

ZSI e-NEWS

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*ZSI in the 96th year of Service to the Nation
(1916 to 2011)*



Back issues of *ZSI e-NEWS*

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Headquarters, Kolkata

Extensive field surveys were undertaken in the States of Assam, Himachal Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh and in the Eastern Ghats, West Coast, Sajnakhali Wildlife Sanctuary and Bethua Dahri Wildlife Sanctuary, West Bengal. One local survey was also conducted in the fish landing center of Canning.

During the month, scientists of Headquarters identified, 4 species of Collembola, 10 species of Coleoptera, 21 species of Hemiptera, 7 species of Hymenoptera, 4 species of Odonata, 5 species of Orthoptera, 1 species of Crustacea, 25 species of Mollusca, 13 species of Marine fishes and 13 species of Amphibia from the States of Himachal Pradesh, Jharkhand, Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Lakshadweep Islands and West Bengal.

A new species of the genus *Scolopsis* of family Nemipteridae has been identified. *Xiphocheilus typus* Bleeker (Pisces) has been found for first time from Indian coast. Elongated Tortoise (*Indotestudo elongata*) has been recorded for the first time from Tripura. Similarly three species of ants (Formicidae) namely, *Paratrechina longicornis* Latreille, *Tapinoma melanocephalum* Fabricius and *Monomorium gracillimum* Smith were found to be new records to Lakshadweep Islands.

Identification and advisory services were rendered on three lots of specimens pertaining to Formicidae and Mollusca received from different institutions and organizations. One sample of neck hackles of *Gallus* sp. was identified for National Wildlife Crime Control Bureau.

During the month, three research papers were published, 8 research papers were accepted and 5 research papers communicated.

Dr. Barry C. Russell, Curator Emeritus, Museum & Art Galleries Northern Territory, Darwin, Australia visited the Marine Fish section from 24th -28th of the month.



Tosena melanoptera White

Shri K. C. Gopi, Scientist-E and Dr. R. Babu, Scientist-C, attended a one day Workshop on "Disposal of Appeal under RTI" held on 31st October, 2011 at ISTM, New Delhi.

Dr. J. K. De, Scientist- D, convened meeting to finalize the list of endemics for India for assessment as per IUCN Red list norms held on 12th & 13th October, 2011 at IUCN Indian Office, New Delhi. Dr. K. A. Subramanian, Scientist-C represented ZSI in the "Brain Storming Session on Insect Genomics" at National Bureau of Agriculturally Important Insects at Bangalore on 24th October. Shri U.S. Singh, Administrative Officer, attended Training Course on Handling of CAT cases at the Institute of Secretariat Training Management from 3rd-5th October, 2011 at DOPT, New Delhi.

Dr. K. Venkataraman, Director, ZSI, attended the D.P.C. meeting held on 4th October at the Ministry of Environment and Forests, New Delhi and the Gujarat Forest Official Meeting at Ahmedabad on 13th October. He visited the Southern Regional Centre of ZSI at Chennai on 21st and 28th and also delivered an invited talk in the workshop on "India's Look East Policy (POORVA DRISTHI)" at Visakhapatnam on 29th October, 2011.

Publications:

1. Dev Roy, M. K. & Bhadra, S. 2011. Brachyuran crabs (Crustacea: Decapoda: Brachyura). In: *Fauna of Tamil Nadu, State Fauna Series*, 17(2): 109-269, *zool. Surv. India*.

2. Deuti, K & Das, I. 2011. First Record of Elongated Tortoise (*Indotestudo elongata*) from Tripura. *Herpetological Review*, 42 (3): 389.

3. Barman, R.P., Mishra, S.S., Kar, S., Mukherjee, P. and Saren, S.C., 2011. Marine and Estuarine Fish. In: *Fauna of Tamil Nadu, State Fauna Series*, 17(2): 293-418, Zool. Surv. India.

Andaman and Nicobar Regional Centre, Port Blair

Marine ecosystem of Sound Island, Interview Island, Rail Island, Karlo Island, Aves Island, Karmatang and Mayabunder in Middle Andaman were surveyed from 14th-20th October, to assess the diversity and density of coral and its associated faunal communities. In addition, surveys were continued from 14th October in Great Nicobar Island to ascertain the terrestrial faunal elements. As a result of field/laboratory studies, a total of 94 species of scleractinian corals, 19 species of echinoderms, 28 species of gastropods, 20 species of nudibranchs, 2 species of polyclads, 8 species of sponges, 4 species of gorgonids, 5 species of brachyuran crabs and 12 species of fishes were identified from the marine ecosystem. Population and behaviour studies on long tailed macaque *Macaca fascicularis umbrosa* are being conducted in Great Nicobar Island. Fifty two specimens of corals, 8 specimens of echinoderms and 12 specimens of fishes were registered in National Zoological Collection of the Centre. The second interim report on the sponsored project entitled, 'Survey and Monitoring the Corals of Andaman and Nicobar Islands' has been submitted to the Department of Environment and Forests (DoEF), Andaman and Nicobar Administration. The EIA study proposal on the Extension of Runway for Indian Navy, Ministry of Defense has been submitted on request. As per the request of the DoEF, A & N Islands, scientific staff of the Centre were associated for the census of spotted deer *Axis axis* in Ross Island. Confiscated elephant tusk and two species of anemone fishes have been identified for the Range Officer, Port Blair and details on the Fauna of South Andaman to the Divisional Conservator of Forests, DoEF, on request.

Lectures on 'Importance of Coral Reefs' by Tamal Mondal, JRF, in a seminar on the occasion of the 57th Wildlife organized by DoEF on 5th October; 'Indian Mammals' by Mr. K. Narasimmarajan, JRF, at the Forest Training School, Wimberligunj, South Andaman on 11th October; 'Mangrove Faunal Diversity in A&N Islands' by Mr. P.T. Rajan, Sr. Zoological Assistant in a National Workshop on 'Mangroves: An Integral Component of Coastal Ecosystem Conservation Strategies and Management Practices (NW-MICCE)' on 12th October and 'Mangrove Faunal Diversity in A&N Islands' by Mr. P.T. Rajan at Forest Training School, Wimberligunj, South Andaman on 17th October have been delivered. Dr. C. Sivaperuman, Scientist-C attended the training course on Integrated Biodiversity & Ecosystem Management Training at University of Malaysia during 4th-27th October. Dr. C. Raghunathan, Scientist-C and Officer-in-Charge made a presentation on draft management plan for Lohabarrack Crocodile Sanctuary before the Senior Forest Officers of DoEF on 17th October; and served as a member in the Committee to evaluate the draft feasibility report for setting up Oceanarium in A&N Islands, on 20th October. Dr. Raghunathan also participated in the NW-MICCE, organized by the DoEF from 12th to 14th October at Port Blair.

Publications:

1. C. Raghunathan and K. Venkataraman, 2011. Status of Corals in Andaman and Nicobar Islands. In: World Conference on Marine Biodiversity-2011, Aberdeen, Scotland, United Kingdom, 26-30 September 2011, p.136.

2. C. R. Sreeraj and C. Raghunathan, 2011. New records of pseudocerotid polyclads from Andaman and Nicobar Islands. *Marine*

Biodiversity Records, Marine Biological Association of United Kingdom, 4: e73: 1-5.



Confiscated elephant tusk



Coral, *Pachyseris rugosa*



Coral, *Porites lobata* Dana



Coral, *Scapophyllia cylindrica*



Gorgonid, *Cirrhipathes anguina*



Grogonid, *Junceella juncea*

North Eastern Regional Centre, Shillong

A field survey was conducted in Keibul Lamjao National Park and its adjoining areas in Manipur from 17th-30th October, to study the reptilian and amphibian fauna. During the

month, 9 species of amphibians, 13 species of fishes and 5 species of aquatic Hemiptera were identified. A research paper has been accepted for publication. Mrs. J. Lyngdoh, Scientist-C

and Officer-in-Charge attended the meetings of the working group on Forestry and Biodiversity, conducted by the Forests and Environment Department, Govt. of Meghalaya on 21st and 28th of the month at Shillong. 35 students and a teacher from St. George Secondary School, Shillong, visited the Centre on 27th as part of their educational tour.



Student visitors at NERC/ZSI, Shillong

Arunachal Pradesh Regional Centre, Itanagar

A field survey was undertaken in and around the Itanagar Wildlife Sanctuary on 25th October and recorded 42 species of birds and made representative collection of butterflies. The significant bird species observed during the survey include, Coppersmith Babbler *Megalaima haemacephala*, Common Hoopoe *Upupa epops*, Common Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis*, Spotted Dove *Streptopelia chinensis*, Brown Shrike *Lanius cristatus*, Oriental Magpie Robin

Copsychus saularis, Common Myna *Acridotheres tristis*, Red-vented Bulbul *Pycnonotus cafer* and Common Tailorbird *Orthotomus sutorius*. Some common species of butterflies recorded include Common Mime *Chilasa clytia clytia*, Common Tiger *Danas genuita*, Common Lascar *Pantoporia hordonia* and Common Mormon *Prinsepis polystes romulus*. Twenty five school children visited the museum during the month.



Invasive African Giant Snail, *Achatina fulica*



Red-vented Bulbul



Pied Kingfisher



Spotted Forktail

Marine Aquarium cum Regional Centre, Digha

The aquarium received an average of 210 visitors per day during the month. The major attractions among the aquarium exhibits were a school of Scats (*Scatophagus argus*), Lion fish (*Pterois miles*), Sea snake (*Hydrophis* sp.), Puffer fishes, Conger Eel (*Muraenosox cineareas*), White-spotted spinefoot (*Siganus canaliculatus*), etc. Sixty eight examples of live marine ornamental exhibits were collected for display in the aquarium galleries. Minor renovation work of aquarium tanks was undertaken as part of ICZM Project activities. Identification of

specimens collected comprised of 25 species of fishes which also included *Argyrops bleekeri* as a new record to Indian waters and *Pomacanthus annularis* and *Balistoides viridescences* recorded for the first time from Digha area.

Publication:

Prasanna Yennawar, Prasad Tudu & Anil Mohapatra. 2011. Occurrence of three red listed species of *Epinephelus* (Perciformes: Serranidae) on Digha coast, India. *Journal of Threatened Taxa*, 3(10): 2150-2152.



Pomacanthus annularis



Balistoides viridiscens



Puffer fishes



Siganus canaliculatus

Northern Regional Centre, Dehra Dun

A faunal survey was undertaken in Dehradun and its environs and representative fauna belonging to 12 faunal groups were collected, besides collecting 35 exs. of helminth parasites from Amphibia and soil nematodes from soil samples. Field observations were made on 7

species of birds and 4 species of mammals. During the month, the following faunal groups were identified: 7 species of amphibia, 10 species soil nematodes, 12 species of Acridoidea from Jhilmil Jheel and 13 species of Acridoidea from Dehradun. 7 species of

amphibia and 23 species of soil nematodes have been recorded for the first time from Jhilmil Jheel, Conservation Reserve. Twenty six data entries on nematodes were entered in the database. Permanent slides of cross sections of PGR of species of Lagomorpha: *Lepus nigricolis* Cuvier, *Lepus hispidus* Blandford, *Lepus arabis* Blandford, *Ochotona roylei*, *Ochotona macrotis* (Gunther) and *Ochotona ladocensis* (Gunther) were prepared for trichotaxonomic studies and permanent wax slides of soil and vertebrate nematodes were prepared for morphological studies. 17 research papers have been



Euploea mulciber observed at Maldevta, Dehradun

submitted and two papers have been accepted for publication. Two research papers on Birds were reviewed and comments communicated.

Dr. P.C.Tak, Scientist-D was deputed to attend the "Annual Research Seminar (ARS)" on 11th October and the "Training, Research & Academic Council (TRAC)" meeting on 12th October. Dr. Archana Bahuguna, Scientist-C attended the meeting for PBR projects organized by the Uttarakhand Biodiversity Board, Dehradun and the meeting of technical committee for Molecular laboratory establishment at ASI, Dehradun.



Collecting aquatic fauna at Maldevta

Southern Regional Centre, Chennai

A faunistic survey tour was undertaken in the Chittoor, Cuddapah and Nellore districts of Andhra Pradesh, falling in the Middle Eastern Ghats, from 3rd-23rd October and collected representative samples of various faunal groups. Identifications for the month include the following: Protozoa: 4 species, Cladocera: 7 spp., from Southern Eastern Ghats; 3 species of Protozoa, 6 spp. of Cladocera, 6 spp. of Rotifera, 3 spp. of Lepidoptera and 10 spp. of fishes from Puzhal eri. Two invited papers were presented at the conferences held at Madurai and Jabalpur. Two research papers were submitted for publication. Two manuscripts were refereed for outside journals and two identification services were rendered. Lectures were delivered by the scientific staff of the Centre on

'Collection, preservation and identification of fauna including DNA Barcoding' to the M.Sc students of Presidency College and Madras University on 10th and 18th October, respectively. Dr.K.Rema Devi, Scientist-E & Officer-in-Charge participated in the discussion meeting on Traditional Knowledge, Invasive alien species and Taxonomy, held at National Biodiversity Authority on 18th of the month. Dr. K. Ilango, as a member of the Core Advisory Committee, attended the second meeting of the "Vector Science Forum" convened by the ICMR to discuss gap areas in the knowledge on Vectors and Vector Control on 4th and 5th October at New Delhi.



Dr. K. Rema Devi and Dr. K. Ilango delivering lecture to M.Sc students of Presidency College, Chennai

Marine Biology Regional Centre, Chennai

A field survey was conducted along the Palkbay and a deep sea faunal survey was carried out off Chennai coast during the month and various faunal samples collected. Scientists of the Centre identified 1 species of nematode, 2 species of arthropods, 5 species of testate amoebae, 11 species each of mollusks & echinoderms and 57 species of fishes out of the material collected from Palkbay. Four research papers were published during the month. Nineteen species of various marine organisms were introduced in to the marine aquarium. Dr. C. Venkatraman, Scientist-C & Officer-in-Charge attended the 17th Expert Committee meeting on "Access and Benefit Sharing" conducted by National Biodiversity Authority, Chennai and served as judge for an elocution competition AMAZE, organized by the Indian Institute of Planning and Management,

Chennai. Dr. Rajkumar Rajan Scientist-C attended the meeting on "Stakeholder consultation for long term funding mechanism of the project Conservation and sustainable use of Gulf of Mannar Biosphere Reserve's coastal resources", organized by the Gulf of Mannar Trust at Chennai and attended a one day workshop on "Disposal of appeal under RTI" organized by ISTM, New Delhi. Six hundred and seven students and tourists visited the marine aquarium during this month.

Publications:

1. Rajkumar Rajan, R. Jeyabaskaran and K. Venkataraman, K. 2011. 'Indian Coral Reefs: Functions, threats and management issues' In: Marine Biodiversity in India, S. Kannaiyan & K. Venkataraman (eds.) Associated Publishing Co., New Delhi. Pp 72-86.



Hippocampus spinosissimus



Scarus gobban

*Lates calcarifer**Upeneus tragula*

2. Sivaleela, G and K. Venkataraman. 2011. Marine sponges of India. *In: Marine Biodiversity in India*, S. Kannaiyan & K. Venkataraman (eds.) Associated Publishing Co., New Delhi. Pp 141-145.
3. Padmanaban, P, C. Venkatraman and K. Venkataraman. 2011. Sea snakes distribution, habitat, feeding strategy and threats. *In: Marine Biodiversity in India*, S. Kannaiyan & K. Venkataraman (eds.) Associated Publishing Co., New Delhi, Pp 239-242.
4. Venkataraman, C. 2011. Coastal birds of India. *In: Marine Biodiversity in India*, S. Kannaiyan & K. Venkataraman (eds.) Associated Publishing Co., New Delhi,, Pp 243-252.

Freshwater Biology Regional Centre, Hyderabad

Field visits for documenting seasonal variability of the heterogeneous zooplankton community and macrophyte based littoral faunae were continued in and around Hyderabad for drawing up the limnoecological profile of a few perennial lakes, irrigation tanks, ponds and transient pools. The major freshwater faunal groups collected from two reservoirs (Cumbum, Prakasam Dist., Andhra Pradesh and Krishanaraja Sagar, Mandya District, Karnataka) were 2 species of Cladocera, 10 spp. of Rotifera, 5 spp. of aquatic Coleoptera and 8 spp. of fishes. The rotifers *Pseudoembata acutipoda* Wycliffe and Michael (Philodinidae) and *Trichocerca pusilla* Jennings (Trichocercidae) and *Trichotria poecillum* Muller (Trichotridae) have been recorded for the first time from Andhra Pradesh. 3 identification/ advisory requests received were dispensed with. Dr. Deepa Jaiswal, Scientist-C attended the "Hands on Training on Molecular Taxonomy of Insects" at Entomology Division, Indian Agricultural Research Institute, Pusa, New Delhi from 17th-22nd October.

*Euclanis dilatata* Ehrenberg (Rotifera)

A view of the laboratory for DNA studies at FBRC/ZSI

Western Regional Centre, Pune

During the month 7 species of Odonata, 17 species of Lepidoptera, 6 species of Orthoptera, 2 species of Collembola, 3 species of Acari, 14 species of Mollusca, 10 species of Pisces and 1 species of fresh water crab were identified. Two molluscan specimens, three skins and one sample of feather received for identification were identified and reports submitted. Students of City Pride International School and Singhgarh Science College, Pune visited the Centre and museum. A study tour on the request of CCF (Wildlife), Pune was conducted to make prey data base of Great Indian Bustard (GIB) in its foraging areas at Nannaj Wildlife Sanctuary, Solapur district from 3rd-5th October.



Tomatares pardalis (Fabricius)

The report comprising of 75 species of insects, a few amphibians, reptiles and crabs was submitted. A local survey of Medha and around (Satara district) was conducted on 20th of the month. Dr. R.M. Sharma, Scientist-D & Officer-in-Charge delivered a talk on "Faunal Diversity profile of Bhimashankar Wildlife Sanctuary and its relevance in protection mechanism of surrounding areas" during the 'Workshop on Declaration of Eco-Sensitive Zones around National Parks and Wildlife Sanctuaries' at Pune on 13th October, organized by the State Forest Department. A chapter on invertebrata was submitted to 'Fauna of Maharashtra', State fauna Series of ZSI.



Male Black buck at Nannaj WLS, Solapur

Sunderban Regional Centre, Canning

A field survey was conducted in and around Canning landing centre and Dabu. Representative faunal samples were collected. One species of Gastropod, 1 species of

Brachyuran crab and 4 species of grasshoppers were identified and registered. One Ph.D thesis received from the University of Madras, was evaluated.



Ocypode burrow model



Uca rosea

Gangetic Plains Regional Centre, Patna

During the month, 12 species of Noctuidae (Lepidoptera) and 3 species of Mollusca were identified. Dr. Gopal Sharma, Scientist-C and Officer-in-Charge conducted an ad hoc aquatic macro-invertebrate sampling with the teams from Central University, Patna and Bihar State

Tourism Development Corporation, Bihar in the Ghoti Katora Lake in Rajgir and Gidhi Lake in Nalanda district on 9th October. Wildlife week was observed at the Centre in the first week of the month. The Centre organized a Hindi workshop on 21st October.



Olepa ricini (Fabricius)



Utetheisa pulchella (Linnaeus)

Central Zone Regional Centre, Jabalpur

During the month, backlog collections of 12 species of Hemiptera, 8 species of Coleoptera, 7 species of spiders (Araneae), 12 species of moths (Lepidoptera) were identified and registered from Singhori Wildlife Sanctuary and Veerangana Durgawati Wildlife Sanctuary, Madhya Pradesh. One research paper was published, one accepted and one communicated. Digitized images and data of 217 species pertaining to 7 faunal groups were submitted to ZSI, Kolkata. Scientific guidance

on the role of Taxonomy in Biodiversity Conservation was rendered to 27 students of B.Sc from Govt. Girls' College, Katni, Madhya Pradesh.

Publication:

Patil, S.R. 2011. Spiders of Jabalpur District (Arachnida: Aranea): An updated Checklist, 2011. In: Souvenir of National Symposium-Workshop on Arachnology with reference to Spiders: Ecology, Biology and Taxonomy, p.39-46.



Antestia cruciata (Fabricius):
Family: Pentatomidae



Dieuches uniguttatus (Thunberg):
Family: Lygaeidae



Ectrychotes dispar Reuter
(Reduviidae)



Leucauge decorata (Blackwall) Family: Tetragnathidae



Telamonia dimidiata (Simon) Family: Salticidae

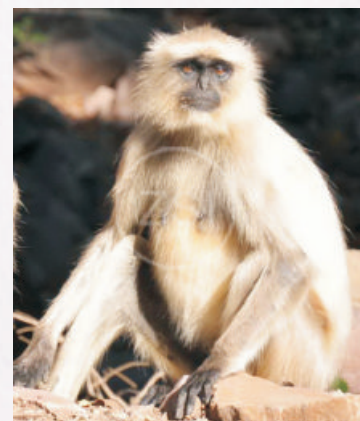
Desert Regional Centre, Jodhpur

During the month, 10 species of Nematodes, 4 species of Odonata and 2 species of Pisces were identified from various environs of Rajasthan. Dr. Gaurav Sharma, Scientist-C delivered a lecture on "Conservation of Faunal Diversity" during the Wildlife Week-2011 celebrations which was organized by the Rajasthan Forest Department, Jodhpur on 5th October. An exhibition on "Biodiversity of Western India" was also conducted by the Centre in collaboration with NMNH, New Delhi from

3rd-7th October, in connection with the Wildlife Week celebrations at ZSI, DRC, Jodhpur. Dr. Sanjeev Kumar, Scientist-C delivered a lecture as a subject expert on the occasion of the Wildlife Week celebration organized by the Office of the D.F.O. (Wildlife, SFD), Jodhpur, during 3rd-5th October. Ten specimens of vertebrates and 10 specimens of Mollusca were digitised. Fifty six entries were made in *e-granthalaya*.



Halcyon smyrnensis



Semnopithecus entellus

High Altitude Regional Centre, Solan

During the month 4 species of Orthoptera, 4 species of Lepidoptera and 2 species of Pisces were identified, out of the faunal collections from Chail Wildlife Sanctuary. 4 species were digitized. The manuscript on Pictorial

Handbook on the Pisces of Himachal Pradesh, comprising of 67 species, has been finalized. One research paper has been accepted in an international journal.

*Metaporia leucodice**Neptis hylas*

Fulvous-breasted Woodpecker

Estuarine Biology Regional Centre, Gopalpur-on-Sea

A local survey tour to Subadhra Estuary was conducted and ornamental fishes were collected, which were identified as 8 species. *Terapon jarbua* (Forsskål) collected from the estuary was found to be very active, well adapted and suitable in brackish water aquarium. During the month 16 species of

molluscs from the collection of the Pennera Estuary, Andhra Pradesh and 12 species of *Anopheles* from the collection of mosquito fauna of Ganjam district, Odisha were identified. Two research papers were accepted for publication. Twenty six visitors paid their visits to the museum.



Collecting brackish water ornamental fishes

*Terapon jarbua* (Forsskål)

Western Ghat Regional Centre, Kozhikode (Calicut)

A new caecilian *Ichthyophis davidi* sp. nov. (Gymnophiona: Ichthyophiidae), the largest striped caecilian has been described from the Western Ghats. Besides, 2 species of Pteromalidae (Hymenoptera) and 5 species of Centipedes (Chilopoda: Scolopendromorpha) were identified. A field survey to southern Western Ghats (Kannur and Wayanad districts, Kerala) was conducted w.e.f. 11th to 21st October and collected representative faunal samples. Three papers were published, four papers submitted and two papers were accepted for publication.

During the month, sixty seven identified species were digitized and metadata compiled.

Dr. K. Rajmohana, Scientist-C, as chief guest, inaugurated the Zoology Association of the Providence Women's College, Calicut on 20th October and delivered a lecture on "Biodiversity Science: a Glimpse". Dr. P. M. Sureshan, Scientist-C, supervised the research project of a JRF of the Centre. Dr. K. Rajmohana, Scientist-C, supervised the research projects of the two JRFs of the Centre as well as 2 M. Sc. students from Kannur University, attached to the Centre for their project work.

Four identification & advisory services were rendered during the month. Laboratory facility was extended to Sri. K. S. Seshadri, ATREE, Bangalore, for studying the Amphibian types deposited at the Centre.

Dr. P. M. Sureshan, Scientist-C attended a one day Workshop on "Disposal of Appeal under RTI", held on 31st October, 2011 at ISTM, New Delhi.

The Wildlife Week 2011 was celebrated at the Centre. In connection with the celebrations, a photography competition on the theme "Insects and Spiders" was conducted. Over 600

photographs were received for the competition. Photographers of the best three photographs were given prizes and certificates. An exhibition of the photographs was also arranged at the Centre from 4th to 14th October. 3291 visitors paid their visits on this occasion and as well to the museum at the Centre.

Publications:

1. Gopalakrishna Bhatta, K. P. Dinesh, P. Prashanth, Nirmal Kulkarni and C. Radhakrishnan. 2011. A new caecilian *Ichthyophis davidi* sp. nov. (Gymnophiona: Ichthyophiidae): the largest striped caecilian from the Western Ghats. *Current Science*, 101 (8):1015-1019.
2. Muhamed Jafer Palot 2011. White-tailed Tropic Bird *Phaethon lepturus* from Kerala, South India. *Indian BIRDS*, 7 (3):75.
3. Praveen, J., Dipu, K., Muhamed Jafer Palot, Mike Prince & Sathyan Meppayur. 2011. Significant pelagic bird sightings from Off-shore waters of the Malabar Coast, Southern India. *Indian BIRDS*, 7 (3):66-69.

NEW DISCOVERY

(New species of
Amphibia from Western Ghats)



Ichthyophis davidi

During the Wildlife Week - 2011 Celebrated at WGRC/ZSI, Calicut



ANIMAL OF THE MONTH

The Edible-nest Swiftlet

Aerodramus fuciphagus (Hume, 1873)



[Text: Muhamed Jafer Palot & C. Radhakrishnan. Photo: Muhamed Jafer Palot Western Ghat Regional Centre, ZSI, Calicut]

India has four species of Swiftlets: the Indian Edible-nest Swiftlet *Aerodramus unicolor* (Jerdon), the Himalayan Swiftlet *Aerodramus brevirostris* (McLelland), the Glossy Swiftlet

Collocalia esculenta (Beavan) and the Edible-nest Swiftlet *Aerodramus fuciphagus* (Hume). The Edible-nest swiftlet, the producer of edible nests, is found in South-east Asia. The Edible-

nest Swiftlets are small, dark brown, slightly fork-tailed birds (size 12 cm). They are in many respects typical members of the Apodidae, having narrow swallow-like wings for fast flight, with a wide gape and small reduced beak surrounded by bristles for hawking insects in flight. Several calls are uttered including a loud rattling call, used for echolocation in dark caves. It often feeds in large flocks with other species of swifts and swallows. It breeds in colonies in caves, clefts on cliffs and sometimes on buildings. The bracket-shaped nest is white and translucent and is made of layers of hardened saliva attached to the rock. The nests measure about 6 cm across with a depth of 1.5 cm and a weight of about 14 grams. Two white, oval, non-glossy eggs are laid by the bird in it. The breeding season is from January to August. The Edible-nest Swiftlet is renowned for the fact that their nests are used for making bird's nest

soup in Chinese cuisine. When cooked, the birds' nests have a gelatinous texture. In Chinese cuisine, high medicinal and aphrodisiac qualities are ascribed to these nests. The nests can fetch high prices and many colonies are harvested commercially. Some populations such as those in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands have been harvested extensively leading the birds to fall under the critically threatened category of the IUCN criteria. In the year 2003, the species was placed in Schedule-I of Indian Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972.

A program to conserve the Edible-nest Swiftlet in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands commenced in 1995, and is being implemented by the Department of Environment and Forests, Andaman & Nicobar Islands (ANF) and by the Salim Ali Centre for Ornithology and Natural History (SACON) since 2001.

ZSI IN NEWS

New limbless amphibian discovered in western Ghats

<http://www.thehindu.com/news/states/kerala/article2571128.ece>

OUT OF THE BOX

Frog species discovered in Arunachal Pradesh

<http://www.ideal flickr.com/2011/09/21/frog-species-discovered-in-arunachal-pradesh/>

Indian Ocean world's most dangerous place for turtles: study

<http://www.deccan chronicle.com/channels/sci-tech/others/indian-ocean-worlds-most-dangerous-place-turtles-study-256>

PAINTINGS FROM ZSI HERITAGE ALBUM



Hoolock gibbon

Hoolock hoolock (Harlan, 1834)

ANNOUNCEMENT

National Level Hands-on Training Workshop on Principles and Practices of Animal Taxonomy With special reference to Insects (For postgraduates and young researchers)

27th February to 3rd March, 2012

at Zoological Survey of India, Western Ghat Regional Centre,
PO Eranhipalam, Calicut-673006, Kerala

A one week National Level Hands-on Training Workshop on Principles and Practices of Animal Taxonomy with special reference to Insects will be organized by Zoological Survey of India, Western Ghat Regional Centre, Calicut to educate and popularize Animal Taxonomy the science of discovering, naming and classifying animals. This residential workshop is open to postgraduates and young researchers and will impart hands-on training in standard techniques and procedures involved in Insect Taxonomy.

Details will be available at Zoological Survey of India website by the first week of December, 2011.