



सत्यमेव जयते



# **Wetland; New; Monitor**

**May - June 2016**

## **TRENDING TOPICS IN THIS ISSUE:**

- 1. Reports on Wetland Birds**
- 2. Brief News on Coral Reef**
- 3. Report on Seizing Coral Rocks**
- 4. Report on Fishes**
- 5. Brief News on Dolphin**
- 6. Report on Crocodiles**
- 7. Brief News on Olive Ridley Turtles**
- 8. News on Smooth-coated Otter**
- 9. Report on Dancing Deer**
- 10. Brief News on Rhino Poaching**
- 11. Report on World Environment Day**
- 12. Wetland Restoration**
- 13. News on Wetland Pollution**
- 14. General Wetland News**

*News brief on Wetland Birds, Coral reefs, Fishes, Dolphin, Crocodiles, Olive Ridley Turtles, Smooth-coated Otter, Dancing Deer, Rhino poaching, World Environmental Day, Wetland restoration, Pollution*



## Reports on Wetland Birds

This is the first country-wide citizen science activity on this scale on natural history in India. A quarter century of ornithological observations of wetland birds of Kerala come with a mixed bag of joy and despair for birders. At a time when the wetlands of the State are facing multi-pronged threats, the population of a few bird species has been found soaring whereas some others have nose-dived in the population chart. Researchers focused their attention on the data generated from the four Ramsar sites of the State - Sasthamkotta Lake, Ashtamudi Lake, Vembanad Lake and Kole Wetlands - and also the other important wetland habitats to get a bird's eye view of the population trends of wetland avian fauna.

The brightly coloured purple swamphen is one species that have thrived amidst widespread destruction of its habitats. Its population trend analysis demonstrated that the species has increased in Kerala during the last decade. Ornithologists arrived at the conclusion after evaluating the bird data picked up from the Asian Water bird Census (AWC) held between 1987 and 2014. The annual census, coordinated by Wetlands International, also happens to be the first country-wide citizen science activity on natural history in India. An influx of Eurasian coot, which was an added to the list of Kerala birds during the late 1980s, has been reported in the State during winter season, noted P.O. Nameer of Kerala Agricultural University, the lead author of the population assessment paper.

The painted stork, earlier evaluated as a vagrant visitor to wetlands of Malabar and south Kerala has spread beyond the region they are generally found predicted ornithologists, after taking into account the reports of its sightings in other parts of the State. The population of Asian Openbill, extremely rare during the 1970s, has remarkably increased since 2001, with at least four census reporting the presence of more than 3,000 birds. So is the case of Eurasian spoonbill as there have been several reports of sighting of large flocks from Kole Wetlands, Vembanad Lake and Kuttanad Wetlands. Same is the case with blackheaded Ibis. Indian spotbilled duck, glossy ibis, oriental darter, Asian woollyneck and spotbilled pelican recorded increased presence whereas the population of the river terns and cormorants remained stable. But the bird group of terns underwent a steady decline over the years. From the nearly 30,000-strong population in 1993-94, it had plummeted to just near 10,000 in the last decade. The loss of estuarine habitat



like Purathur in Malappuram district and disturbances in other estuaries might have contributed to this decline. The decline was evident in the relatively stable sites such as Kole Wetlands, rued the ornithologists.

The population of whiskered tern, which form the major chunk of the population of the terns in the State, too has fallen significantly. Gulls too painted a gloomy picture as they were sighted in lesser number during the past few censuses. The BirdLife International has recorded that 11 water bird species of Kerala come under the IUCN Red list threatened categories with the black bellied tern being one of the 'Endangered' waterbird species in Kerala. The only report of black bellied tern during AWC was from the Kole Wetlands. Great knot, a 'vulnerable,' trans-continental migrant, has been reported from four sites whereas the Asian woolly neck stork (another vulnerable species), has been reported from 44 wetlands across the State.

Demographic pressure, industrial development, pollution, urbanisation, agriculture and aquaculture and water transport have been adding pressure on the wetlands of the State. Reclamation of wetlands and the aquatic ecosystems, which are often considered as wastelands, is spelling trouble to several taxa. The stake nets used for fishing removes a wide array of non-target organisms, which are functionally important to the aquatic environment. Destructive fishing practice are also taking a toll on the bird population, it was reported. Unregulated fishing, reclamation of wetlands, dumping of solid waste and domestic sewage too posed threats to the wetlands of Kerala, according to ornithologists.

Migratory birds, which had thronged Chilika during the winter, continue to be there despite the May heat. Species like greater flamingo, spot-billed pelicans, painted storks, spoonbill and black-headed ibis were sighted in the lake during the summer count of birds conducted by the Chilka Wildlife Division. As many as 41,569 birds of 113 species were found in the lake. Divisional forest officer, Chilka Wildlife Division, Bikash Ranjan Das stated that out of, 31,195 and 10,374 are water fowls and resident birds respectively. Most of the birds were found in the 15.59-sqkm Nalabana bird sanctuary.



सत्यमेव जयते



## Source:

- <http://www.thehindu.com/todays-paper/tp-features/tp-sci-tech-and-agri/asian-waterbird-census-data-causes-mixed-feelings/article8602946.ece>
- <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/home/environment/flora-fauna/Birds-defy-heatwave-stay-put-in-Chilika/articleshow/52383662.cms>

## Brief News on Coral Reef

Thai Marine officials reported that three islands off Phuket in south Thailand were closed to tourists to protect endangered coral reefs. Xinhua news agency reported that the tiny islands off Phuket's east coast, namely Koh Khai Nai, Khai Nok and Khai Nui, were shut down with all facilities and structures used for tourist activities since about 80 per cent of coral reefs in the area have been destroyed. Department of marine and coastal resources (DMCR) pointed out that the islands usher in at least 60 speedboats per day. More and more restaurants and shops settle down in the wake of the arrival of an increasing number of tourists, who often spend at least three hours feeding fish and snorkeling.

## Source:

- <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/home/environment/flora-fauna/Three-islands-shut-down-to-save-coral-reef-in-Thailand/articleshow/52445368.cms>

## Report on Seizing Coral Rocks

The Forest Department personnel seized 364 kg of coral rocks, including 14 kg of live coral from an aquarium chain in the city. The seizure was during a raid that was jointly conducted by the Department and Wildlife Crime Control Bureau (WCCB), on a tip-off from S. Chandrasekar from Vanam Trust of India. The accused was identified as H. Shaji (39) of Thrissur district in Kerala who lives at Peelamedu in Coimbatore. He owned pet shops at Peelamedu and has



branches at R.S. Puram and Vadavalli. On the directions of District Forest Officer A. Periyasamy, the raid was conducted by three teams led by Forest Range Officers C. Dinesh Kumar and M. Senthil Kumar simultaneously at all the three branches. A major share of the seizure was from the shop at Peelamedu. Department sources after preliminary inquiries said that the man bought the corals from the grey market in Thoothukudi. Live corals cost four times more than the dead ones said and quoted the accused as saying that corals were used to create a sea bed like ambience in bungalows and cost Rs. 1.5 lakh to Rs. 2 lakh. Corals are Schedule I part IVA species. The accused was booked under section 9 of the Tamil Nadu Wildlife Protection Act, 1972, and remanded. The department plans to conduct a check at other aquariums in the city and asked those having corals (alive or dead) to hand these over to the department to avoid action on them.

**Source:**

- <http://www.thehindu.com/todays-paper/tp-national/tp-tamilnadu/364-kg-coral-rocks-seized-from-aquarium-in-coimbatore/article8698707.ece>

## **Report on Fishes**

The population of the golden mahseer, hunted for sport and food, is declining in rivers of Himachal Pradesh, prompting the fisheries department to begin an artificial propagation programme for its rehabilitation and conservation. A hatchery with an outlay of Rs 6 crore (\$900,000) has been set up at Machhial near Jogindernagar town in Mandi district to rear the mahseer, also known as the tiger of Indian rivers, to breed the fish and release its fingerlings into the wild.

Studies conducted by the fisheries department say the population of the golden mahseer is declining in the state due to various reasons, including construction of dams, barrages, pollution, indiscriminate fishing of brood and juvenile fish, introduction of exotic species and habitat deterioration. It has been declared endangered by the Washington-based International Union of Conservation of Natural Resources. The mahseer, the longest-living freshwater fish, is



native to mountain and sub-mountain regions. It belongs to the genus *Tor*. The Pong Dam reservoir, around 250km from state capital Shimla and 190km from Chandigarh, supports an ample population of the golden mahseer. It migrates upstream for spawning during the southwest floods. After spawning, it returns to the original feeding grounds. It is available at altitudes of up to 2,000 metres above sea level and is purely carnivorous. Himachal Pradesh is aptly called a storehouse of aquatic biodiversity. The state's water bodies are home to 85 fish species, including rohu, catla and mrigal and trout, both brown and rainbow. The fisheries department says the overall fish production in the state has increased by 9.2 percent in the last fiscal.

After successful efforts to conserve Narmada Mahseer, the state fish of Madhya Pradesh, by constructing an artificial flowing water repository in Barwah, the state forest department is all set to take its next step towards an *in-situ* conservation and rejuvenation of the endangered tor tor fish in tributaries of Denwa River within Satpura Tiger Reserve (STR).

Six species of Mahseer are found in India. Of these, tor-tor was common in rivers of MP, particularly Narmada. Population of mahseer has gone down alarmingly in the past two decades. Vipin Vyas, lecturer (Limnology) of Barkatullah University had also carried out an extensive documentation of aquatic biodiversity of major rivers in MP for suggesting their conservations. He had suggested *ex-situ* and *in-situ* conservation action points in accordance with National Biodiversity Action Plan and other related legislation and policies. He noted that this fish was sliding towards extinction in the Narmada river (Hoshangabad) and in Tapti (Barhanpur), where it was found in abundance a few years back. There were six seed collection sites reported around Hoshangabad from where seed of Mahseer was collected and transported throughout the country, but all vanished. State fisheries federation is also trying to set up new seed collection site at Dongerwada (Hoshangabad) in coordination with the local fisherman.

The state fisheries federation had been asking fishermen to release Mahseer fishes in natural process if they gets trapped in their nets or hooks. Construction of dams has caused breeding problem of these fishes. To create its gene pool, the bio-diversity board had also recommended declaring Bandrabhan, Sethani ghat, Omkerashwar and Maheshwer ghat of Narmada as biodiversity heritage spot under Section 37 of Biodiversity Act, 2002.



**Source:**

- <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/home/environment/flora-fauna/Saving-Mahseer-Forest-dept-set-for-in-situ-conservation-in-STR/articleshow/52138788.cms>

## **Brief News on Dolphin**

Assam's Guwahati became the first city in the country to have its own city animal with the district administration declaring the Gangetic river dolphin as the mascot. In a press conference, Kamrup metropolitan deputy commissioner M Angamuthu said that the animal, locally known as 'Sihu', would be the city animal of Guwahati. The district administration had organised online and offline voting among three protected creatures, which are on the verge of extinction, to decide the mascot. Along with Gangetic river dolphin, the other two animals were black softshell turtle (Bor Kaso) and greater adjutant stork (Hargila). While less than 2,000 Gangetic river dolphins remain in the Brahmaputra along Guwahati, a recent survey said only a small population of black softshell turtle were found in the river and its tributaries. The number of greater adjutant stork is less than 1,200 in and around Guwahati. The three-month-long voting process attracted 60,003 participants to decide the city animal and Gangetic river dolphin received 24,247 votes. The greater adjutant stork got 18,454 votes, and black softshell turtle was the choice of 17,302 people. In offline voting, 76 schools and colleges across Guwahati participated. Along with the Kamrup metropolitan district administration, other organisations such as Assam forest department, Assam state biodiversity board and an NGO Help Earth worked closely to decide the city animal.

**Source:**

- <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/home/environment/flora-fauna/Gangetic-river-dolphin-to-be-city-animal-of-Guwahati/articleshow/52623206.cms>



## Report on Crocodiles

Wildlife personnel in Bhitarkanika National Park, an internationally acclaimed wetland site in Odisha, have spotted 68 nesting sites of estuarine (saltwater) crocodiles even as the annual breeding ritual of these reptiles has reached its peak stage. While 66 nesting sites were spotted within the core area of Bhitarkanika National Park, two sites were found along Mahanadi deltaic region under Mahakalpada forest range outside the park territory. The nests were sighted by wildlife enumerators of the forest department along the innumerable nullahs, creeks and water inlets in the Bhitarkanika river system, an ideal habitat for saltwater crocodiles.

### Source:

- <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/home/environment/flora-fauna/68-nesting-sites-of-estuarine-crocodiles-spotted-in-Odisha-park/articleshow/52735307.cms>

## Brief News on Olive Ridley Turtles

The appearance of the turtles in our coast is a good environmental indicator. Exposure to a temperature of over 34 degree Celsius can be fatal to embryos. The *in-situ* conservation method has proved to be a boon for Olive Ridley turtles along the Andhra Pradesh coast. Sensing the wind direction and tides, the shelled reptile reaches the coast for its breeding season by the end of winter. The coast, therefore, is one of the areas where the turtles could be sighted in large number. Along the over 970-km coastline of the State, beaches such as Bhavanapadu, Kalingapatnam, Bheemunipatnam, Visakhapatnam, and Machilipatnam to Nellore are known to be safe nesting grounds as the eggs are conserved in rookeries. Marking the World Turtle Day on May 23, it is not an exaggeration to say that the *in-situ* method adopted by the Forest Department has contributed immensely to the conservation of the turtles. The role of local communities, including the Yanadi tribe, in the conservation efforts is laudable, given their direct role in the collection of eggs and ensuring their security until the hatchlings are released into the blue waters. The in situ method has yielded tremendous result at Rushikulya in Odisha. As a result, the place has turned into a tourism spot for sighting Olive Ridley turtles.





A juvenile turtle comes out of the sea to the beach.

Source: The Hindu Dt.: May 23, 2016

**Source:**

- <http://www.thehindu.com/todays-paper/tp-national/tp-andhrapradesh/in-situ-conservation-method-a-boon-for-olive-ridley-turtles/article8635357.ece>

## News on Smooth-coated Otter

Otters, which measure not more than three feet from head to tail, are making a comeback to Bengal. For environmentalists, however, the import is far greater than the size of the animal; its comeback indicates a revival of health of the Sunderbans, the world's largest mangrove forest

spanning two countries. The Otter was once very common in Bengal, finding its way into even rhymes about mothers "talking" to otters. And that has enthused environmentalists no end; for, they believe that comeback of the species is the surest indication of the mangroves regaining its health. This carnivorous and semi-aquatic mammal, considered threatened in the IUCN Red List, was feared to have gone extinct in the Indian Sunderbans in 2000. But 16 years down the line, a report by Dehradun-based Wildlife Institute of India (WII) has found that otters are more evenly distributed across the tiger reserve with area coverage of about 67% — a figure higher than that of estuarine crocodiles and water monitor lizards which score better over otters in terms of sighting. The study reveals that the otters were observed to have a higher relative abundance in the southern part of National Park East range.



Otters were feared to have gone extinct in the Indian Sunderbans in 2000

Source: The Times of India Dt.: June 05, 2016

Pradeep Vyas, state chief wildlife warden stated that the management plan for Sunderbans Tiger Reserve (STR) in 2000 says that otters, along with king cobras, have perhaps become extinct in Indian Sunderbans. But a year later in 2001, Vyas, as the field director of STR, had clicked a couple of otters during a routine patrol in Sajnekhali - the first reported



photographic evidence of otters in the Sunderbans. He added, it was the rediscovery of the species in Sunderbans and the WII report in 2016 about the distribution status of otters only points to an improved health of the Sunderbans ecosystem. According to Vyas, from 2000 onwards protection measures were strengthened in the Sunderbans with special focus on restricting illegal entries into the creeks.

**Source:**

- <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/home/environment/flora-fauna/Otters-return-gives-Sunderbans-a-chance/articleshow/52599340.cms>

## **Report on Dancing Deer**

The scientists of Wildlife Institute of India (WII), SA Hussain and Ruchi Badola have been assigned the task to provide second home to 110 Sangai, brow-antlered and one of the most endangered species under Centre's Endangered Species Recovery Project. Once distributed throughout much of Southeast Asia extending from Manipur in North eastern India to Indochina, it is now confined in small patches in Manipur (India) , Myanmar, Thailand, Cambodia, Lao Viet Nam and Southern China. The Sangai is now restricted to the Keibul Lamjao National Park (KLNP) in the Southeastern fringe of Loktak Lake in Manipur. Phumdis, floating vegetation occupy about two-third of the surface area of the lake. While walking on this floating biomass, Sangai often balances itself which looks as if it is dancing on the green grassland and therefore popularly called as "dancing deer" of Manipur. They feed, live and breed on this 9 km area of Phumdis.

Hussain stated that they are seeking ways to strengthen the Sangai population in the park which includes preservation and restoration of the habitat, reducing mortalities and advocating establishment of second population within Manipur. The Sangai use phumdis, hillocks and elevated strips of land along the lake and as the Park has lost its connectivity with the surrounding habitat the natural recolonization of the species is bleak. Around 36 densely



populated villages, their agricultural land and fish ponds have left no room for the Sangai to recolonize in the adjacent areas.

According to Badola, the habitat in the Park is deteriorating primarily because of the change in water regime due to construction of Itahi barrage. The phumdi, which used to settle during lean season and get replenished with soil and nourishment, are now continuously floating resulting in their thinning. Consequently, so they are unable to bear the weight of deer now. The shelter plants are stunted, mainly due to constant floating of phumdis making Sangai vulnerable to poaching. After the commissioning of the Loktak Hydro-Power Project in 1983, large agricultural areas at the lake periphery have been submerged which have changed the economic life of the people making them more dependent on the Park. Very little efforts have been made to mitigate the detrimental effects of the hydropower project on the park which could be disastrous in near future.

**Source:**

- <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/home/environment/flora-fauna/Wildlife-Institute-of-India-to-relocate-endangered-dancing-deer-of-Manipur/articleshow/52282276.cms>

## **Brief News on Rhino Poaching**

A male rhino carcass believed to have been poached was found at the Bhuyanpara range of Manas national park, about 175km from Guwahati. The horn was missing, confirming that the rhino was poached. This is the ninth rhino poached in Manas since 2011 when the park got back its UNESCO World Heritage Site status. Manas has 30-odd rhinos, majority of them trans located from Kaziranga National Park and Pobitora wildlife sanctuary as a part of restoring the rhino habitat in Manas. In the late 1980s Manas' 100 was killed and park infrastructure damaged by insurgents. This led World Heritage Committee to put Manas in danger list in 1992. In 2011 Manas got back World Heritage Site status for success conservation, and reintroduction of rhinos was one of the factors.



This is the ninth rhino poached in Manas

Source: The Times of India Dt.: May 06, 2016

**Source:**

- <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/home/environment/flora-fauna/Manas-lost-9th-rhino-to-poachers-in-15-years/articleshow/52156570.cms>

## Report on World Environment Day

Marking the World Environment Day, Prime Minister Narendra Modi asked the nation to take a pledge to collectively work towards conserving the environment resources, adding that the Earth should be kept clean and green. In a series of tweets, Prime Minister Modi said that this day was a commitment to protect the environment and live in harmony with the nature. In his 21<sup>st</sup> radio address 'Mann Ki Baat' on May 29, Prime Minister Modi called for protection of the environment and said conservation of water and forests were people's responsibility. He also said that this year, the UN decided the theme of the World Environment Day on June 5 would be the 'Zero Tolerance for Illegal Wildlife Trade'.



सत्यमेव जयते



## Source:

- <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/home/environment/global-warming/World-Environment-Day-PM-Modi-calls-on-nation-to-keep-Earth-clean-green/articleshow/52599175.cms>

## Wetland Restoration

Wetland restoration reestablishes or repairs the hydrology, plants and soils of a former or degraded wetland that has been drained, farmed or otherwise modified since European settlement. The goal is to closely approximate the original wetland's natural condition, resulting in multiple environmental benefits.

Lake conservation in Mysuru has gone hi-tech with an expert team from Canada came forward to help restore Dalvoy lake, which was once an important water source, located on the National Highway 212 on the outskirts of the city. The lake, spread across 144 acres, is one of the biggest waterbodies, which had been contaminated due to the release of untreated sewage into it. As the district administration in Mysuru has taken up the cause of conserving waterbodies teaming up with the urban local bodies, the Canadian team is expected to come up with a strategy to help cleanse the lake and use the water for irrigation and other purposes. Both treated and untreated sewage from a nearby sewage treatment plant gets mixed with the lake water. Accompanied by Mysuru district in-charge secretary Kamble, the eight-member team from Canada comprising a membrane technology expert, a biofuel expert and an electromechanical engineer, inspected the lake and collected data from the officials. Deputy Commissioner C. Shikha and other officials were present. Ms. Shikha said that water samples from Dalvoy lake and sewage samples from the STP had been collected and taken along by them for studies. The team is expected to come up with its strategy for Dalvoy lake. Thereafter, the plans on the fate of the lake will be finalised. She added that the team had been approached to suggest measures for generating biofuel from the solid wastes generated and dumped at the STP.



Two days after a massive fish kill in Ulsoor Lake, the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) began cleaning up the lake. B.E. Satish, chief engineer (lakes), BBMP said that they have begun taking out the dead fish. Some of the likely causes of the fish kill include inflow of untreated sewage and garbage dumped into storm water drains being washed into the lake during rain. Another factor is that the Fisheries Department issues tenders for fish breeding. Kavitha Reddy of the Agara Lake Protection and Management Committee said that there are very irregular varieties of fish for ornamental purposes that are being bred here.

A research on fruit peels saving a lake were carried out by who students have come up with an innovative idea to alleviate two of the city's problems: disposal of organic waste and frothing of lakes due to pollution. Mohammad Athiq and Abhishek B., final year students of Sapthagiri College of Engineering, have created a filter using fruit peels that can reduce fluoride content in lake water by approximately 92.5 per cent. Their claim has been verified by the Central Water Testing Laboratory of the Bangalore Water Supply and Sewerage Board using samples from Bellandur lake. Mohammad stated that they have initially designed a filter to purify groundwater from Peenya Industrial Area a year ago using orange and watermelon peels.

After reading media reports about lake pollution and frothing due to high fluoride levels, they hit upon the idea of designing a filter to purify lake water. Since Bellandur Lake has high fluoride content, the students used sweet lime and pineapple peels, which have high affinity to fluoride ions. After the fruit peels are treated with a mild acid, they can be used in place of activated carbon for filtering. Mohammed said that when five to six litres of water is passed through the filter, it reduces all solutes from 537 mg/L to 64 mg/L (approximately 88 per cent). Fluoride content is reduced by approximately 92.5 per cent. Their prototype will utilise about 150 to 200 g of fruit peels to filter five to six litres of water. The students are confident that the process will work with all kinds of vegetable and fruit peels, which account for a major portion of organic waste in the city. Prashanth Kumar H.P., one of the professors who guided the team said that the college management has sought a detailed project report for presentation to the Ministry for Small Scale Industries.



Smart idea: Students of Sapthagiri College of Engineering demonstrating the filter that can reduce flouride content in lake water

Source: The Hindu Dt.: May 30, 2016

The city corporation plans to introduce activities involving the public at Singanallur Tank in an effort to bring down pollution of the water body, sprawling on 288 acres. Mayor P. Rajkumar launched a drive to remove plastic wastes from the tank's bund to mark World Environment Day. Mr. Rajkumar reported that subsequent to the cleanliness drive, trees will be planted on the tank's bund. On efforts to prevent pollution of the tank, he said that a private firm has come forward to establish a micro sewage treatment plant near the inlets. He also asked the officials to prevent dumping of construction debris along the tank's bund and into the water body. The drive to clear tonnes of plastic waste from the tank's bund was initiated by Coimbatore Corporation and NGOs such as Animal Rescuers, Agni Siragugal, Green Global Trust, 6<sup>th</sup> Sense Foundation and My India My Creation Youth Club.

Director (Community Education) at Animal Rescuers Vinny R. Peter, who is doing her Ph.D. on Singanallur Tank, said that the tank has a rich biodiversity with 686 species comprising



birds, insects, snakes and plants identified so far. But, the tank faces a serious threat in the form of plastic wastes among other wastes dumped into it on a large scale. The main sources of plastics entering the tank are through water inlets. About four truckloads of plastic wastes were collected during the drive.

Volunteers cleaned -300-acre Selvachinthamani Tank, off Perur Road. The group comprised volunteers from the Environmentalist Foundation of India (EFI) says Sanjay Prasad G., its Coimbatore City coordinator. The Foundation has been engaged in the cleaning operation for around two years. Students, businessmen, working professionals and other enthusiasts spend around three hours from 7 a.m., picking up waste, mostly inorganic plastic waste.



Environmentalist Foundation of India volunteers cleaning the Selvachinthamani Tank in the city

Source: The Hindu Dt.: June 13, 2016

The volunteers gather the plastic waste, take it to a nearby bin from where the Coimbatore Corporation collects the waste to be taken to the Vellalore dump yard for processing. Most of the waste is plastic carry bags, sachets or plastic used to wrap food. Their objective is to clean as much as possible before the inflow of rainwater into the tank and work with the Coimbatore Corporation to arrest the flow of sewage.

Bengaluru city's dying lakes now have a new ray of hope as five corporate firms have come forward to fund the rejuvenation of five lakes. The newly formed Karnataka Lake

Conservation and Development Authority (KLCDA), which in its earlier avatar as the Lake Development Authority (LDA) landed in a soup for leasing out four lakes in the city, repitched for contributions from the corporate sector to conserve and rejuvenate lakes. In response, five firms namely, Biocon Ltd., Wipro Ltd, the UB Group, Mphasis India, and Sensara Engineering signed the Expression of Interest (EoI) with KLCDA. KLCDA's chief executive officer Ajay Misra said the authority would now work with corporate companies and the civic agencies to draw up detailed project reports (DPRs) for works to be taken up in the lakes. However, commercial activity, advertisements and charging any entry fee were prohibited.



The lake behind Biocon Campus at Buddha Nagar, Hebbagodi, in Bengaluru

Source: The Hindu Dt.: June 14, 2016

**Source:**

- <http://www.thehindu.com/todays-paper/tp-national/tp-karnataka/a-helping-hand-from-canada-to-restore-dalvoy-lake/article8572354.ece>
- <http://www.thehindu.com/todays-paper/tp-national/tp-karnataka/following-fish-kill-bbmp-cleaning-lake/article8587413.ece>



- <http://www.thehindu.com/todays-paper/tp-national/tp-tamilnadu/dont-discard-fruit-peels-they-could-save-a-lake/article8664953.ece>
- <http://www.thehindu.com/todays-paper/tp-national/tp-tamilnadu/public-to-be-roped-in-to-protect-singanallur-tank/article8695161.ece>
- <http://www.thehindu.com/todays-paper/tp-national/tp-tamilnadu/volunteers-clean-selvachinthamani-tank/article8722693.ece>
- <http://www.thehindu.com/todays-paper/tp-national/now-corporates-pitch-in-for-bengaluru-lakes/article8725651.ece>

## News on Wetland Pollution

Dehradun has ranked 31<sup>st</sup> in the recently released list of most polluted cities of the world. Although the city's rankings have improved (it was on the 29<sup>th</sup> slot last year), town planners, civic officials and NGOs say that much more needs to be done to minimize pollution in the Doon valley, which is increasingly facing health hazards due to rapid pollution. Elaborating on the reasons for this ranking, Mayor Vinod Chamoli reported that global warming has become a worldwide phenomenon now and with the increasing population as well as vehicles, this was bound to happen. Another factor which features majorly is uncontrolled and unplanned development because of which we have lost out on a lot of greenery which has had an overall negative impact on our environment.

The list released by WHO on May 12, 2016 is based on how much fine particulate matter (PM 2.5) they have in the air and Dehradun's PM count is beyond 100. These pollutants pose health risks like eye, nose, throat and lung irritation. Also they can elevate the risk for lung and heart ailments over long period of exposure. These small particles are typically found in exhaust fumes from cars, trucks, buses and other vehicles, though they can also come from natural sources such as forest and grass fires.

In the recent list of the most polluted cities there are 10 Indian cities which feature in the top 20 and the data on which this ranking is based was majorly collected between the years 2012 to 2014. Raj Kanwar, member of Citizens Action Group (CAG) and a resident of Doon for last



सत्यमेव जयते



70 years blames loss of greenery for this ranking. S S Rana, regional officer, Pollution Control Board, however feels that the geographical condition of the city also increases the pollution level and said that the city is surrounded by hills and the fine particles do not escape out of the city. They are caught in a loop. Also the increase in construction and poor maintenance also contribute in increasing the pollutants. WHO has taken 3000 cities of 103 countries into consideration for making this list.

**Source:**

- <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/home/environment/flora-fauna/Dehradun-ranks-31st-in-the-list-of-most-polluted-cities-of-the-world/articleshow/52257955.cms>

## General Wetland News

Andhra Pradesh state's second largest fresh water lake Kondakarla Ava is an area of rich aquatic biodiversity with lotus plants, fish and hundreds of species of resident avifauna and migratory birds . Located around 50 kilometres from port city, near Anakapalle, this scenic lake amidst small hills, attracts picnickers, bird watchers and nature lovers round the year as the lake retains water even in peak summer. But owing to environmental degradation, reduction in fish catch, lotus growth and most significantly, depletion in bird census has been observed in recent years. Domestic sewage, pesticide laden surface run off from surrounding agro fields and extensive growth of weeds and reeds have been largely responsible for it. Research scholars from the Andhra University's Environment Science (EVS) department, who have conducted bird census between 2014 and 2016 and have also studied the biodiversity of the area, point to the depletion.

Researcher from EVS department of AU Aparna Surampudi said that in their case study from 2014 to 2016, it was found that the migratory birds have decreased probably due to changes in the lake environment and climatic conditions. In 2014, the number was 2,594, in 2015 it was 1,756 and so far in 2016 it's only 459. The yearly census of birds like the common Shell Ducks, Cotton Teals, Northern Pin Tails and also Asian Open Bills and Painted Storks has also gone down. The place used to be a habitat for more than 136 species of winged visitors (both water



birds and migratory birds) and also around 25 varieties of fish. Besides the birds, natural lotus cultivation also takes place in the lake. *Typha aungustata*, *Ipomoea fistula*, *Nymphoides indicum*, *Azolia filiculoides*, *Lemna acuinocentralis*, *Utricularia aureo*, *Pistia stratiotes*, *Hydrilla verticillata* plants are more dominant species in the lake.

**Source:**

- <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/home/environment/flora-fauna/Aquatic-flora-fauna-depleting-in-Kondakarla-Ava-lake/articleshow/52455060.cms>