



BOMBAY NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY NEWSLETTER



SEPTEMBER, 2025

CONSERVATION NEWSLETTER

FROM THE DIRECTOR DESK



Dear Members,

Your society completed 142 years on September 15, 2025. Personally, I do not believe in celebrations, so we decided to mark this auspicious day with a brainstorming session for the BNHS staff to discuss a common strategy for working together at our optimum capacity. The BNHS staff from CEC-Goregaon, Airoli, and Hornbill House gathered at the newly renovated Museum Collection at Hornbill House, while other colleagues joined us remotely. People are more important than buildings, and BNHS can only grow when its staff performs at their best.

Together with senior staff members and HoDs, I designed parameters to assess monthly staff performance in order to select the best-performing staff. I am confident that the incentives and public recognition planned for such individuals will inspire every staff member to aspire to this achievement. We also felicitated staff members who have made significant contributions. Our Vice President, Mr Saurabh Kant Singh, Honorary Secretary, Dr. Bharat Bhushan, and Governing Council Member, Mr. Debi Goenka, graced the concluding function and addressed the audience.

I also visited the project site at the Ujani wetland in Maharashtra, where the BNHS team is working on an eco-restoration project. Thanks to our President, concerned government departments have been brought together to make this initiative successful. The local fishing community is excited about the project. During my interactions with them, I realized how their struggles reflect the degradation of the wetland. Although the Government of India has banned the artificial breeding of African catfish, awareness of this ban has not fully reached local levels. I observed that about 95% of fish species in our wetlands today are invasive. We hope this project will raise awareness among law enforcement agencies and also provide alternatives for cultivating indigenous fish, enabling communities to earn better livelihoods.

BNHS is also an academic institution. Thanks to Dr Sálím Ali, BNHS formally affiliated with Mumbai University in the 1980s for Botany and Zoology, and later with MAHE University, Manipal. Our Ph.D. programme allows students to work on field research projects. I recently met the Vice Chancellor of Mumbai University, Prof Ravindra Kulkarni, who encouraged BNHS to contribute further to academics, particularly within the framework of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020. This summer, several students completed internships at Hornbill House and field sites such as Jaisalmer (Rajasthan) and Bhagalpur (Bihar), reflecting the new academic opportunities created by NEP 2020.

BNHS also shares a longstanding association with the Indian Armed Forces, and we have collaborated on several conservation projects in border areas. This requires mutual understanding and trust. The President and I visited New Delhi to meet Defence Secretary Mr Rajesh Kumar Singh, who was briefed on BNHS conservation initiatives and key issues. He assured us of his prompt support. We also met the Forest Secretary Mr Tanmay Kumar to seek support from the MoEF&CC for our conservation breeding programmes.

This month, our dynamic Librarian, Ms Nirmala Barure, opted for voluntary retirement to attend to family responsibilities. During a rare and emotional farewell, she urged the staff to focus on what we can contribute to the Society rather than on what it can give us. Her heartfelt message was deeply moving and motivating. BNHS is proud to have had such a dedicated staff member.

Your Society has also taken an important decision to allow ordinary BNHS members (annual, 3-year, and 5-year) to upgrade to Life Membership by paying the balance amount (₹ 17,700). I encourage you to take advantage of this scheme. Please contact our Membership Officer, Asif (WhatsApp: +91 9819570758), for assistance.

I would also like to congratulate birdwatchers Mr Shashank Dalvi, Mr Harish Thangaraj, Mr Adesh Shivkar, and their team for rediscovering the Jerdon's Courser on August 24, 2025, this time outside the Lankamalla Hills. This remarkable sighting comes nearly four decades after Dr Bharat Bhushan, our present Honorary Secretary, originally rediscovered the bird – once thought extinct – after 86 years in 1986 at Lankamalla Hills, Andhra Pradesh, with the help of local hunter Aitanna. Later, BNHS scientist P. Jeganathan worked extensively in the area from 2004 to 2008.

The BNHS library has now reopened in the renovated space at Hornbill House and is preparing to launch innovative programmes for readers. Our Museum Collection team, led by young professionals, is already engaged in organizing various programmes and workshops for students and forest officials. Please visit our website for revised guidelines and prior appointment details.

Finally, I encourage you to read the BNHS Blog (<http://blog.bnhs.org>), voluntarily curated by our member Ms Oishimaya Sen, for its unique stories. 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 will also help them 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

BNHS Celebrates 142nd Foundation Day

The Bombay Natural History Society (BNHS) commemorated its 142nd Foundation Day on September 15, 2025, with a series of events held at its headquarters, Hornbill House, Mumbai. Staff members from across the country participated through hybrid sessions, underscoring BNHS's national presence and collective commitment to nature conservation.

The day began with a session led by Director Kishor Rithe, Heads of Departments, and staff, reflecting on BNHS's achievements to date, ongoing programmes, and future priorities. The afternoon was dedicated to discussions on building staff capacity to further strengthen the reach and impact of BNHS's conservation initiatives.

In the concluding session, Director Rithe presented BNHS's landmark contributions over the past 142 years and outlined the road ahead. Members of the Rajasthan team, Sachin and Pankaj Bishnoi, shared their collaborative efforts with BNHS to conserve the great Indian bustard and lesser florican, supported by a documentary screening.

As part of the celebrations, Vice President and Hon. Treasurer Saurabh Kant Singh, Honorary Secretary Dr Bharat Bhushan, Director Kishor Rithe, and Governing Council member Debi Goenka felicitated staff members for their outstanding contributions during FY 2024–25. A symbolic cake-cutting, led jointly by BNHS's youngest and eldest employees, marked the occasion.

Fittingly, nature itself joined the celebration. A rare Moon Moth, with a wingspan of nearly 15 cm and a lifespan of just a week, emerged at the BNHS Nature Reserve (CEC) on the same day. Identified by BNHS expert Meehir Pawar, this sighting served as a reminder of the precious biodiversity BNHS works tirelessly to study and protect.

Extending the spirit of Foundation Day beyond Mumbai, the BNHS Rajasthan team celebrated with students of Dungar College, Bikaner. Dr Pratap Singh, Head of the Zoology Department at Dungar College and a BNHS life member, spoke on the Society's rich history. Dr Sujit Narwade shared insights into BNHS's national conservation programmes, while Dr Neelkanth highlighted ongoing work on the Thar Desert bustard project. The event encouraged youth participation in field research and initiated discussions on carcass sample testing in collaboration with the National Research Centre on Equines (NRCE), Bikaner – nurturing the next generation of conservation researchers.

As BNHS enters its 143rd year, the Society remains steadfast in its mission to conserve India's natural heritage, with the continued support of its members, partners, and well-wishers. ■



International Vulture Awareness Day 2025

On September 6, 2025, the Bombay Natural History Society (BNHS) and its partners joined the global conservation community in observing International Vulture Awareness Day (IVAD). Celebrated annually on the first Saturday of September, IVAD was initiated in 2009 by the Birds of Prey Programme (South Africa) and the Hawk Conservancy Trust (United Kingdom). It has since evolved into a worldwide platform to highlight the ecological importance of vultures and the urgent need to protect them.

This year, BNHS marked the day with diverse programmes across India, engaging students, teachers, veterinarians, paravets, community members, forest officials, and conservation partners. Activities ranged from educational workshops and quizzes to community engagement, creative competitions, habitat restoration initiatives, and special collaborations with government departments.

Bhagalpur, Bihar



BNHS supported the Bhagalpur Forest Division in organizing a quiz competition at Adarsh Madhya Vidyalaya, Simra. Eighty students, along with their teachers and principal, participated enthusiastically. The quiz raised awareness about vulture species, their ecological role, and conservation challenges, inspiring young learners to become ambassadors for conservation.

Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh



The Van Vihar National Park & Zoo, Bhopal, in collaboration with BNHS-VCBC, hosted a wide range of outreach activities combining creativity, education, and public participation.

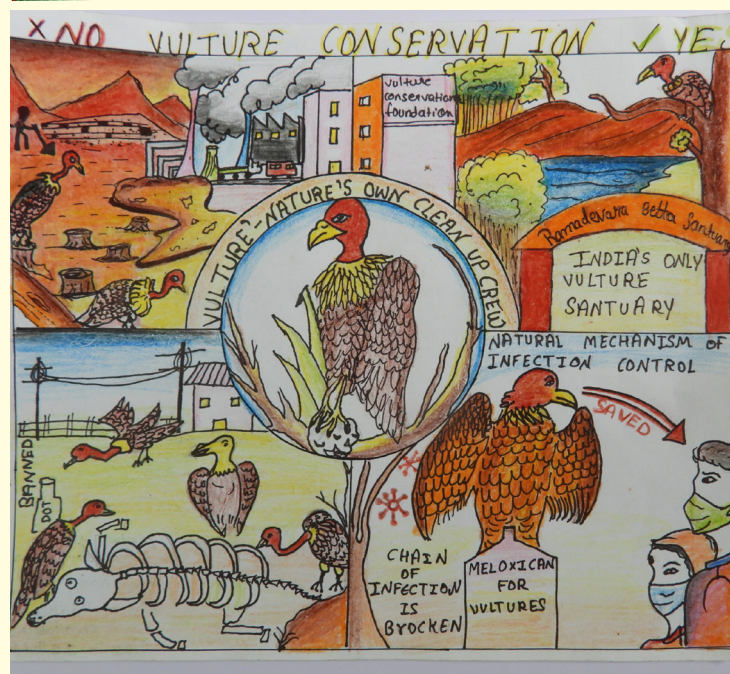
Activities:

- Workshop for Gaushala Representatives: Experts emphasized vultures' ecological role, safe veterinary practices, and alternatives to diclofenac. Sessions were led by Dr Ruhi Haque (Van Vihar), Shri Mohammed Khaliq and Dr Sangeeta Rajgeer (Bhopal Birds), and Dr Hamza Nadeem Farooqui.

Public Engagement Campaigns:

- Selfie with Vulture & Oath Campaign encouraged visitors to pledge support for vulture conservation.
- "Wings of Hope" Signature Campaign, inaugurated by PCCF (Wildlife) Shri Subharanjan Sen, IFS, invited participants to sign a pledge board symbolizing collective action for vulture protection.

Creative Competitions:



- Inter-School Drawing and Painting Competition enabled students to creatively express the importance of vulture conservation. Winners were felicitated by Shri Sen, who urged youth to become wildlife ambassadors.
- On-the-Spot Quiz at the Snake Park tested visitor knowledge of vultures and broader conservation issues, with prizes awarded to winners.

Interactive Learning:

- A specially designed Vulture Conservation Board Game (Snakes & Ladders) offered families a fun and educational way to engage with conservation themes.

Indore, Madhya Pradesh



At the Indore General Post Office (GPO), BNHS-VCBC Bhopal partnered with the Postal Department to release a Special Postal Cancellation.

The event was attended by Mr Shivansu Kumar (Senior Superintendent of Post Offices, Indore City Division), Mr Shriniwas Joshi (Senior Postmaster, Indore GPO), and Dr Arockianathan Samson (Centre Manager, VCBC Bhopal).

Speaking on the occasion, Dr Arockianathan Samson, Centre Manager, VCBC Bhopal, emphasized vultures' role as nature's 'clean-up crew', BNHS's pioneering work in the Vulture Conservation Breeding Programme, and the need to ban harmful veterinary drugs such as diclofenac, aceclofenac, ketoprofen, nimesulide, and flunixin, while stressing the need for Vulture Safe Zones, community participation, and citizen advocacy.

The Postal Department's involvement was widely appreciated for extending conservation awareness to grassroots communities through stamps and cancellations.

Nagpur, Maharashtra

At Shri Mathuradas Mohota College of Science, Nagpur, the Nagpur Forest Division organized an awareness programme, featuring a panel discussion-cum-quiz session for students of the Zoology Department. The session focused on vulture ecology, the



decline of their populations due to harmful veterinary practices, and the importance of youth participation in conservation. A total of 66 participants attended the event. Mr Manan Mahadev, Conservation Biologist, Pench Tiger Reserve, delivered an insightful presentation on vultures, emphasizing their role as nature's clean-up crew, the major threats they face – including toxic NSAID veterinary drugs, food scarcity, and habitat degradation – and the urgent need for conservation awareness. He also interacted with students, answering a range of questions on vulture ecology and conservation.

Other panellists included Shri Vivek Rajurkar (RFO East Pench, Pench Tiger Reserve), Shri Nandkishor Raut (DFO, Social Forestry and Gorewada Project) and the session was moderated by Shri Avinash Londhe (Honorary Wildlife Warden, Nagpur District).

Pinjore, Haryana



At the Jatayu Conservation Breeding Centre (JCBC), Pinjore, an awareness meeting was held with Veterinary Livestock Development Assistants (VLDAs) and Block Livestock Extension Officers (BLEOs) from Panchkula District.

Centre Manager Hemant Bajpai introduced JCBC's conservation initiatives, followed by a detailed presentation on vultures' ecological role and the threat posed by unsafe veterinary drugs. The interactive discussion highlighted paravets' role as key stakeholders in grassroots-level vulture conservation.

The session concluded with a group photograph symbolizing the shared commitment of JCBC and the veterinary community.

Kaithal, Haryana

On the same day, BNHS team collaborated with the Animal Husbandry Department (AHD), Kaithal, to organize a workshop for 38 veterinary surgeons. The session focused on vultures' ecological importance, the dangers of toxic NSAIDs, and vulture-safe practices.



The programme strengthened BNHS–AHD collaboration and paved the way for wider awareness among paravets and rural practitioners.

Rani, Assam



At VCBC Belguri, celebrations were held at Carmel School, Rani, with a district-level drawing competition and felicitation programme. Special guests included Ms Roji Barman (RFO, Rani Range), Ms Lavina D'Souza (Principal, Carmel School), Mr Sanat Chakraborty (Environmental Scientist), Mr Kankan Jyoti Kaushik (RFO, Kulsi Range), and Mr Nayan Jyoti Das (RFO, Loharghat Range). Six 'Vulture Friends' – Mr Khogan Rabha, Ms Binita Rabha, M. Sampa Rabha, Ms Himakshi Saud, Mr Banjyoti Nath, and Ms Ayesha Siddika – were recognized for their contributions to conservation, along with long-term partners such as 7Weaves Organization, Bharti Airtel Foundation, and Diya Foundation. Winners of the drawing

competition among 50 schools from Kamrup District were Angel Deepika (1st), Nihar Kalita (2nd), and Taison Rabha and Dritidipa Bora (3rd).

Biswanath, Assam

The VSZ Biswanath team partnered with Kaziranga National Park and Tiger Reserve to celebrate IVAD at the Divisional Forest Office, Bokakhat. The programme was attended by Dr Sonali Ghosh, IFS (Field Director, Kaziranga), officials from CWRC Kaziranga, forest staff, and students of J.D.S.G. College and C.N.B. College.

Biologist Githartha Borah delivered an awareness talk on vulture conservation. Students and officials actively participated, with the event concluding in a group photograph symbolizing collective commitment.



Sivasagar, Assam

On the eve of IVAD, the Vulture Safe Zone (VSZ) in collaboration with the Society for Green Conservation conducted a plantation programme at Kokilamari Village, Sivasagar District – home to one of Assam's largest vulture colonies. The activities included:

- Planting of 100+ native saplings (Indian Redwood, Bishop Wood, Indian Mahogany, and Arjun) to enhance roosting and nesting habitats.
- Active participation from the Forest Department, local governance representatives, and villagers.
- Recognition of two participants for outstanding contributions during plantation activities.

This initiative aimed to restore vulture habitats, engage communities, and raise environmental awareness in a critical conservation area.

The IVAD 2025 celebrations across India highlighted vultures' indispensable role as nature's clean-up crew, preventing disease outbreaks by disposing of carcasses. With South Asian vulture populations having declined by over 95% since the 1990s due to Diclofenac use, the events emphasized urgent, collaborative conservation. Showcasing community engagement, youth participation, scientific input, and enduring partnerships, BNHS's observance reaffirmed its commitment to protecting vultures, safeguarding ecosystems, and fostering cooperation. Supported by communities and institutions nationwide, BNHS continues to work toward a safer future for these keystone species. ■



White-rumped Vultures – One Step Closer to Reintroduction in Assam

As part of ongoing vulture conservation efforts, six captive-bred white-rumped vultures were transferred on September 27, 2025 to the release aviary at Nalapara, Kamrup district. The aviary was inaugurated by Dr Ashwini Kumar, IFS, Director of the Assam State Zoo, who released the first vulture. Ms Roji Barman, RFO, Rani Range, also participated in the programme, releasing additional birds into the aviary. ■

Lesser Florican Sighting in Sailana Grasslands

During a joint survey by BNHS and the MP Forest Department on 16 September, a female lesser florican was sighted in Sailana – a historical stronghold for the species. Though brief, the sighting is ecologically significant, reaffirming the value of Sailana’s grasslands and underscoring the need for ongoing monitoring and habitat protection. ■



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189° S
Ratlam, Ujjain Division 457550
India
Altitude: 538.2m
Shikarwadi, Sailana



Grassland Revival and Avian Monitoring in Tiger Landscapes

BNHS, in collaboration with the TATR Foundation, has launched a pioneering study to evaluate how birds – particularly the critically endangered lesser florican – respond to grassland restoration in rehabilitated village sites within and around tiger reserves. This initiative represents a significant shift in tiger landscape management, recognizing grasslands, often overlooked, as vital habitats for avifauna. By integrating bird monitoring into habitat restoration, the project aims to create a replicable model that balances carnivore conservation with grassland biodiversity. ■

Sarus Crane Conservation in Gondia

In Gondia, BNHS is conducting sensitivity mapping and threat assessments for sarus crane habitats, with a focus on high-tension power lines – a known risk to these majestic birds. The initiative strengthens the Sarus Mitra network and explores the concept of ‘Sarus Rice’, a community-led conservation model linking sustainable agriculture with species protection. This approach exemplifies BNHS’s participatory ethos, combining ecological science with rural livelihoods. ■



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BNHS Scientist Invited as Expert at Workshop on Integrated Wetland Management

Ms Parveen Shaikh, Scientist D, BNHS, was invited as an expert to the National Level Workshop on Integrated Wetland Management, organized by the Madhya Pradesh Forest Department and the Wildlife Institute of India at Khajuraho on September 3–4, 2025.

The workshop brought together wetland experts, researchers, and policymakers to discuss strategies for conserving India's wetlands and their biodiversity. Ms Shaikh presented the success story of Indian skimmer conservation along the Chambal River, highlighting the Nest Guardian Programme, which engages local

communities to protect nesting colonies from threats such as livestock, dogs, and human disturbance.

She shared insights from long-term monitoring, ringing, and colour-flagging studies that have enhanced understanding of the species' migration and breeding biology. Ms Shaikh also emphasized the importance of a landscape-level management plan for the Chambal, addressing challenges such as sand mining and water extraction, and proposed ways to strengthen ongoing conservation through community and government partnerships. ■

Bridging Ecology and Economy

On September 13, 2025, the Balipara Foundation hosted "Naturenomics Collective: Innovation in Conservation and Community" in collaboration with NMIMS University and the Assam Investment Society. The event took place at NMIMS University, Mumbai. Shri Kishor Rithe, Director of BNHS, was among the esteemed panelists, alongside Dr. Anish Andheria, President and CEO of the Wildlife Conservation Trust, and several other distinguished experts. The session was moderated by Gaurav Barthakur, Grants and Business Head at the Balipara Foundation.

The discussion centred on building sustainable futures by bridging ecology and economy, highlighting the vital role of community-led conservation and corporate engagement in driving long-term environmental resilience. ■

Tamil Nadu Establishes Raptor Research Foundation and Hosts Workshop

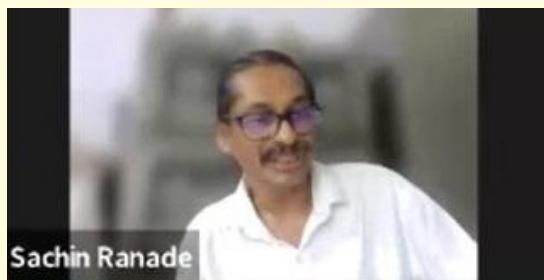
The Government of Tamil Nadu has launched the Tamil Nadu Raptor Research Foundation (TNRRF) – the first state-funded initiative in India dedicated to the conservation of birds of prey. Based at the Advanced Institute for Wildlife Conservation (AIWC), Vandalur, the foundation will focus on research, rehabilitation, habitat management, and education for raptors such as eagles, hawks, falcons, vultures, and owls. With a dedicated budget of ₹1 crore, TNRRF is expected to strengthen both regional and national raptor conservation efforts.

A committee has been constituted to guide the foundation's activities, with Dr Arockianathan Samson, Centre Manager, BNHS Vulture Conservation Breeding Centre, Bhopal, appointed as a member for his expertise in raptor research.

To mark the launch, a one-day workshop on "Raptors of Tamil Nadu" was held on September 2, 2025 at AIWC, Vandalur. The event was inaugurated by Tmt. Supriya Sahu, IAS, Additional Chief Secretary, Environment, Climate Change & Forest Department, who unveiled the TNRRF logo and released the Guidelines on Wild Animal Carcass Management. Senior forest officials emphasised the urgent need for raptor conservation in the state. Selvi S. Senbagapriya, IFS, Deputy Director (Admin), AIWC, outlined the ecological importance of raptors. Thiru A. Udhayan, IFS, PCCF & Director, AIWC, shared the vision and mandate of TNRRF, while Thiru Rakesh Kumar Dogra, IFS, PCCF & Chief Wildlife Warden, delivered a special address emphasising the urgency of raptor conservation in Tamil Nadu.

Technical sessions featured expert presentations on monitoring methodologies, threat mitigation, and habitat restoration. A key highlight was Dr Samson's proposal for an Egyptian vulture Conservation Breeding Programme in Tamil Nadu. He underscored the drastic decline of the species, once common in the state but now reduced to fewer than 150 individuals across Southern India. The proposal calls for captive breeding, habitat restoration, vulture-safe zones, and public awareness to support long-term recovery. ■





BNHS Participates in SAVE Open Day Webinar

On September 10, 2025, Mr Sachin Ranade (Centre Manager, VCBC-Assam) represented BNHS and India at the SAVE Open Day webinar, attended by 120 participants from 35 countries. ■

BNHS-EIACP Shines at National Evaluation Workshop in Dehradun

The Ministry of Environment, Forests, and Climate Change (MoEF&CC), Government of India, held the EIACP National Evaluation Workshop from September 18 to 20 2025 at the Wildlife Institute of India (WII), Dehradun. The workshop convened representatives from all 54 EIACP centres to assess performance and ensure alignment with EIACP guidelines.

Dr Sujit Narwade, Deputy Director of BNHS and EIACP Project Coordinator, along with Mr Nandkishor Dudhe, Senior Programme Officer, represented the BNHS–EIACP Resource Partner Centre. They presented the centre's achievements and innovative initiatives to an expert panel, highlighting BNHS's strategic outreach, capacity-building efforts, and community-driven conservation models.



The presentation emphasized the integration of EIACP activities with Mission LiFE (Lifestyle for Environment), promoting sustainable practices and ecological awareness among youth, farmers, and local institutions. For the year 2025–26, the BNHS–EIACP centre will place particular focus on Dharashiv and Washim, two key districts identified under the Aspirational District Programme, aiming to further strengthen local conservation efforts and community engagement. ■

BNHS Leadership Strengthens Ties with Defence and Forest Secretaries

BNHS shares a long-standing partnership with the Indian Armed Forces, working together on conservation projects in border regions such as Ladakh, Rajasthan, Sikkim, the north-eastern states, and along the east and west coasts. Strengthening this collaboration requires mutual understanding and trust.

BNHS President Mr Pravinsingh Pardeshi and Director Kishor Rithe met Defence Secretary Mr Rajesh Kumar Singh at South Block, New Delhi, to brief him on BNHS's conservation

initiatives with the Armed Forces and to discuss emerging issues. The Secretary appreciated BNHS's work and assured prompt support.

The President and Director also met Forest Secretary Mr Tanmay Kumar at Paryavaran Bhawan, where they outlined BNHS's plans for conservation breeding of endangered species. The Secretary expressed his commitment to extending support from the MoEF&CC for these initiatives. ■

Collaboration with Mumbai University

BNHS, an academic institution affiliated with Mumbai University since the 1980s for M.Sc. and Ph.D. programmes in Botany and Zoology, continues to strengthen its academic role. Our Ph.D. programme offers students valuable opportunities to work on field research projects. Recently, BNHS Director Kishor Rithe met with Prof Ravindra Kulkarni, Vice Chancellor of Mumbai University, who invited BNHS to play a greater role in academics, especially under the scope provided by the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020. This collaboration will allow more Mumbai University students to participate in BNHS field research, gain hands-on knowledge, and complete internships. ■





GIB Conservation Dialogue in Chandrapur

A strategic meeting with Shri Rajan Talmale, MFS, Divisional Forest Officer in Chandrapur, reviewed the status of the great Indian bustard in Warora, a region with a history of historical sightings. The dialogue explored converting degraded forest patches, such as Temurda, into functional grasslands. This reflects BNHS's systems-level approach, reviving lost habitats through interdepartmental collaboration and ecological planning. ■

Stakeholder Meeting in Sailana

On September 19, BNHS convened a stakeholder meeting in Sailana, bringing together forest officials, local leaders, and media. The session emphasised collaborative conservation, protection of breeding habitats, and promotion of grassland-friendly agriculture. Media coverage amplified the message, fostering community engagement and public awareness. ■



Integrating Grassland Management into Forest Working Plans

The BNHS team recently met Shri Avinash Kumar, IFS, DyCF, Chandrapur, to discuss embedding grassland management into the official Forest Working Plan. Institutionalizing grassland restoration in this way will ensure long-term protection for species such as the GIB and lesser florican. ■



Meeting with Pro-Vice Chancellor of NMIMS University

Mr Nandkishor Dudhe, Senior Programme Officer, BNHS, met with Dr Sharad Mhaikar, Pro-Vice Chancellor of SVKM's Narsee Monjee Institute of Management Studies (NMIMS) University on September 22, 2025, along with faculty members, to discuss the implementation of a socio-economic survey in Kihim and Kamat villages, Alibaug, Raigad. A preliminary field visit will be conducted to develop a master plan, which will guide the detailed survey. ■





Ajmer BHS Review and Florican Film Screening

On September 25, the Rajasthan State Biodiversity Board (RSBB), Jaipur, hosted a review of a proposed Biodiversity Heritage Site (BHS) for Lesser Florican conservation in Ajmer. A documentary screening reinforced the urgency of protecting grassland habitats, highlighting the role of storytelling in making scientific conservation efforts accessible and compelling to stakeholders. ■

Visit to Ujani Site to Review Ongoing Projects

Mr Kishor Rithe, Director, along with Dr P. Sathiyaselvam, Deputy Director Wetlands and Flyways Programme, visited the Ujani site to review the progress of two ongoing projects: 'Eco-restoration and Climate-Resilient Fisheries Development Program for Ujani Reservoir/Wetland (Bhigwan) of Maharashtra' funded by the Cipla Foundation, and 'Building a Surveillance Model for Detecting Zoonotic Spillover in Increased Bird-Human Interaction Settings Using the One Health Approach: A Study at Selected Bird Sanctuaries and Wetlands' funded by the ICMR.



During their visit, they engaged in constructive discussions with fishermen at the Kumbargaon Fish Landing Point, and the Director also held a detailed meeting with the President of the fishermen's society. In addition, they observed the bird sampling protocols being implemented by the BNHS team for wild bird monitoring. ■



Visit to RESQ Charitable Trust

Mr Kishor Rithe, Director, along with Dr P. Sathiyaselvam, Deputy Director, visited the Wildlife Transit Treatment Centre (TTC) in Pune, managed by the RESQ Charitable Trust. The centre, authorised by the Government of Maharashtra, carries out state-wide wild animal rescues in collaboration with the Maharashtra Forest Department. During the visit, they interacted with Ms Neha Panchamiya, Founder & President of RESQ Charitable Trust, and her team to explore opportunities for collaboration. It was noted that the TTC maintains extensive datasets on rescued and rehabilitated wildlife. The Director suggested that these valuable records and datasets could be published in the Journal of the Bombay Natural History Society (JBNS). ■



Seva Pakhwada Awareness Activities

Observed annually from September 17 to October 2, Seva Pakhwada promotes community service, environmental protection, and public participation in nation-building. As part of this initiative, BNHS conducted activities engaging students, teachers, and community members.

BNHS–CEC Nature Reserve (September 17): A nature awareness programme engaged 44 students and six teachers from Dosibai Jeejeebhoy Primary School, Goregaon. Participants were introduced to BNHS, joined a guided trail led by Mr Dilip Giri (Field Assistant, CEC-Mumbai) and naturalists Unmesh Paranjape and Meehir Pawar, and attended an interactive session on biodiversity and conservation. The event, coordinated by Ms Priyadarshini Supekar (Education Officer,

CEC-Mumbai) with her team, aimed to inspire ecological curiosity and highlight the value of natural heritage.

VCBC–Pinjore (September 23): The Haryana Forest and Wildlife Department hosted an awareness programme at the Jatayu Conservation Breeding Centre for 20 local cattle owners. A documentary showcased the role of vultures and the threats they face. Mr Hemant Bajpai, Centre Manager, explained BNHS and state initiatives in vulture conservation, stressing the dangers of veterinary NSAIDs like diclofenac and the benefits of safer alternatives such as meloxicam and tolfenamic acid. The event saw active community participation and was attended by Shri Surjeet Singh, Inspector (Wildlife), and Shri Jai Pal, Forest Guard.

BNHS–EIACP (September 29): A Bird Identification and Basic Ornithology session at Nandadeep Vidyalaya, Goregaon, engaged 120 students from Classes 6 to 8. Led by Natasha Girkar (Information Officer) and Niraj Patel (IT Officer), the interactive session fostered enthusiasm for bird conservation and underscored the importance of nurturing future conservationists. ■



Vulture Conservation Awareness in Rani, Assam

The Vulture Conservation Breeding Centre, Rani, conducted 23 awareness programmes across Assam in September, reaching over 1,500 students, teachers, and community members. Activities were held across six districts: Kamrup, Biswanath, Sivasagar, Barpeta, Dhubri, and Sonitpur.

Programmes included:

- School and college awareness sessions on vulture conservation and reintroduction efforts.
- Community meetings promoting the concept of “Vulture Restaurants” and safe livestock practices.
- Tree plantation drives in collaboration with the Assam Forest Department to restore habitats preferred by vultures.

The initiatives were led by VCBC team: Mr Sachin Ranade (Centre Manager), Mr Ghanashyam Gogoi (Biologist), Mr Gitartha Borah (Biologist), Mr Sthitapragyan Mallick (Biologist), Ms Aneena Lakshmanan (Biologist), and Mr Jayanta Kumar Rabha (Office Assistant). These efforts strengthened conservation values among both students and local communities, encouraging active participation in safeguarding vultures.



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

Sl. No.	Date	School Name	District	No of attendees	
				Students	Teachers
1	09-01-2025	Marigold High School	Biswanath, Assam	55	5
2	09-01-2025	Rani High School	Kamrup, Assam	60	5
3	09-02-2025	Uttar Chatia High School	Biswanath, Assam	126	5
4	09-03-2025	Bhawanipur Anchalik College	Barpeta, Assam	110	3
5	09-04-2025	Nagshankar High School	Biswanath, Assam	65	2
6	09-08-2025	Madhab Choudary College	Barpeta, Assam	55	4
7	09-08-2025	Pub Sootea High School	Biswanath, Assam	59	1
8	09-09-2025	Jamuguri Academy	Sonitpur, Assam	70	2
9	09-10-2025	Dimoria College	Kamrup Metro	120	14
10	09-10-2025	Nalapara Anchalik High School, Rani	Kamrup, Assam	55	4
11	09-10-2025	Normal School	Biswanath, Assam	91	6
12	09-11-2025	Vidyarathi Senior Secondary School	Kamrup, Assam	40	4
13	09-11-2025	Kokjhar Sri Mahendra Choudary H S	Kamrup, Assam	50	3
14	09-11-2025	Dolonguri High School	Biswanath, Assam	65	2
15	09-11-2025	Jamuguri junior college	Sonitpur, Assam	72	2
16	09-18-2025	Biswanath Science Academy	Biswanath, Assam	150	3
17	09-19-2025	Gauhati University	Kamrup, Assam	55	4
18	09-19-2025	T. C. B. M Senior Secondary School	Biswanath, Assam	130	5
19	09-25-2025	District Institute of Education and Training, Sonitpur	Biswanath, Assam	50	5
20	09-29-2025	Biswanath College of Education	Biswanath, Assam	70	5

Table 2: Details of Community meetings conducted by VCBC, Rani

Sl. No.	Date	School Name	District	No of attendees
1	09-12-2025	Kokilamari village	Dhubri, Assam	20
2	09-18-2025	Disangmukh village	Sivasagar, Assam	15
3	09-24-2025	Kokilamari village	Dhubri, Assam	20
4	09-08-2025	Amchang + Khanapara Wildlife Range, Bonda, Narengi	Kamrup Metro, Assam	28
5	09-10-2025	SAVE Open Day 2025	Online	140
6	09-24-2025	Borgang Range office, Behali Wildlife Sanctuary, Gohpur	Biswanath, Assam	31

Assistant Conservator of Forests (ACF) Trainees visit VCBC-Bhopal

On September 25 2025, the 30th Batch of Assistant Conservator of Forests (ACF) trainees from the Central Academy for State Forest Service (CASFOS) visited the BNHS-VCBC at Van Vihar National Park, Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh. The educational visit formed part of their specialized field training on wildlife conservation, ex-situ conservation, and endangered species management. The trainees were accompanied by Shri Sarathbabu, IFS, batch in-charge and training coordinator.

The programme began with a welcome address by Dr Ruhi Haque, Assistant Director, Van Vihar National Park. Dr Haque outlined the importance of conservation centres such as VCBC and their role in safeguarding endangered species like vultures, which are critical to maintaining ecological balance.

A technical session was conducted by Dr Arockianathan Samson, Centre Manager, VCBC Bhopal (BNHS). His presentation covered:

- Decline of Vultures in India: Causes of population collapse since the 1990s, particularly due to the veterinary use of Diclofenac, a toxic NSAID.
- Drug Ban and Policy Measures: The Government of India's ban on Diclofenac (2006) and promotion of safer alternatives such as Meloxicam.
- BNHS Vulture Conservation Breeding Programme: Objectives, milestones, and achievements in breeding critically endangered species.



- Centre Infrastructure and Facilities: Specialized aviaries, quarantine units, artificial incubation chambers, chick-rearing units, and veterinary facilities.
- Future Plans: Reintroduction of captive-bred vultures into natural habitats through soft-release protocols in designated Vulture Safe Zones.

The trainees were given a guided tour of the VCBC, which included:

- Breeding aviaries and segregation zones
- Artificial incubation and chick-rearing areas
- Feed preparation and quarantine facilities
- Veterinary care and monitoring systems

The ACF trainees engaged actively throughout the programme, participating in discussions, asking technical questions, and linking classroom knowledge with real-world practices. The interaction emphasized the importance of scientific interventions in species recovery. ■

Tamil Nadu Forestry Trainees visit BNHS Bird Migration Study Centre

The BNHS Bird Migration Study Centre (BMSC), Point Calimere, hosted 68 Forest Watcher trainees from the Tamil Nadu Forestry Training College, Vaigai Dam. The team was led by Mr K.R. Palanisamy, Forest Range Officer, and Mr Thirupathi Rajan, Forester.

The session, conducted by Mr S. Sivakumar, Scientist-D, BNHS, provided an overview of BNHS's research-driven conservation history and bird migration studies at Point Calimere. Mr Paul Antony B., Senior Researcher, demonstrated bird-marking equipment and explained the parameters recorded during field studies, giving trainees a hands-on introduction to bird migration monitoring.

A guided field visit to the Pump House area followed, where participants learned about the Point Calimere Wetland Complex, its global importance for migratory shorebirds, and received an introduction to wetland bird diversity. Divided into two groups, trainees explored the wetlands with Sivakumar and Rose Francis,



Junior Researcher, who helped them identify various bird species.

The group also observed bird-trapping techniques, including a live demonstration of mist nets. Mr T. Elanchezhian, Forester, Vedaranyam Range, joined the training session, which provided a comprehensive field-based learning experience. ■

Visit of CASFoS Officer Trainees to BNHS Collections Department

On September 30, 2025, BNHS hosted 32 Officer Trainees and faculty member Ms Anisha Kalkoor, IFS, from the Central Academy for State Forest Service (CASFoS). The visit introduced future Assistant Conservators of Forests to the significance of natural history collections in biodiversity conservation, policy, and management.

The programme began with a welcome address by Mr Kishor Rithe, Director, BNHS, followed by an overview of BNHS's 142-year legacy by Ms Pooja Patil, Field Zoologist. Trainees viewed rare mammal specimens with Mr Vinod Patil, Junior Zoological Assistant, and attended thematic sessions by BNHS scientists. Ms Parveen Shaikh shared insights on Indian skimmer conservation, Dr Sathiyaselvam, Deputy Director, highlighted India's role in the Central Asian Flyway, and Mr Vithoba Hegde showcased endemic bird specimens. Mr Sandesh Kadam also introduced opportunities for BNHS membership.

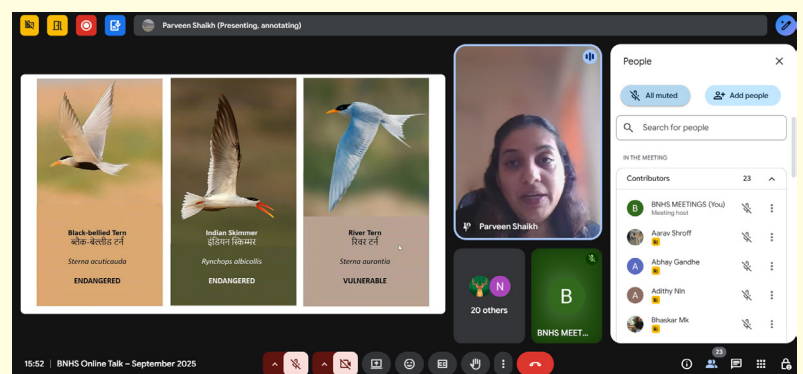


The visit concluded with an interactive discussion, closing remarks from the Director, and a tour of the Central Marketing Department's souvenir section. Trainees expressed appreciation for the exposure, noting the collections' role in advancing research and conservation action. ■

BNHS Online Monthly Talk – Indian Skimmer

On 14, September 2025, BNHS hosted an insightful talk titled 'Beyond the Badlands – Community-led Conservation of the Indian skimmer on the Chambal River' by Ms Parveen Shaikh, Scientist D, Riverine Bird Conservation Programme.

The session shed light on the fragile status of the endangered Indian Skimmer *Rynchops albicollis*, its distribution, behaviour, and breeding ecology, as well as the growing threats to its habitats. Drawing on years of fieldwork along the Chambal River, Ms Shaikh highlighted the importance of this stretch as a critical refuge for the species. She also shared the success of community-led conservation initiatives, where local participation has safeguarded nesting sites and created safer breeding conditions.



Participants gained a rare glimpse into the life of this charismatic bird and the challenges of riverine conservation, while discussions highlighted the vital role of citizen involvement in ensuring its survival. This initiative continues to connect BNHS members, experts, and nature enthusiasts, fostering collective action for conservation. ■

BNHS–CEC Mumbai Flora Documentation Programme

BNHS CEC–Mumbai, in collaboration with the Blatter Herbarium and the Department of Botany at St. Xavier's College, has launched a joint initiative to document the flora of the BNHS–CEC Nature Reserve at Goregaon. The project aims to create a comprehensive record of plant diversity within the Reserve, supporting both research and conservation while offering students and researchers valuable hands-on learning opportunities.

As part of this programme, a Herbarium Training Workshop was organized at the Blatter Herbarium on September 8, 2025, where participants received practical training in scientific plant collection, pressing, preservation, and documentation techniques. Guided by experts, students from St. Xavier's College gained insights into best practices for maintaining herbarium specimens and their importance for research, taxonomy, and biodiversity conservation.

The workshop not only built technical skills, but also deepened participants' appreciation of herbarium collections as vital repositories of botanical knowledge. ■



Youth Clean-up Drive with JBCN International School

On September 13, 2025 around 50 Class XI students from JBCN International School, Parel partnered with BNHS-CEC for a forest clean-up, reducing waste and raising youth awareness on urban biodiversity. Led by Ayaan Sham from the school's Ecospire group, in collaboration with the Climate Action Project, over 40 participants collected 100 kg of non-biodegradable waste, including plastic bottles, wrappers, cans, and glass. The clean-up areas included the Temple Trail, Temple Trail Road, and the CEC entrance.

While working, students encountered diverse plants, insects, reptiles, and mammals, deepening their appreciation for Mumbai's hidden biodiversity. All collected waste was transferred to 5RCYCLE Foundation for segregation and recycling. ■



First-Ever Overnight Spider Camp at BNHS Reserve, Mumbai

September 1, 2025: The BNHS Conservation Education Centre (CEC), Mumbai, organised its first-ever overnight camp dedicated to spider diversity. Twelve participants, the majority of them women, joined the session led by naturalist and arachnologist Pranav Joshi, assisted by naturalists Bhushan Jadhav and Shardul Bajikar (Education Officer, BNHS).

Activities such as pitfall trapping and bush beating allowed participants to temporarily capture and study species that are otherwise difficult to observe. The night trail was a highlight, offering close encounters with spiders and other arachnids in their natural habitat. The following morning, the group returned to the forest to document additional species. The camp provided a rare opportunity to engage with these often-overlooked creatures, highlighting their ecological importance. ■



Leopard Trail Walk



September 07, 2025: The BNHS Nature Reserve, a 33-acre forest near Film City, Goregaon, gifted to BNHS in 1983, hosted a special Leopard Trail walk. Participants admired monsoon flora such as Commelina and Pin Cushion Flower, as well as fauna including the Owl Moth. The walk also highlighted the role of BNHS-CEC, active since 1993, in fostering environmental awareness through trails, workshops, and courses, reaffirming BNHS's commitment to conservation education. ■

CSR Nature Trail for BNP Paribas



September 11, 2025: As part of its CSR initiatives, BNP Paribas partnered with BNHS-CEC for a guided nature trail. Led by Ms Priyadarshini Supekar and Mr Dilip Giri, the session encouraged employees to explore native flora and fauna while learning about ecological relationships and sustainable practices. The trail fostered awareness of conservation in urban spaces and inspired participants to integrate eco-friendly practices into their daily lives. ■

Monsoon Nature Walk at Shilonda Trail



September 14, 2025: Eleven participants joined BNHS naturalists Shardul Bajikar and Bhushan Jadhav for a monsoon nature walk along the Shilonda Trail in Sanjay Gandhi National Park. Highlights included sightings of a sun-basking blue mormon butterfly and a chorus of bird activity featuring woodpeckers, red-rumped shama, common hawk-cuckoo, Tickell's blue flycatcher, jungle owlet, and puff-throated babbler. Participants also enjoyed walking across crystal-clear forest streams, soaking in the serenity of the monsoon forest. ■

St. Xavier's College Students Visit CEC-Mumbai

September 14 2025: BNHS-Conservation Education Centre (CEC), Mumbai, hosted students from St. Xavier's College, Mumbai, as part of their Extra-Curricular (ECC) programme. The full-day session, blended lectures, field observations, and interactive activities. Dr Rajendra Shinde, eminent botanist and former Principal of St. Xavier's College, delivered technical sessions on biodiversity and conservation strategies. Students explored the CEC campus, observing flora and fauna while applying ecological concepts in the field. The visit strengthened academic linkages and inspired students to engage with nature, reinforcing BNHS-CEC's commitment to fostering youth participation in conservation. ■



MIT Pune Students visit CEC-Mumbai

September 19, 2025: The BNHS-CEC, Mumbai, welcomed a group of 49 participants from MIT Pune, including 39 students, for a day of experiential learning in biodiversity and conservation. The visit began with an interactive guided trail through the CEC campus, led by naturalists Unmesh Paranjape, Gaurang Tawade, Hrushikesh Ghogare, and Priya Gupte, who introduced the students to the rich flora and fauna of the area. Discussions highlighted key ecological concepts, conservation challenges, and the importance of sustainable practices.

The programme formed part of the ongoing collaboration between BNHS and MIT Pune, designed to promote environmental education, research, and experiential learning. The visit was coordinated by Ms Aqsa Majgaonkar, Senior Education Officer and CEC In-Charge, ensuring a smooth and enriching experience. ■



Overnight Insect Diversity Camp

September 20–21, 2025: The BNHS–CEC hosted an overnight camp dedicated to insect biodiversity, with 16 participants, including school and college students. The camp was led by Shardul Bajikar with support from naturalists Bhushan Jadhav, Meehir Pawar (trained entomologist), and Gaurang Tawde.

Participants documented an impressive array of insects, including the rare Moon Moth, owl moths, praying mantises, long- and short-horned grasshoppers, dung beetles, long-horned beetles, click beetles, katydids, and bush crickets. Caterpillars of butterflies and moths were also recorded. Unexpected sightings included a fungoid frog and a wolf snake, adding excitement to the experience. The highlight for many was viewing a 25-million-year-old fly fossil preserved in Burmese amber. ■



Special Nature Trail for Children and Parents

September 21, 2025: BNHS–CEC organised a family-friendly nature trail for children and parents at the BNHS Nature Reserve. The event featured forest storytelling, birdwatching, and exploration activities, encouraging intergenerational learning in the outdoors. Designed to foster curiosity and environmental stewardship, the programme emphasised the role of families in nurturing eco-conscious values. ■



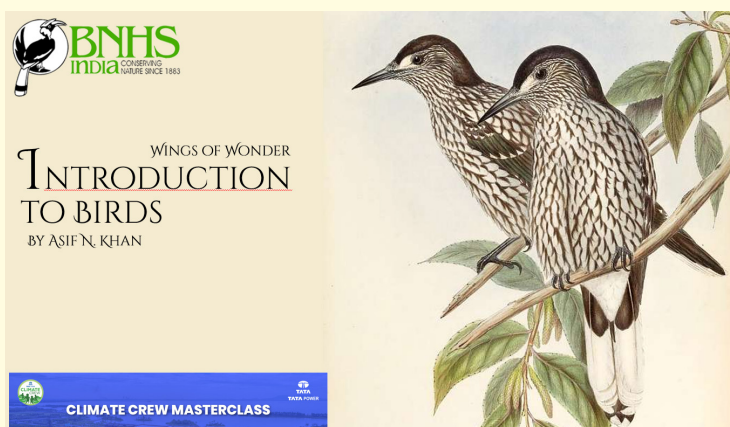
Field Visit – Sane Guruji English Medium School

September 24, 2025: BNHS–CEC hosted 139 students and 8 teachers from Sane Guruji English Medium School, Dadar, for an immersive field visit. The session, led by Ms Priyadarshini Supekar, included an introduction to BNHS, a guided nature trail, and an engaging presentation on biodiversity, conservation practices, and ecological interdependence. Documentaries added depth to classroom concepts, making the visit both educational and inspiring. ■



Tata Power Climate Crew Masterclass

September 25, 2025: BNHS conducted a session for corporate member Tata Power, as part of its Climate Crew Masterclass series. Led by Asif Khan, the talk, 'Wings of Wonder: Exploring the World of Birds', introduced participants to bird diversity, the joys of birdwatching, and the role of birds in ecosystems. Through engaging visuals and storytelling, the session connected bird observation with broader themes of conservation and sustainability. ■



Field Visit – Trillium Montessori School



September 26, 2025: Students from Trillium Montessori School participated in an engaging field visit focused on insect diversity and metamorphosis. Guided by Mr Gaurang Tawde, Naturalist, participants observed butterflies, grasshoppers, praying mantises, and colourful bugs, learning about their life cycles and ecological roles. A documentary session on butterfly metamorphosis, conducted by Ms Priyadarshini Supekar, reinforced field observations with scientific insights. ■

Cathedral & John Connon School Nature Club Visit



September 27, 2025: Members of the Cathedral and John Connon Senior School Nature Club visited BNHS-CEC to study insect diversity. Naturalists Gaurang Tawde and Meehir Pawar led a guided trail and interactive slideshow on insect ecology. The students displayed great curiosity and enthusiasm, while teachers expressed appreciation for the educational and engaging experience. ■

School Awareness Session – BEP Society High School



September 26, 2025: BNHS-EIACP organised an interactive awareness session at BEP Society High School on the theme 'Birds Around Us'. Conducted by Mr Nandkishor Dudhe (Senior Programme Officer, BNHS-EIACP), the programme engaged 83 students from Classes 5 to 9 in Q&A rounds, with winners receiving copies of Buceros, BNHS's newsletter. Knowledge materials were handed over to the headmaster at the close of the session. The event, supported by Mr Niraj Patel and Mr Yogesh Dhamnaskar, successfully combined education with fun. ■

BNHS Hosts Seminar on Native Plantation at Kihim School, Raigad

The BNHS conducted an Environmental Education Seminar on 'Native Plantation and Plantation Techniques' at Lokmanya Shikshan Prasarak Mandal's Shree S. M. Vadake High School, Kihim. Led by Mr Rohan Chavan, Project Associate, BNHS, the seminar engaged over 150 students, six teachers, and Vice Principal Mrs Namrata Mhatre. The interactive session underscored the role of native plantations in conserving biodiversity and maintaining ecological balance. To further inspire students, BNHS distributed the Buceros newsletter and informative posters, fostering awareness of flora, fauna, and sustainable practices. ■



Corporate Trail with Nuvama Group

September 27, 2025: BNHS–CEC welcomed over 70 associates from the Nuvama Group (formerly Edelweiss Wealth Management) for a rainy-season nature trail. Despite heavy downpours, participants trekked enthusiastically through the forest, guided by BNHS naturalists. Although bird and animal activity was subdued due to rain, participants enjoyed the immersive experience of wading through gushing streams and expressed surprise and delight at the existence of such a biodiverse reserve within Mumbai. ■



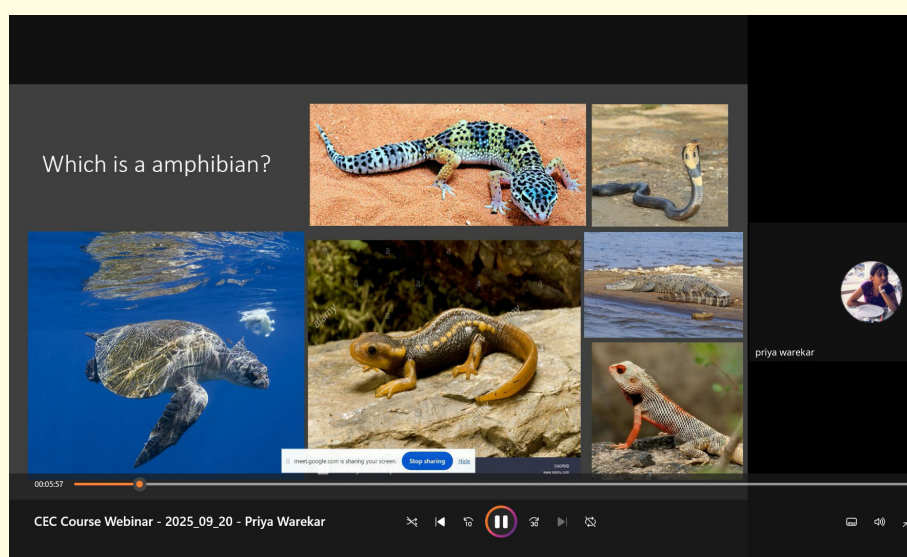
Wrap-up Session for Online Hybrid Courses

September 13, 2025: BNHS–CEC conducted the wrap-up session for its online-hybrid courses: the Leadership Course in Biodiversity Conservation (LeadBio) and the Basic Course in Ornithology (Ornitho). Led by Ms Priyadarshini Supekar, Education Officer, the day began with a warm welcome followed by a refreshing nature trail in the BNHS Nature Reserve, guided by Mr Hrishikesh Ghogare, Naturalist. Participants then presented their observations and course learnings, revisiting key concepts through interactive discussions, reflections, and feedback. The session served both as a celebration of accomplishments and a platform to plan for continued engagement in conservation initiatives. ■



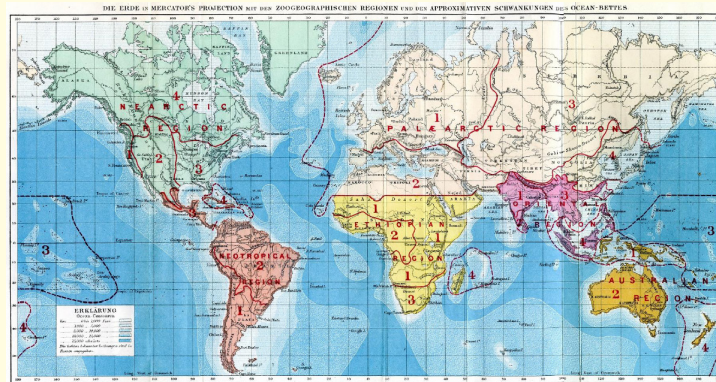
Webinar for LeadBio and Herpetology Courses

September 20, 2025: BNHS–CEC hosted an online webinar for participants of the Leadership Course in Biodiversity Conservation (LeadBio) and the Basic Course in Herpetology (Herp). Opened by Ms Priyadarshini Supekar, the session featured Ms Priya Warekar, wildlife researcher and conservationist, who spoke on amphibians, their characteristics, diversity in India, and distinctions between frogs and toads. The webinar fostered interdisciplinary learning, linking leadership in biodiversity with herpetofauna studies. ■



Webinar for Ornithology and LeadBio Courses

September 27, 2025: BNHS–CEC hosted a joint webinar for participants of the Basic Course in Ornithology and the Leadership Course in Biodiversity Conservation (LeadBio). The session was led by Mr Asif Khan, Programmes Department, BNHS, who discussed India's biogeographic zones, their ecological significance, and role in supporting biodiversity. The webinar consolidated participant learning and highlighted the value of expert-led virtual sessions in expanding conservation knowledge. ■



BIOGEOGRAPHY OF INDIAN BIRDS

BY ASIF N. KHAN



World Ozone Day Exhibitions with Axis Bank Foundation

To mark World Ozone Day, Axis Bank Foundation organised exhibitions at their offices in Airoli, Ghansoli, and Worli on September 9, 10, and 16, 2025. The BNHS Marketing Department set up a stall to showcase and promote BNHS activities, publications, and merchandise. The exhibitions provided an excellent platform to engage with nearly 1,000–1,200 Axis Bank employees, raising awareness about BNHS's conservation initiatives while fostering wider outreach and visibility. ■



Bird Count at Sanjay Gandhi National Park

The September Bird Count at Sanjay Gandhi National Park (SGNP) was successfully conducted on September 28, 2025, with the participation of over 35 BNHS members and volunteers. BNHS launched the 'SGNP Bird Monitoring Programme', also known as the SGNP Bird Count, in February 2021 to monitor avian diversity in SGNP and Tungreshwar Wildlife Sanctuary through citizen science. Since then, monthly counts have been carried out across different locations in collaboration with the Forest Department, BNHS members, birdwatchers, and volunteers. Those interested in joining future counts can visit www.bnhs.org or email programmes@bnhs.org. ■



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Get in touch

Asif Khan: 98195 70758 | Sandesh Kadam: 9930 150531
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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.

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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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