



Members Matter: Working Together for Wildlife Wildlife Week Celebrated

2nd - 8th October, 2016

Report by

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National Wildlife Week is celebrated all over the country in the month of October from 2nd to 8th October every year with the view to preserve faunal population. It was first started in the year 1952 with the great vision of saving the life of the Indian animals by taking some critical steps. Similarly, the Wildlife Week is celebrated in Sikkim annually.

The theme for 2016 **"Members Matter: Working Together for Wildlife"** focused on the contributions that individuals, schools, and communities could make for the wildlife in their own areas and across the nation.

On the occasion, East Wildlife Division organized awareness programmes and various activities on the 7th of October 2016 at Government Secondary School, Phadamchen. The school is situated close to the Pangolakha Wildlife Sanctuary in East District.

The major aim of the programme was to generate awareness amongst the young people about the floral and faunal biodiversity of the area. A bird watching activity was organized in Phadamchen as the place is well known for its avifaunal population. The bird watching activity started at 9:00 am and the team was led by Mr. Dibyendu Ash, Going Wild (West Bengal) who is a frequent bird watcher in the area. The main objective of the activity was to encourage empathy towards the birds and to make the students aware about the avifaunal population around them. The students were taught about various bird watching techniques by Mr. Dibyendu Ash during their one hour walk around their village. The students recorded around 25 species of birds in the area.

Other activity conducted during the Wildlife Week celebration was painting competition wherein the theme was Wildlife and nature. The painting competition was followed by a talk on Pangolakha Wildlife Sanctuary and the need to carry out conservation activities through students. The classroom session was followed with the talk which included a presentation by Ms. Karma Choden, ACF (Wildlife North) on biodiversity of the state and inscription of

Khangchendzonga National Park as World Heritage site. During the session, the students and teachers were sensitized through a documentary film on Sikkim. The classroom session included open quiz. There was active participation by the students and the teachers.

The Headmaster of Phadamchen Secondary School spoke about the importance of wildlife conservation and encouraged students to take active part in environmental activities. The programme was followed by prize distribution for painting competition. Lastly, the programme ended with vote of thanks by Mr. Krishna Chandra Dahal, BO (FWLS).





Similarly, North Wildlife Division celebrated the Wildlife Week 2016 (2nd - 8th October) in North Sikkim Academy, Mangan. The celebration involved a series of activities like presentation, quiz, painting competition, essay writing and filming of documentary.

The day witnessed large and enthusiastic participation of Principal Mr. Namgyal Kazi, teachers and students of North Sikkim Academy and Forest officials, DFO Mr. Sunil Kumar; ACF/WL/North, Miss Karma Choden Bhutia; ACF, Pangolakha, Mrs. Dichen Namdul; RO Shingba, Mr. Karma Gelay Lachungpa and field staffs.

Presentation on "Biodiversity of Sikkim, Conservation and KNP UNESCO World Heritage Site" was presented by ACF, W/L, North and "Green School" by ACF, Pangolakha. Quiz was conducted along with the presentation. Painting competition and Essay competition were based on the theme "Wildlife and Nature Conservation".

Also, filming of documentary film "Pokchi" was carried out. The winners of the quiz and painting competition were awarded a certificate and a prize. The winners of the essay competition were made to read out their essays. Likewise booklet named "Natures Marvel" and Rhododendron charts were distributed to all by the Division. As a gesture, the Division gifted two guitars to the School. The intent of the celebration was to reach out to the students spreading the important message of wildlife conservation and concept of Green School. This was the first Wildlife Week celebration programme in North Sikkim Academy.



DISCOVER *Kitam* !

Greater Rangit Ecotourism Festival

9-11 December, 2016

Kitam, a serene place in South Sikkim dotted by village settlements, forests, rivers and rural life is identified as one of the 11 ecotourism zones in Sikkim. Kitam ecotourism zone also covers the 4 sq km Kitam Bird Sanctuary which is considered to be an inimitable forest for the intermixed presence of Sal and Chir-pine forests and rich bird life.

'The Greater Rangit Ecotourism Festival – Discover Kitam', the first of its kind festival in Kitam, South Sikkim was organized by the Directorate of Ecotourism from 9th to 11th December, 2016. Major attractions during the festival were;

- River side camping
- Canopy walk
- Trekking
- Bird watching
- Homestay experience
- Local ethnic cuisines
- Kishan mela
- Cultural programmes

The festival was inaugurated by the Forests Minister Shri T. W. Lepcha and was participated by other political dignitaries like Tourism Minister Shri Ugen T. Gyatso Bhutia, Social Welfare Minister Smt. Tulsi Devi Rai during the valedictory functions who greatly promoted Kitam towards ecotourism potential as a mainstay industry of the rural populace of Kitam.

Introducing Kitam as one of the ecotourism hotspots in the State, the festival was organized with the focus to generate income and employment through community based ventures that satisfy both conservation and development objectives which help in promoting the Himalayan way of life. Under the ecotourism component of the Sikkim Biodiversity Conservation and Forest Management Project, MAYUR KITAM EDC has been identified as the focal unit for ecotourism development in the Kitam ecotourism zone.