminating in an inter-college quiz competition on October 8 at the Sundarvan Interpretation Centre.

Through these inclusive and participatory activities, the Bhagalpur Forest Division and BNHS effectively engaged youth and local communities, fostering a deeper appreciation of nature and a collective commitment toward wildlife conservation. ■



VCBC-Bhopal Annual Report for 2024–2025 Released

The Annual Report 2024–2025 of the Vulture Conservation Breeding Centre (VCBC), Bhopal, was officially released by Dr Mohan Yadav, Hon'ble Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh, during the inaugural session of Wildlife Week 2025 held on October 1, 2025 at Van Vihar National Park, Bhopal.

The event marked the formal commencement of the week-long celebrations and was graced by several distinguished dignitaries: Dr Mohan Yadav, Hon'ble Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh, Shri Dilip Ahirwar, Hon'ble State Minister for Forest and Environment, Shri Ashok Barnwal, Additional Chief Secretary, Forest & Wildlife Department, Shri B.N. Ambade, PCCF (HoFF), Madhya Pradesh, Shri Subha Ranjan Sen, PCCF (Wildlife), Madhya Pradesh, Shri L. Krishnamurthy, APCCF (Wildlife), Madhya Pradesh, Shri Vijay Kumar, Director, Van Vihar National Park, Bhopal, and Dr Ruhi Haque, Assistant Director, Van Vihar National Park, Bhopal.

The release of the Annual Report underscored the significant progress made in vulture conservation efforts across the state and reaffirmed the government's commitment to protecting endangered wildlife species. The inaugural ceremony concluded on an optimistic note, setting a positive and inspiring tone for the Wildlife Week 2025 celebrations across Madhya Pradesh. ■



BNHS Signs MoU with IHCAE, Sikkim



The BNHS has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Indian Himalayan Centre of Adventure and Ecotourism (IHCAE, Sikkim) to promote adventure activities aligned with biodiversity conservation. This collaboration aims to integrate nature-based adventure with environmental education, fostering a deeper appreciation of the Himalayas' unique biodiversity while encouraging sustainable ecotourism practices. ■

BNHS Unveils the Omnibus Natural History Program and 'Any Time Planner' at the Annual General Meeting

At its Annual General Meeting (AGM) held on October 10 2025, the BNHS announced two significant initiatives – the Omnibus Natural History Program and the Any Time Planner – aimed at celebrating India's rich natural heritage and inspiring wider participation in documenting it.

Mr Pravinsingh Pardeshi, IAS (Retd.), President, BNHS, along with Mr Umang Kale, Member, BNHS, unveiled the promotional banners for the Omnibus Natural History Program, an initiative designed to update and expand BNHS's classic series of Indian natural history books on birds, mammals, reptiles and amphibians, and trees.

This ambitious program seeks to bring these definitive reference works into the modern era by incorporating crowdsourced information from BNHS members, field researchers, and naturalists across the country. It represents a fusion of scientific heritage and community-driven discovery, ensuring that BNHS's legacy publications remain relevant to contemporary readers and researchers.

In an age when naturalists and wildlife enthusiasts have unprecedented access to remote ecosystems through advances in travel and technology, BNHS seeks to harness this wealth of first-hand knowledge. Whether through detailed studies of species or simple field anecdotes, every contribution will help illuminate the lesser-known aspects of India's biodiversity—the overlooked species, obscure habitats, and untold ecological stories that together define our natural world.

As part of this initiative, BNHS invites members to contribute to *Systema naturae*, an upcoming compendium envisioned as a futuristic and collaborative record of the natural history of India and the Oriental Region. Members are encouraged to submit articles, field notes, and photographs capturing their observations of wildlife behaviour, migration, habitats, and conservation challenges.

Contributions to *Systema naturae* may be sent to the Editors at systema150@bnhs.org. Both research-based articles and brief observational notes are welcome, accompanied by photographic documentation that visually enriches the narrative of India's living heritage.

Mr Pravinsingh Pardeshi also launched the BNHS 'Any Time Planner', a beautifully designed, collectible planner inspired by the exquisite John Gould Lithograph Paintings. This elegant edition seamlessly blends art,



nature, and functionality, serving as both a daily planner and a piece of natural history art.

The 'Any Time Planner' can be used for any two consecutive years, making it both practical and timeless. With its aesthetic appeal and thoughtful design, it brings the charm of natural history to the user's workspace while supporting BNHS's mission to connect people with nature. ■

For purchase inquiries, please write to cmd@bnhs.org.

Training Sessions at BNHS Bird Migration Study Centre, Point Calimere



Regular training programmes are conducted at the BNHS Bird Migration Study Centre, Point Calimere, for in-service and trainee personnel of the Forest Department. These sessions are designed to enhance participants' knowledge and skills in bird migration studies, bird census techniques, species identification, and to foster an understanding of the ecological significance of coastal landscapes and related conservation challenges.

In the recent programme held on October 7, 2025, a total of 15 in-service Forest Department personnel from the Vedaranyam Forest Range participated. The group comprised 4 Foresters, 5 Forest Guards, 1 Forest Watcher, and 5 Anti-Poaching Watchers, who took part in a practical bird identification session conducted at the BNHS Centre, Point Calimere. The event was coordinated by Mr T. Elanchezhian, Forester, Vedaranyam Range. The BNHS team, led by Mr S. Sivakumar, Assistant Director, provided an overview of Tamil Nadu's bird diversity and emphasized the global significance of Point Calimere as a key site

for migratory shorebirds. Senior Researchers Mr Paul Antony B. and Ms Rose Francis delivered engaging sessions on bird identification, focusing on both waterbirds and land birds of the region.

Tamil Nadu Forest Academy: On October 9, 2025, the BNHS Bird Migration Study Centre (BMSC) at Point Calimere, Tamil Nadu, hosted 60 in-service Foresters from the Tamil Nadu Forestry Training College, Coimbatore, as part of their 54th Forester Training Programme, led by M. V. Chellapandi, Forester. The BNHS team presented an overview of the institution's research-led conservation legacy and the history of BNHS bird migration studies. The session included live demonstrations of bird marking materials, field equipment, and the data collection parameters used during migration studies, offering trainees a comprehensive understanding of field ornithology methods. The event was also attended by Mr T. Elanchezhian (Forester, Vedaranyam Range) and Mr Gunashekhar (Forest Guard, Vedaranyam Range). ■

Members Gain Hands-On Experience in Bird Migration Studies at Point Calimere

Field ornithology courses are organized annually during the winter months at Point Calimere to promote awareness and interest in birds and their conservation among citizens and nature enthusiasts. These courses place special emphasis on the identification of coastal and migratory bird species such as waders, terns, and gulls, as well as on techniques employed in bird migration studies.

The first batch of participants attended the course from October 16–19 2025. This batch was exclusively open to BNHS Members. There were seven participants from diverse professional backgrounds taking part in the four-day programme. Mr Deepak Rajanna (Technical Contributor, BNHS), a past participant of the 2023 batch, joined the camp and shared his journey from trainee to contributor, highlighting his work on developing software for digitizing BNHS ringing data.

Participants received hands-on training in bird ringing, species identification, and field data collection techniques, exploring the rich ecosystems of Point Calimere, including Muthupet Lagoon, Tropical Dry Evergreen Forests (TDEF), grasslands, freshwater lakes, and tidal mudflats – all critical habitats for migratory birds along the Central Asian Flyway.

The course was conducted under the guidance of Dr P. Sathiyaselvam, Deputy Director, along with Mr S. Sivakumar (Assistant Director & Course Coordinator) and Senior Research Fellows Mr Paul Antony B. and Ms Rose Francis. Participants also benefited from insights shared by Mr Ilanchezhian, Forester, Vedaranyam Range, Nagapattinam Forest Department. Highlights included sightings of over 200 great



knots and red knots – listed as Endangered and Near Threatened on the IUCN Red List and a memorable encounter with common dolphins leaping off the coast. Over 109 bird species were recorded during the course, alongside observations of blackbuck and feral horses within the Point Calimere Wildlife Sanctuary. With the increasing number and diversity of bird species observed at Point Calimere, future participants can look forward to witnessing remarkable congregations of migratory birds, providing valuable learning experiences and contributing to ongoing conservation efforts. ■

BNHS Leads Conservation Initiatives for the Lesser Florican in Ajmer, Rajasthan

A series of field activities was carried out across the Ajmer Landscape under the Lesser Florican *Sypheotides indicus* Conservation Project.

- A field visit to Dhantol was undertaken to assess grassland habitat conditions and review the progress of ongoing conservation measures.
- A meeting with the Gram Panchayat of Shokaliya was organized for People's Biodiversity Register (PBR) data collection, aimed at updating the population database and strengthening long-term monitoring efforts.
- A meeting with Mr Indrajit Lawrence, Life Member, BNHS, was held to discuss project progress and regional conservation strategies. On the same day, an additional field visit to Dhantol was conducted to continue habitat monitoring and document grassland bird diversity.
- The team visited Bamaniya Balaji Wetland near Nasirabad to monitor post-monsoon ecological conditions and assess avifaunal activity following recent flooding. Active nesting of colonial waterbirds was documented, indicating



ongoing breeding and gradual habitat recovery after heavy rainfall.

- A meeting was held with Mr Nathu Lal Ji, Kharmor Mitra, to recognize his interaction with the Hon'ble Prime Minister, where he represented the Kyari initiative.
- Regular monitoring and habitat assessment will continue across all surveyed sites as part of the Lesser Florican Conservation Programme, with a focus on habitat condition, species response, and regional coordination for effective grassland and wetland management. ■

BNHS team sighted Lesser Florican in Madhya Pradesh

Extensive landscape-level surveys were conducted across the Sailana region of Madhya Pradesh to monitor grassland ecosystems and identify potential conservation priority sites under the ongoing Lesser Florican Conservation Programme. The key focus areas for this month included the Shikarwadi and Amba grasslands.

At Shikarwadi Grassland, annual grasses had reached peak growth, forming a dense vegetation cover across the landscape. Winter migratory raptors, such as harriers and kestrels, was recorded. However, intensive agricultural activity in surrounding farmlands, particularly wheat sowing using heavy machinery, caused notable disturbance to adjoining grassland patches. Continuous monitoring will help to evaluate the impact of these activities on lesser florican habitat use and grassland health.

At Amba Grassland, frequent vehicular movement and the proximity of windmills were identified as sources of persistent habitat disturbance and noise pollution, potentially influencing bird presence and behaviour. These factors will be regularly assessed to inform future management and mitigation strategies.

Regular monitoring will continue across all surveyed sites to ensure effective implementation of conservation measures and to support adaptive management strategies for the region's grassland ecosystems.

A highlight of the month was the sighting of a female Lesser Florican in the Shikarwadi area on September 16, recorded by the BNHS team. The bird was first noticed by forest watcher Mr Kheema ji on September 14 during flight. During the confirmed sighting, the bird was seen near the watchtower, about 60–70 metres away, walking briefly along a foot track before disappearing into the grassland. Although the observation was brief and unphotographed, it holds great significance – reaffirming Sailana's importance as a stronghold for the species and highlighting the continued need for long-term monitoring and habitat protection. Detailed findings will be included in the upcoming survey report. ■



BNHS Conducts Field Surveys to Assess Ecological Restoration in the Thar Landscape

Field surveys were conducted across the Pokhran Basecamp and associated restoration sites within the Thar Landscape to evaluate ongoing ecological restoration efforts. The primary objective was to study regrowth dynamics of *Prosopis juliflora* across restoration plots and assess the effects of overgrazing on plant community structure and habitat quality.

Detailed observations included plant height measurements and phenological documentation of vegetation. Controlled uprooting of *P. juliflora* individuals was undertaken at select sites to analyse its regeneration potential and seasonal

growth patterns. The data will contribute to understanding the species' persistence under different management regimes. Livestock movement was observed across multiple sites, with heavy grazing pressure posing challenges to vegetation recovery and soil stability. Additionally, anthropogenic disturbances such as vehicular movement and resource extraction (mining) were noted, potentially affecting restoration outcomes. ■



BNHS Conducts Field Surveys in Punjab to Study Land-Use Dynamics and Biodiversity Patterns

A comprehensive field visit across Punjab provided valuable ecological insights through systematic vegetation assessments, bird surveys, and community interactions, enriching understanding of the region's biodiversity, land-use dynamics, and socio-cultural influences on environmental practices. Land-use assessments across agricultural fields, fallow lands, and semi-natural habitats revealed variations in species diversity, dominant flora, and habitat condition, reflecting the influence of land-use intensity and seasonal cultivation on ecosystem health.

ecological knowledge, shedding light on crop pattern shifts, land management practices, and socio-economic factors driving stubble burning and water-use challenges. ■



Bird surveys, conducted using point count and scanning methods across multiple time sessions, recorded diverse avian communities – both resident and migratory. The observations also highlighted the adverse impact of stubble burning on bird diversity and habitat quality. Community discussions with farmers, forest guards, and local officials provided valuable traditional



Neem-ka-Thana Survey – BNHS assesses environmental impacts of mining activities

The BNHS team conducted a site visit to Deepawas Village in the Northern Aravalli region following a request from Locals and the 'People for Aravalli' group to assess the environmental impacts of mining activities on the local ecosystem. Locals reported that approximately 500 mining units are currently operating across Deepawas.

The team also surveyed the Girjan River and its catchment areas, noting potential long-term impacts on the river system due to feldspar and iron ore mining. The Baleshwar Dham Conservation Reserve, the river's source and spanning 221.69 sq. km, is under immense pressure from mining activities. During the visit, a mining crusher was observed approximately 600 metres before



the Reserve's entrance, underscoring the urgency of implementing stricter conservation and regulatory measures to safeguard this ecologically sensitive area. ■

Indian Army recycling waste to produce manure for locals



The BNHS, with support from The Habitat Trust, has successfully deployed two Organic Waste Composter (OWC) machines – each with a capacity of 50 kg/day – at Indian Army formations in Drass and Nyoma. These machines have been installed to effectively manage organic food waste generated by army units, thereby promoting sustainable waste management practices and reducing the dependence of free-ranging dogs on leftover food waste.

The EnviCare OWC units operate efficiently, converting organic waste into high-quality compost within just 24 hours. This rapid process not only minimizes the environmental footprint of food waste but also produces nutrient-rich compost that can be used for gardening and landscaping within army camps and nearby villages – fostering a circular, eco-friendly approach. Designed for minimal maintenance and low operational costs, the EnviCare machines offer high efficiency even in remote, high-altitude locations. Their deployment highlights the Indian Army's commitment to innovative, sustainable solutions that enhance both environmental stewardship and operational readiness.



The successful implementation of these composters marks a significant step toward environmentally responsible practices within military establishments and sets a benchmark for organic waste management in challenging terrains. The encouraging results from these OWC units demonstrate the potential for similar initiatives across other formations, further promoting ecological awareness and resource conservation. ■

Vulture Conservation Awareness in Rani, Assam

The Vulture Conservation Breeding Centre (VCBC), Rani, successfully conducted 25 awareness programmes during October 2025, including 17 school sessions reaching nearly 1,500 students and teachers, and five community meetings. These initiatives were organized across four districts of Assam – Kamrup, Biswanath, Lakhimpur, and Nagaon – with outreach also extended to students in Bhopal.

The programmes focused on Vulture Conservation, Vulture Reintroduction, and the innovative concept of the ‘Vulture Restaurant,’ designed to promote safe feeding zones for vultures while preventing exposure to harmful substances. The awareness activities were conducted by the VCBC team comprising Mr Sachin Ranade (Centre Manager), Mr Gitartha Borah (Biologist), Ms Aneena Lakshmanan (Biologist), and Mr Jayanta Kumar Rabha (Office Assistant).



Mr Gitartha Borah with the students of Chariali Academy HS School, Biswanath

Four community meetings were held on October 22, 2025 by Mr Sachin Ranade (BNHS) and Dr Pari Das (Don Bosco University). The sessions were organized with self-help groups (SHGs) from forest fringe communities around Guwahati, exploring avenues for sustainable livelihood development.

The discussions focused on enhancing income-generation opportunities through local food production and packaging, homestays and ecotourism, and handloom activities. These initiatives aim to strengthen community participation in wildlife conservation by linking economic development with ecological stewardship. Meetings were conducted in Madanpur and Kulsi, where participants actively shared ideas and discussed how community-driven enterprises can support local conservation goals.

Table 1: Details of the School awareness meetings conducted by VCBC Rani

Sl. No.	Date	School Name	District	No of attendees	
				Students	Teachers
1	3/10/2025	IIFM Bhopal	Bhopal	13	0
2	7/10/2025	Jalukbari Higher Secondary School	Kamrup	65	5
3	7/10/2025	Panpur H.S. School, Jamurighat	Lakhimpur	52	2
4	10/10/2025	Shankardev Shishu Vidya Niketan	Biswanath	103	1
5	11/10/2025	Bamunigaon High School	Kamrup	150	6
6	11/10/2025	PM SHRI Chariali Academy	Biswanath	87	7
7	15/10/2025	Gyan Vikash Academy, Sootea	Biswanath	35	2
8	17/10/2025	Daphne Senior Secondary School	Biswanath	55	3
9	22/10/2025	Auniatia Hemachandra Dev H S., Amguri	Sivasagar	50	3
10	22/10/2025	Adarsh Vidyalaya Biswanath	Biswanath	65	3
11	24/10/2025	Larsing Khorgvir Pertin Pretayev Memorial School	Rhi-Bhoi	30	6
12	25/10/2025	Gyanbharati Public school, Sootiya	Biswanath	45	3
13	27/10/2025	Pragjyoti Jatiya Vidyalay	Kamrup	120	18
14	29/10/2025	Suren Das Autonomous College, Hajo	Kamrup	110	5
15	30/10/2025	Assam Catholic Educational Trust	Kamrup		400
16	30/10/2025	Podum Konwari Collegiat High School, Rangia	Kamrup	80	4
17	30/10/2025	Biswanath College	Biswanath	70	4

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*(continued from previous page)***Table 2:** Details of Community meetings conducted by VCBC, Rani

Sl. No.	Date	Community	District	No of attendees
1	1/10/2025	Drawing competition at Belguri Village	Kamrup	15
2	10/09/2025	Pabhoi Range Office	Biswanath	49
3	10/16/2025	Nagshankar Range Office, West Divison Kaziranga National Park & Tiger Reserve	Nagaon	16
4	22/10/2025	Chhatargaon Forest village (Self-help group members)	Kamrup	30
5	22/10/2025	Belguri Village (Self-help group members)	Kamrup	5
6	22/10/2025	Madanpur Village (Self-help group members)	Kamrup	12
7	22/10/2025	Kulsi (Bahalpur & Kohua) (Self-help group members)	Kamrup	10
8	27/10/2025	Vet and Chemist meeting	Biswanath	15



Mr Jayanta Rabha delivering a presentation about vultures for the students of Bamunigaon HS School, Kamrup



Ms Aneena Lakshmanan interacting with the students of Jalukbari HS School, Kamrup during Vulture awareness meeting



Mr Sachin Ranade participated as a resource person at three-day Veterinary Training Program at Nanaji Deshmukh Veterinary Science University, Madhya Pradesh

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Participants and Community members of Belguri village with VCBC staff during Durga Puja Drawing competition conducted at VCBC, Rani



Mr Sachin Ranade Explaining the Vulture Conservation by BNHS to the students of IIFM Bhopal

Reaching out for Collaborations

On October 3, 2025, a BNHS Mumbai team conducted a site visit to DPS Lake, Navi Mumbai, to assess site layout and plan the installation of knowledge panels and visitor engagement activities. The team met with Ms Rekha Sankhala and Mr Sandeep Sareen from the Rotary Club of Navi Mumbai – Joy of Giving, to discuss collaboration opportunities for enhancing the visitor experience through educational outreach. Discussions focused on panel placement, interpretive content, and visitor flow, ensuring that the installations are both engaging and environmentally sensitive.

The BNHS team included Ms Aqsa



Majgaonkar, Senior Education Officer, CEC-Mumbai, Ms. Natasha Girkar, Information Officer, EIACP, and Mr Pritam Kadam, Field Driver, who provided on-ground logistical support. This initiative is part of BNHS's broader effort to promote urban environmental education and turn DPS Lake into a hub for learning and biodiversity awareness. ■

BNHS conducts Sustainable Living Workshop at the BlackRock Office, Mumbai

On October 7, 2025, BNHS conducted a Sustainable Living Workshop on 'Herbal Tea and Aromatherapy Sachet Making' at the BlackRock Office, focusing on hands-on learning in herbal wellness. Participants created their own herbal tea blends and aromatherapy sachets, exploring the therapeutic benefits of natural ingredients and sustainable living practices.

Over 50 participants took part in the workshop, actively engaging in the creative process while exchanging ideas on eco-friendly lifestyles. The event was organized by Ms. Aqsa Majgaonkar, Senior Education Officer, CEC Mumbai, and reflected

BNHS's commitment to combining education, sustainability, and community engagement in a fun and practical format. ■

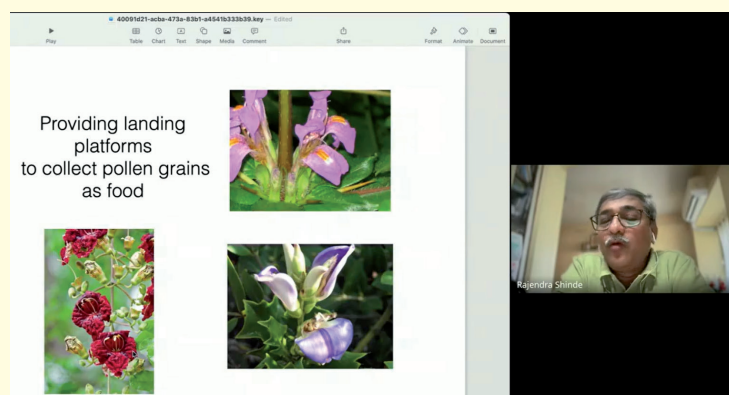


BNHS Talks restarted: Dr. Shinde spoke on the Plants

On October 12, 2025 the Bombay Natural History Society (BNHS) hosted its Online Monthly Talk as part of the Members' Talk Series, featuring Dr Rajendra D. Shinde, Retired Principal of St. Xavier's College, Mumbai, and a renowned botanist and taxonomist. In his captivating session titled "Pollination: Romance in Nature," Dr Shinde explored the fascinating relationships between plants and their pollinators, highlighting how these intricate interactions sustain ecological balance and biodiversity.

Through vivid examples, he revealed how plants entice, deceive, and adapt to attract their pollinators – employing intricate flower shapes, vibrant colours, alluring scents, and even ingenious traps to ensure pollination success. His engaging storytelling and deep scientific insight offered participants a glimpse into the remarkable intelligence and evolutionary ingenuity of plants in their quest for reproduction and survival.

More than 55 participants attended the virtual session, which



was widely appreciated for its blend of science, storytelling, and celebration of nature's delicate partnerships.

Missed the session? Watch the recording now on the BNHS YouTube channel!

Not a member yet? Renew or join today to be part of our upcoming Online Talks and exciting nature programmes: [BNHS Membership Form \(New / Renewal\)](#) ■

BNHS Members' Bird Banding Camp at Point Calimere

The BNHS successfully conducted a Members' Camp for Bird Banding at the Bird Migration Study Centre, Point Calimere, Tamil Nadu, from October 16 to 19, 2025. The camp brought together bird enthusiasts, researchers, and conservationists to deepen their understanding of bird migration and conservation science. Participants explored the diverse habitats of Point Calimere – its wetlands, grasslands, mudflats, and tropical dry evergreen forests — and experienced bird ringing firsthand at the Centre. The camp concluded with a memorable boat safari at Muthupet Lagoon and a visit to Muniyappan Lake, showcasing the region's exceptional biodiversity.

Situated along Tamil Nadu's south-eastern coast, Point Calimere is one of India's key wintering sites for migratory birds. Established in 2008, the BNHS Bird Migration Study Centre provided an ideal setting for participants to gain



hands-on experience in bird ringing, data collection, and species identification under the expert guidance of BNHS ornithologists. ■

The next Bird Banding Camp will be held from December 11–14, 2025. To participate, please email programmes@bnhs.org. ■

Connecting with Communities Through Exhibitions



The Marketing Department actively participated in several exhibitions during October 2025, showcasing BNHS activities, publications, and merchandise.

Events attended:

- Vanyavani Wildlife Week Festival 2025 – Veermata Jijabai Bhosale Botanical Udyan & Zoo, Mumbai (4–5 October 2025)
- Global Wildlife Fair 2025 (BNHS and EcoSikh) – New Delhi (October 10–12, 2025)
- Diwali Exhibition – Tata Power, Dharavi, Mumbai (October 16, 2025)
- Diwali Exhibition – SBICap Securities Ltd., Lower Parel, Mumbai (October 16, 2025)
- Wildlife Carnival – Pune (October 25–26, 2025)

At each of these events, the BNHS stall highlighted our conservation initiatives, publications, and a range of BNHS merchandise. These exhibitions provided an excellent platform to connect with thousands of visitors and spread awareness about the Society's ongoing efforts in nature conservation. ■

Employee of the Month: Mr Abilash R.

We are pleased to announce Mr Abilash R. as our Employee of the Month of October – 2025 for his outstanding contributions to bird conservation and research.

Abilash, associated with the BNHS Bird Ringing and Monitoring Station, Bhagalpur, has over two years of experience in bird monitoring and habitat research across the Ganga River landscape in Bihar. Alongside his research, he actively engages in community awareness and outreach programmes promoting bird conservation and wetland protection. He is also pursuing his PhD in Breeding Bird Ecology, focusing on nesting ecology and conservation challenges of key species.

He was recently awarded the prestigious International Ornithologists' Union (IOU) Global Messenger Equipment Grant for his project 'Tracking the Movements of River Lapwing for Conservation in the Indian Gangetic Floodplains'. This grant, worth ₹ 7.5 lakhs, will support BNHS's first telemetry-based study on the Near Threatened River Lapwing, providing valuable insights into its movement ecology and aiding riverine habitat conservation within the Vikramshila Gangetic Dolphin Sanctuary.

The River Lapwing *Vanellus duvaucelii*, a Near Threatened species, is an important indicator of riverine ecosystem health. The species' habitats – open sandy islands and exposed riverbanks – are under increasing pressure from sand mining, agriculture, grazing, and human disturbances. Despite its ecological significance, no studies have been conducted on this species in India. Abilash's work aims to bridge this critical gap by generating the first telemetry-based insights into the River Lapwing's movement ecology, home range, and habitat use.

Abilash's additional accomplishments include completing the Bhagalpur Atlas Report, uploading BNHS bird ringing data to the Avifauna tool, and drafting two research notes from field observations. ■

The committee commends Abilash for his initiative, dedication, and scientific excellence.

Congratulations, Abilash!



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ADOPT A TREE

HELP OUR PLANET GROW



🌿 Adopt a Tree, Become a Tree Ambassador! 🌿

Make a lasting impact on the environment by adopting a tree at BNHS Conservation Education Centre (CEC), Mumbai! Whether it's to honor a loved one, celebrate a special occasion, or simply give back to nature, your adoption helps restore and protect our green spaces.

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- ✓ Support biodiversity conservation
- ✓ Help create a greener future
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Make your CSR truly matter – for nature, for people, for the planet

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- ❖ Engage your team through nature volunteering & EcoDay events
- ❖ Exclusive perks: sustainable gifts, magazine access, discounts & more
- ❖ Promote your CSR story while contributing to SDGs 13, 15 & 17



Membership Tiers:

- ❖ Silver (1 Year): ₹ 50,000/-
- ❖ Gold (3 Years): ₹ 1,50,000/-
- ❖ Platinum (5 Years): ₹ 5,00,000/-



We are thrilled to welcome our newest Corporate Members Maharashtra Hybrid Seeds Company Pvt Ltd. (Gold Category) and Tata Power Company Ltd. (Gold Category) into the Bombay Natural History Society community — partners in conservation, champions of sustainability, and true stewards of nature.

Together, we will work towards restoring vital ecosystems and inspiring communities through action and education.

Let's make every step count – for wildlife, for our planet, for future generations.

Welcome aboard!

Let us protect species, restore habitats, and build a greener tomorrow – together.

Get in touch

Asif Khan: 98195 70758 | Sandesh Kadam: 9930 150531
membership@bnhs.org | cmd@bnhs.org



BASIC COURSE IN FIELD ORNITHOLOGY AND BIRD MIGRATION STUDIES



Join us in learning the art and science of bird migration monitoring.
Be part of India's growing network of citizen scientists protecting migratory birds across
the Central Asian Flyway. Enroll Now:

BNHS's Basic Course in Field Ornithology and Bird Migration Studies (Oct 2025–Jan 2026)

The Bombay Natural History Society (BNHS) is pleased to announce six batches of its Basic Course in Field Ornithology and Bird Migration Studies, to be held between October 2025 and January 2026 at the BNHS Bird Migration Study Centre, located in Point Calimere, Tamil Nadu - a globally significant migratory hotspot.

About the Course: This specialized field-based course is designed to provide hands-on training in bird monitoring and migration studies, while fostering a network of birders and citizen scientists along the Central Asian Flyway.

Why Join?

- ❖ Field-based learning at one of India's most important migratory bird sites
- ❖ Practical sessions on bird identification, census techniques, and demonstration of bird ringing
- ❖ Classroom lectures on bird migration, monitoring tools, and data collection methods
- ❖ Focus on both shorebirds and migratory landbirds

Location: BNHS Bird Migration Study Centre, Point Calimere (Kodiyakarai), Tamil Nadu

Located at the southeastern tip of India, Point Calimere is a biodiversity-rich site, home to:

Endangered shorebirds like the Great Knot, Near Threatened species including Eurasian Curlew, Bar-tailed Godwit, and Black-tailed Godwit. Spectacular Greater Flamingos, ducks and large wader congregations. Regular sightings of migratory birds such as Sanderlings, Dunlins, Whimbrels, Pacific Golden Plovers, and Migratory landbirds such as the Asian Brown Flycatcher, Indian Pitta, Paradise Flycatcher, Forest Wagtail, and leaf warblers. This rich diversity makes Point Calimere the perfect live classroom for bird migration studies.

Who Should Attend?

- Birdwatchers and nature enthusiasts
- Students of ecology, wildlife, or environmental science
- Aspiring ornithologists
- Researchers and conservation volunteers

Course Duration: Four batches from October 2025 to January 2026

Venue : BNHS Bird Migration Study Centre,
Point Calimere, Tamil Nadu

Field trips : Great Vedaranyam Swamp;
Point Calimere Wildlife Sanctuary;
Beach, Siruthalaikadu mudflats.

Registration Fee (per person): Rs. 5,000/- (for BNHS Members); Rs. 6,500/- (for non-Members)

Fee includes tent accommodation -Two person per tent; Facilities: cots, fan, charging points, pillow and blankets

Other expenses: Rs. 4,500/- (includes food, field visits, entry fee etc.);

Eligibility: No prior field experience is required – just a passion for birds and conservation.

Registration closes 7 days before start date of each batch

The payment details will be shared once the enquiry form is filled and confirmed the registration.

Resource Persons: Dr P. Sathiyaselvam, Mr Sivakumar S., Ms Parveen Shaikh, Mr Paul Antony B., Ms Rose Francis

For More information: Mr S. Sivakumar: s.swaminathan@bnhs.org; 94088 72745; Mr Paul Antony B.; bmscpointcalimere@bnhs.org

Schedule for 2025–2026:

Batch I	November 28–30	Batch III	January 9–11
Batch II	December 19–21	Batch IV	January 23–25

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Help us Preserve a Literary Treasure: Adopt a Rare Book

Introduction and Background

The BNHS Library holds a remarkable collection of rare books—treasures that house the wisdom of great thinkers from the past. These rare books are not just relics; they are a priceless heritage for humankind, preserving facts, ideas, and evidence on Natural History. These valuable resources are indispensable for present and future generations. Unfortunately, these literary gems face threats of deterioration due to climatic, physical, chemical, and biological factors. The loss of such irreplaceable materials would be devastating.

These rare books also contain crucial information about endangered flora and fauna, making them an important resource for students conducting research. The beautifully illustrated plates can be used for exhibitions in schools and colleges, and the wild stories in these books are excellent teaching aids for educators. By digitising these rare resources, we can make them more accessible for educational purposes and conservation awareness.

Why Your Support Matters

Preservation: Rare books are delicate and require expert conservation to prevent deterioration. Your donation will fund state-of-the-art techniques to preserve these literary treasures.

Accessibility: By adopting a rare book, you help make it accessible to scholars, students, and the public, ensuring its knowledge continues to inspire and educate.

Legacy: Your support ensures that these irreplaceable works will be preserved for future generations, keeping their historical and cultural significance alive.

How You Can Help

Adopt a Book: By contributing ₹ 1 lakh (for five years), you can adopt one of our rare books and support its preservation. Your donation will directly fund conservation efforts and ensure these books remain accessible for years to come.

Acknowledgement: Donors will receive an 80G tax-saving certificate, acknowledgement in our annual report, and recognition on the inner page of the book's front cover.

Books Available for Adoption

1. **Nests and Eggs of Indian Birds (Vol. I, II, & III) by Allan O. Hume (1889–1908)**

This invaluable work, authored by Allan Hume, a pioneer in Indian ornithology, is a rare gem, especially significant because the BNHS houses a unique collection of bird eggs.

2. **Indian Ducks & Their Allies by E.C. Stuart Baker (1908)**

This first publication of the BNHS features beautiful illustrations and holds great historical significance. It's essential to preserve this foundational book of our institution.

Thank you for considering this opportunity to make a meaningful impact.
For more information on how you can contribute to preserving these literary treasures,
please feel free to contact us at library@bnhs.org

Book Donations to the BNHS Library

The Bombay Natural History Society (BNHS) warmly invites individuals and organizations to contribute to the enrichment of our Library through the donation of books and relevant literature. Your generosity plays a vital role in expanding our knowledge base and supporting our mission to promote the conservation of nature and natural resources.

Over the years, donations – from rare, historic volumes to the latest publications – have significantly enhanced our collection, all in alignment with the Vision and Mission of BNHS. We remain deeply grateful to all who have supported us in this endeavour.

To help us manage donations efficiently, we kindly request you to follow the guidelines:

Submission Guidelines:

If you are considering a donation, please email a list of the books or literature you wish to contribute to library@bnhs.org and director@bnhs.org.

Please Note:

- Donors will not receive goods or services in exchange for their contributions.
- All accepted books will be catalogued in the Library’s accession register at the earliest possible opportunity.
- Due to space and operational constraints, donated materials will be incorporated into the main Library and Archives and will not be housed in a separate collection.

We sincerely thank you for considering a donation to the BNHS Library. Your support makes a lasting difference.

For more information on the Donation Policy, please contact the Librarian at library@bnhs.org



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Student Membership (below 25 years; College ID Proof compulsory)	₹ 450/-

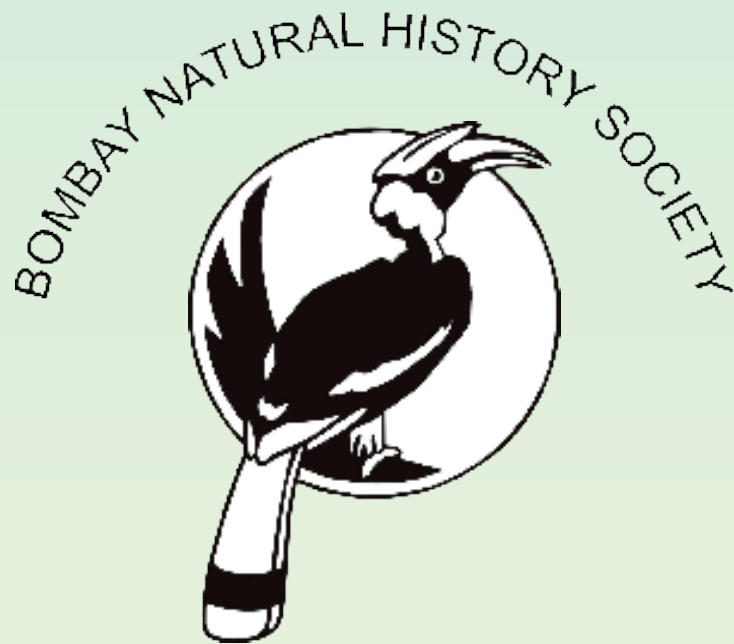


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BNHS MISSION

Vision: Premier independent scientific organization with a broad-based constituency, excelling in the conservation of threatened species and habitats.

Mission: Conservation of nature, primarily biological diversity, through action based on research, education and public awareness.

CONTACT US

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