

Education report

Wildlife Workshop, Photography Exhibition and Talk at Sundarvan

Sundarvan, a mini zoo authorized by Central Zoo Authority (CZA) is an activity of Centre for Environment Education (CEE) doing various activities for different age groups to create awareness on wildlife conservation. In 2015, Sundarvan started the first workshop of many in the series, which focused on lesser charismatic species. As a part of this, on 26th June 2016, Sundarvan organised the



David Raju talks to visitors during the Exhibition

fourth workshop on "Odonates: Explore the Amazing World of Dragonflies and Damselflies", conducted by naturalist and photographer, David Raju. Coming all the way from Kerala, David added to the charm of Sundarvan and impressed the participants with his stories and experiences. The one day workshop included an introduction to Odonates as delicate looking but ferocious hunters, fascinating facts on migration, bio mimicry etc, ecological value, threat and conservation. An outdoor component was added with a field visit to Thol Bird Sanctuary and nearby wetland to give participants an idea about habitat and basic identification. Tips on insect photography were also discussed while encouraging participants to upload their pictures on Facebook page (Dragonflies of Gujarat) as their contribution to citizen science and to get help in identification.

A week long photography exhibition was held on Dragonflies and Damselflies of India. Spectacular photographs clicked by David from all over India were displayed which showcased not only beauty but also behaviour in terms of flight, feeding, predation, larval stages etc. Visitors praised his work and appreciated the opportunity of seeing these insects in different light.

On 27th June 2016, David also gave a talk on 'Wildlife of Central India' taking the audience through his photographic journey and close encounters. David



Participants discuss about dragonflies during practical session at Thol wetland

spoke about some of the elusive mammals he has had a chance to photograph like the shy leopards. He also shared videos of sloth bears with babies and stories on their behaviour. Taking the audience from mammals to reptiles, insects, birds, all the way to spiders, he weaved his story with the most interesting observations and insight, inspiring each participant.



Participants get to know each other during Icebreakers

With heartfelt thanks to David Raju and all the participants, the team at Sundarvan hopes to conduct many such programmes in the future that will help us understand nature and remain in awe of it.

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