



White-bellied heron *Ardea insignis* Hume, 1978



सत्यमेव जयते



Ministry of Environment,
Forest and Climate Change



Zoological Survey
of India, 1916

From the Director's Desk

I am glad to present the May 2021 issue of E-News to the readers. The month begins with a new discovery of a mammal *Crocidura norcondamica*, from the remotest Narcondam Island in the Andaman Sea. This finding of ZSI is claimed to be the first discovery of insectivorous mammal after the span of 43 years from the world. Subsequently, habitat assessment of critically endangered White-bellied Heron from its new nesting site, Anjaw district in Arunachal Pradesh, provides new knowledge about its distributional range. ZSI is actively involved in the evaluation of the People's Biodiversity Register for all the districts of West Bengal by joining its hand with West Bengal State Biodiversity Board. Inter-ministerial services such as vetting species index data to Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation, providing inputs for United Nations Post 2020 Global Biodiversity Framework and offering comments for the United Nations Guidelines on Bio-Physical Modelling of Ecosystem Accounting rendered during the month are worth mentioning. Amidst the pandemic forced lockdown in most of the states of the country, ZSI could progress considerably well by identifying 6590 specimens comprising 1234 species. It is noteworthy to state that 10 new species and two new genera of Lepidoptera were described during the month along with the record of 11 species for the first time from India. In addition, 54 species have been newly augmented to the National Zoological Collections while 31 DNA barcodes have been generated. Altogether 37 publications, including a book, 26 papers, 7 book chapters and 4 popular articles, have been made during the month. I congratulate all the officers and staff of ZSI for making immense progress during the lockdown period.

Jai Hind

Dr. C. RAGHUNATHAN

Director [i/c]

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HEADQUARTERS, KOLKATA

The survey conducted in the Lohit and Anjaw districts of Arunachal Pradesh from 10th to 24th May 2021 to assess the status of White-bellied Heron. In addition, protected areas of Bibhutibhushan Wildlife Sanctuary and Murshidabad district, West Bengal, have also been surveyed. Five new species were described, including one new mammalian species, *Crocidura narcondamica*. Two genera and three species of Lepidoptera, *Prabadra occidentalis* Dubatolov, Volynkin, N. Singh, Joshi & Cerný, 2021, *Zadadra confusa* Dubatolov, Volynkin, N. Singh, Joshi & Cerný, 2021 and *Trilocha nicobari* N. Singh & Ahmad, 2021; one species of Hymenoptera, *Prosevania austrina* Rameshkumar & Kazmi, 2021, were newly described. Lectotype was designated for *Lithosia distorta* Moore, 1872; two new combinations *Dentadra flavicosta* (Moore, 1878) and *Prabadra monastyrskii* (Dubatolov, 2012), were established, and *Zadadra neodistorta* Joshi, Kirti & N. Singh, 2015 was synonymized with *Zadadra distorta* Moore, 1872 from Lepidoptera. Three species augmented in Hemiptera and two type specimens of Decapoda *Cuapetes chelatus* sp. nov. *Actinimenes koyas* sp. nov. received from NBFGR-ICAR Kochi, Kerala, were added to the National Zoological Collections. Mammal section rendered identification and advisory services to WB Forest department, Customs department and Directorate of Revenue Intelligence, Kolkata; Hemiptera section to Uttar Banga Krishi, H.O.D. of Agricultural Entomology, Coochbihar. Scientists reviewed five manuscripts for different journals and adjudicated one PhD thesis from Kerala Agricultural University. Comments for Guidelines on Biophysical Modelling for Ecosystem Accounting has been provided to MoEFCC. Five PBRs of Purulia district and 4 PBRs of Alipurduar were evaluated and report submitted to West Bengal Biodiversity Board. The requisite details regarding vetting of Species Index data to the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation were submitted. The inputs were provided for UN Post 2020 Global Biodiversity Framework in the prescribed worksheet circulated by MoEFCC. Prepared a book on *Animal Discoveries 2020 - New Species and New Records* and submitted to MoEFCC for release during World Environment Day 2021. Assessed the damages caused by Cyclone Yaas in ZSI - Marine Aquarium cum Regional Centre, Digba, West Bengal.



Lesser Flamingo, *Phoeniconaias*
minor Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire, 1798

NORTH EASTERN REGIONAL CENTRE, SHILLONG, MEGHALAYA



Common Stonechat *Saxicola torquatus* (Linnaeus, 1766)

Altogether 24 spp., including Reptilia (3 spp.), Amphibia (6 spp.), and Pisces (15 spp.) were identified. Advisory services were rendered to the Chief Wildlife Warden, Govt. of Meghalaya on the Mammalian fauna of Meghalaya on request. Scientist of the Centre reviewed a manuscript for the *Indian Journal of Science and Technology*.

Crested Serpent Eagle *Spilornis cheela* (Latham, 1790)



WESTERN REGIONAL CENTRE, PUNE, MAHARASHTRA

A total of 65 species were identified pertaining to following faunal groups: Coleoptera (4 spp.), Lepidoptera (39 spp.), Odonata (5 spp.), Orthoptera (6 spp.), and Amphibia (58 spp.).



Indian lunar moth, *Actias selene* (Hübner, 1807)



Argina astrea (Drury, 1773)

CENTRAL ZONE REGIONAL CENTRE, JABALPUR, MADHYA PRADESH

Alcedo atthis
Linnaeus, 1758



Scientists of the Centre identified and registered 266 specimens of Coleoptera (Carabidae) belonging to 57 species and 24 genera.

Sarcogyps calvus
(Scopoli, 1786)



DESERT REGIONAL CENTRE, JODHPUR, RAJASTHAN

The survey was conducted in the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir from 15th April to 15th May, 2021. Forty-five artificial nests of indigenous bees were developed in the surveyed area. Pollination management strategy was demonstrated to more than 400 farmers and growers for the improved practice of pollination in their orchards and crops. The diversity of



Artificial nest of wood dwelling bees

Bombus melanurus
Lepeletier, 1835



the host flowering plants of the pollinating bee species of the region has been updated. A total of 375 examples were identified, containing 32 species (13 spp. of Lepidoptera, 1 sp. each of Orthoptera, Coleoptera and Hemiptera, 12 spp. of Hymenoptera and 04 spp. of fishes).



Brown hawk-owl,
Ninox scutulata
(Raffles, 1822)

NORTHERN REGIONAL CENTRE, DEHRADUN, UTTARAKHAND

Blattodea were generated and uploaded to NCBI. Scientists of the centre reviewed three papers for National Journals. International Day for Biological Diversity was celebrated by planting twelve saplings in the campus on 22nd May 2021.

Spotted dove,
Spilopelia chinensis
(Scopoli, 1768)



Scientists of the centre identified 31 species of different faunal groups, i.e. 3 spp. of Protozoa, 4 spp. of Nematoda, 6 spp. of Odonata, 4 spp. of Lepidoptera, 4 spp. of Pisces and 10 spp. of Aves from Uttarakhand, Punjab and Uttar Pradesh. Four DNA barcode sequences of Lepidoptera and

SOUTHERN REGIONAL CENTRE, CHENNAI, TAMIL NADU

A total of 6 species of fishes were identified and registered and five new species of Ephemeroptera (Ephemerellidae) viz., *Cincticostella funki* Martynov, Selvakumar, Palatov & Vasanth, 2021, *Cincticostella wangi* Selvakumar, Martynov & Subramanian, 2021, *Serratella palatovi* Martynov, Selvakumar & Jacobus, 2021, *Torleya simbalbarensis* Selvakumar, Subramanian, Martynov & Jacobus, 2021 and *Torleya dibruensis* Selvakumar, Martynov & Jacobus, 2021 were described and published. In addition, three new records of Ephemeroptera (Ephemerellidae) viz., *Cincticostella gosei* (Allen, 1975) *Teloganopsis jinghongensis* (Xu, You & Hsu, 1984) and *Hyrtanella grandipennis* (Zhou, Su & Gui, 2000) were also reported. The new species and new reports were based on the collections made in Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Meghalaya and Himachal Pradesh.

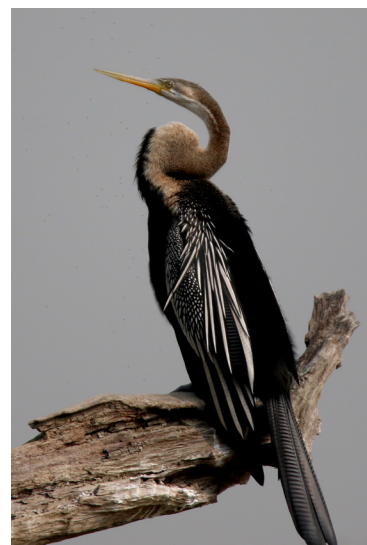
GANGETIC PLAINS REGIONAL CENTRE, PATNA, BIHAR



A survey was conducted in Mizoram from 27 April to 04 May 2021. Altogether, 177 examples were identified and registered, representing 11 species of Mollusca.

Plegadis falcinellus
Linnaeus, 1766

Anhinga melanogaster
Pennant, 1769



HIGH ALTITUDE REGIONAL CENTRE, SOLAN, HIMACHAL PRADESH

River Lapwing
Vanellus duvaucelii
(Lesson 1826)



Scientists of the Centre identified 34 species, including 14 species under order Lepidoptera from Pangri valley and Sainj WLS (district Kullu) of Himachal Pradesh, 05 spp. each of Orthoptera, Ephemeroptera, Pisces and Amphibia, and 12 spp. of Aves were identified based on direct sighting/photographs. Identification and Advisory Services were provided to Baru Sahib University, district Sirmour (HP) and Department of

Zoology, Punjabi University, Patiala (Punjab) on Butterflies; to IGNOU for UNIT IX (Genetics) of B.Sc. Zoology syllabus. Three manuscripts were reviewed during the month for different journals.



Spotted rustic *Phalanta phalantha* (Drury 1773)

A stressed coral
in the Gulf of
Kuchh

MARINE BIOLOGY REGIONAL CENTRE, CHENNAI, TAMIL NADU



Parupeneus trifasciatus
(Lacepede, 1801)

Twenty-four species were identified, including moss inhabiting testate amoebae 12 spp., marine sponges 04 spp., and Pisces 08 spp. Five species of testate amoebae viz. *Diffugia ampla* Rampi, 1950, *D. ampullula* Playfair, 1918, *D. bryophila* (Penard, 1902) Jung, 1942, *D. lacustris* (Penard, 1899) Ogden, 1983 and *D. ventricosa* Deflandre, 1926 are reported as new to India. Under the coral restoration project in the Gulf of Kachchh, surveys were undertaken at reef sites in Narara, Poshitra, Mithapur, Arambada to study the resilient capacity of corals. The number of healthy, partially and fully bleached colonies were estimated in these sites. The size classes of the coral colonies were also noted. In the collaborative project with the

Space Application Centre, *Health Assessment of Indian Corals and Coral Reefs* Project undertook health assessment surveys in Nararra reef. Eleven types of coral health issues were recorded, such as the growth anomaly, focal bleaching, white syndrome, termatodiasis, algal abrasion, sponge overgrowth, worm infestation, invertebrate gall, zoanthids overgrowth, fish predation and CCA overgrowth. Under the 'Long-term coral reef monitoring programme' in Lakshadweep, monitoring data was gathered from Agatti and Bangaram Islands. A pilot restoration study was initiated in the Agatti lagoon.

ANDAMAN AND NICOBAR REGIONAL CENTRE, PORT BLAIR



Ten days local surveys were conducted from 6th-15th May 2021 to Shoal Bay, Kalatang, Ferargunj, Sippighat, and Chidiyatappu, South Andaman, to assess the terrestrial faunal diversity. A total of 278 species were identified: Fishes 36 spp., Bryozoa 1 sp., Mollusca 9 spp., Decapoda 29 spp., Coral 104 spp. from the marine environment and Lepidoptera 65 spp., Odonata 6 spp., Hemiptera 2 spp., Birds 26 spp. from the terrestrial environment. Identification services were rendered on spiders to Government Arts & Science College, Kumbakonam, Tamil Nadu.

Chaetodon collaré
Bloch, 1787

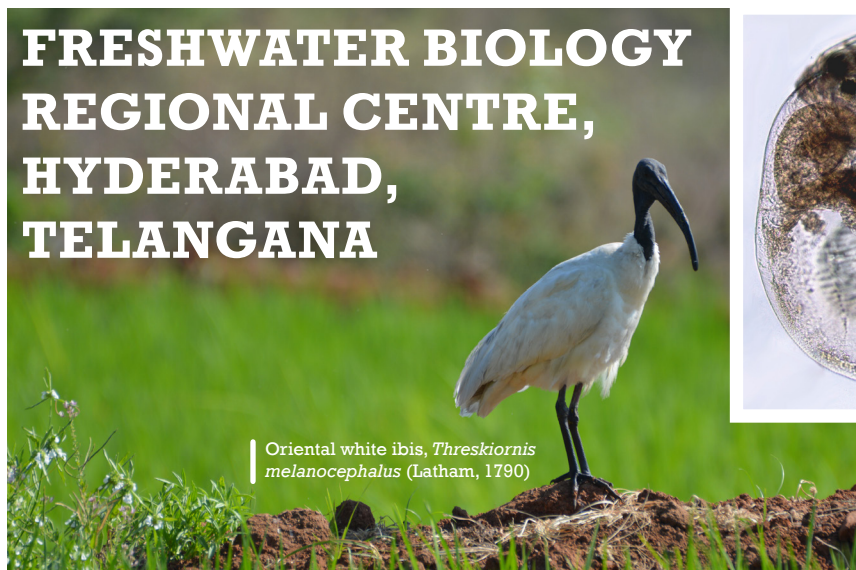
Orudiza protheclaria
Walker, 1861



SUNDERBAN REGIONAL CENTRE, CANNING, WEST BENGAL

A total of 60 species were identified, including Arthropoda 31 spp., Mollusca 13 spp., Reptilia 8 spp., Pisces 4 spp., Amphibia 3 spp., Cnidaria 1 sp., 5 gorgonian and two spp. black corals for Thiru Kolanjiappar Government Arts College, Virudhachalam, Tamil Nadu. In augmentation of NZC, 25 spp. were added during this month (20 spp. of Arthropoda, 1 sp. of Amphibia, 2 spp. of Mollusca, 1 sp. of Fish and 1 sp. of Cnidaria). One PhD synopsis was reviewed for M.S. University, Tamil Nadu.

FRESHWATER BIOLOGY REGIONAL CENTRE, HYDERABAD, TELANGANA



Oriental white ibis, *Threskiornis melanocephalus* (Latham, 1790)



Macrothrix triserialis
Brady, 1886

The scientists, staff and research scholars of the centre examined 639 specimens from Amrabad & Kawal Tiger Reserve, Wyr Lake, Koilsagar Reservoir, Telangana; Krishna, East Godavari and Visakhapatnam districts Andhra Pradesh; Nayagarh, Subamapur and Angil districts, Odisha; Hoshangabad district, Madhya Pradesh. Altogether, identified 15 spp. of aquatic Coleoptera, 06 spp. of decapods, 18 spp. of Ostracods & Branchiopods, 07 spp. of Mollusca and 26 species of fishes. The drawing competition was conducted online on International Biodiversity Day, 22nd May 2021.

WESTERN GHATS REGIONAL CENTRE, KOZHIKODE, KERALA



Crocodylus palustris
Lesson, 1831



Geochelone elegans
Schoepff, 1795

One species of mud dauber wasp *Sceliphron destillatorium* (Illiger, 1807) (Hymenoptera: Sphecidae) reported for the first time from India and findings published. Forty-one species (Hymenoptera – 33 spp., and Coleoptera – 08 spp.) of 158 exs. were identified.

ESTUARINE BIOLOGY REGIONAL CENTRE, GOPALPUR- ON-SEA, ODISHA

Moringua raitaborua
(Hamilton, 1822)



A total of 615 specimens were identified into 75 species, which includes lice, crabs, molluscs and fishes belonging. Two DNA barcodes were uploaded in the BOLD database, including the sequence of an endangered whale shark from the Gopalpur-on-Sea coast. In addition, an eel species *Moringua raitaborua* (Hamilton, 1822) was reported for the first time from the Chilika lagoon.

ARUNACHAL PRADESH REGIONAL CENTRE, ITANAGAR



Bithynia pulchella (Benson, 1836)



Faunal Collection during the Survey

A total of 15 species comprising 1 sp. of Amphibia; 7 spp. of Pisces; 2 spp. of Millipedes; 5 spp. of Mollusca were identified from 163 examples. Advisory services were provided to Modern College of Arts Science & Commerce, Pune University, and Meghalaya Government by providing information on the Mollusca and Butterflies species available/reported from West Khasi Hills District. In addition, scientists reviewed three manuscripts for different journals.

MARINE AQUARIUM AND REGIONAL CENTRE, DIGHA, WEST BENGAL



Ocypode macrocera
H. Milne Edwards, 1837



Pista elongata Moore, 1909

Forty-two species from 135 specimens were identified, accounting, Mollusca (31 sp.), Echinodermata (3 spp.), Cnidaria (3 spp.), Arthropoda (3 spp.) and Polychaeta (2 spp.). Scientists of the

centre reviewed two manuscripts for the *Journal of Environmental Science and Pollution Research* and *Journal of Scientific Research and Reports*. Scientists of this centre participated and attended West Bengal elections micro observer counting duty on 03.05.2021.

NEW DISCOVERIES AND NEW RECORDS

NEW SPECIES

Lepidoptera



Prabadra occidentalis Dubatolov,
Volynkin, N. Singh, Joshi &
Cerný, 2021 (holotype, male)



Zadadra confusa Dubatolov,
Volynkin, N. Singh, Joshi &
Cerný, 2021 (holotype, male)



Zadadra confusa Dubatolov,
Volynkin, N. Singh, Joshi &
Cerný, 2021 (paratype, male)



Trilocha nicobari N. Singh &
Ahmad, 2021 (holotype, male)



Trilocha nicobari N. Singh &
Ahmad, 2021 (paratype)

Ephemeroptera



Cincticostella funki



Cincticostella wangi



Cincticostella gosei



Serratella palatovi



Torleya dibruensis



Torleya simbalbarensis



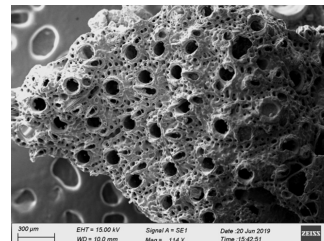
Hyrtanella grandipennis



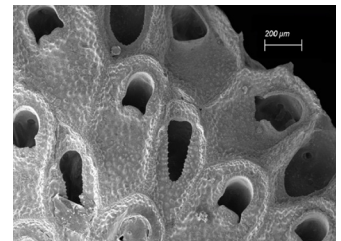
Teloganopsis jinghogensis

NEW RECORDS

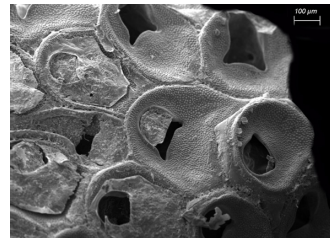
Bryozoa



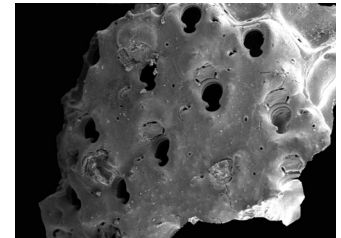
Parasmittina collifera
(Robertson, 1908)



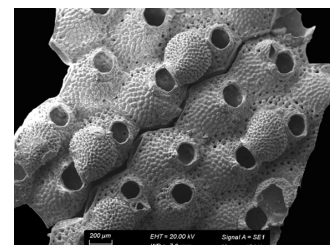
Smitipora philippinensis (Canu &
Bassler, 1920)



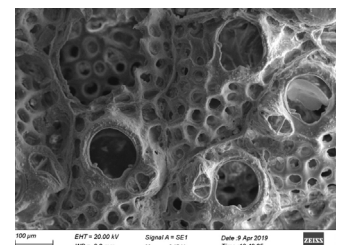
Onychocella angulosa
(Reuss, 1848)



Plesiocleidochasma
porcellanum (Busk, 1860)



Robertsonidra argentea
(Hincks, 1881)



Schizoporella errata
(Waters, 1878)

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 3. Girish Kumar, P., Sureshan, P.M. and Karuthapandi, M. 2021. Insecta: Hymenoptera: Vespoidea: Scoliididae. In: K. Chandra, D. Jaiswal, C. Raghunathan, S.S. Jadhav and M. Karuthapandi (Eds.), *Current Status of Faunal Diversity in Telangana*: 207–210 (Published by the Director, Zoological Survey of India, Kolkata).
 4. Girish Kumar, P., Sureshan, P.M. and Jadhav, S.S. 2021. Insecta: Hymenoptera: Vespoidea: Vespidae. In: K. Chandra, D. Jaiswal, C. Raghunathan, S.S. Jadhav and M. Karuthapandi (Eds.), *Current Status of Faunal Diversity in Telangana*: 211–220 (Published by the Director, Zoological Survey of India, Kolkata).
 5. Pati, S.K. 2021. Crustacea: Decapoda: Brachyura. In: K. Chandra, C. Raghunathan, P.M. Sureshan, K.A. Subramanian and A.N. Rizvi (Eds.). *Faunal Diversity of Biogeographic Zones of India: Western Ghats*: 159–165 (Published by the Director, Zoological Survey of India, Kolkata).
 6. Pati, S.K. and Mandal, S. 2021. Crustacea: Decapoda: Brachyura (Freshwater Crabs). In: K. Chandra, D. Jaiswal, C. Raghunathan, S.S. Jadhav and M. Karuthapandi (Eds.), *Current Status of Faunal Diversity in Telangana*: 113–118 (Published by the

- Director, Zoological Survey of India, Kolkata).
7. Sureshan, P.M. and Girish Kumar, P. 2021. Chapter 28 Insecta: Hymenoptera: Chalcidoidea. In: K. Chandra, D. Jaiswal, C. Raghunathan, S.S. Jadhav and M. Karuthapandi (Eds.), *Current Status of Faunal Diversity in Telangana*: 187-191 (Published by the Director, Zoological Survey of India, Kolkata).

POPULAR ARTICLES

1. Palot, M.J., Rajeevan, P. and Sashikumar, C. 2021. Annotated checklist of the birds of Madayipara, Kannur district of north Kerala, India. *Malabar Trogon*, 18(2 & 3): 12-42.
2. Prasad, H. and Purushothaman, J. 2021. Why do oceans glow? *Malabar Trogon* 18(2&3), 78-81.
3. Prasad, H., and Purushothaman, J. 2021. Oceanic Bioluminescence. *The Indian Ocean Bubble-2*, 14, 9-10.4.
4. Uttam Saikia, 2021. "The Earth needs our help" published in *The Shillong Times* on the 19th April, 2021.

4. Dr. Basudev Tripathy, Scientist-E, participated in the process for Species Richness Count - SRC (as per IUCN Red List) per unit area, being finalized by Statistics Division of MoEFCC, New Delhi.
5. Dr. Narender Sharma Scientist-E Attended first meeting of the XXIII State Board for Wildlife on 17th May, 2021, chaired by the Hon'ble Chief Minister, Arunachal Pradesh and Chairman, State Board for Wildlife, Arunachal Pradesh.
6. Dr. Anil Mohapatra, Scientist-E, attended the meeting of Similipal Biosphere Reserve Management Council (SBRMC) on 12.05.2021 by virtual mode, organised by State Forest Department, Odisha.
7. Dr. Sanjeev Kumar, Scientist-E and Dr. Ruquaeya Bano, Scientist-E and Hindi Adhikari attended Inspection Meeting on 20th May 2021 with Shri Kumar Pal Sharma, Deputy Director (Implementation), RIO (Rajbhasha Implementation of Official Language), Ministry of Home Affairs, Deptt. of Official Language, Northern Regional Implementation Office, New Delhi through virtual mode.
8. Dr. Rahul Joshi, Scientist-C, attended Arctiinae Research Community meeting 2021, via virtual mode, held on 28 May 2021 hosted by Wake Forest University.
9. Dr. R. H. Raina, Scientist-D, attended the second meeting of the State Board for Wildlife of the Union Territory of Ladakh Chaired by Hon'ble Lieutenant Governor, UT of Ladakh Shri R. K. Mathur, on 10th May 2021 via Video Conferencing.
10. Dr. S. S. Jadhav, Scientist-D attended BOS meeting on 8th May 2021 of Swami Ramanand Teerth Marathwada University, Nanded by virtual mode.

MEETINGS ATTENDED

1. Dr. C. Raghunathan attended the Internal Day for Biological diversity 2021 on 22nd May 2021, organized by National Biodiversity Authority through virtual mode.
2. Dr. K.A. Subramanian, Scientist-E, attended the meeting on identifying gap areas in Biodiversity Heritage Sites organized by the National Biodiversity Board, Chennai and also participated in discussions on notifications of threatened species under Section 38 of BD Act (2002) organized by WGRC, Kozhikode.
3. Dr. C. Sivaperuman, Scientist-E, attended the meeting with the official of AECOM in connection with the REIA studies conducted in Great Nicobar Islands for the developmental activities on 12th May 2021; attended the Doctoral Committee meeting at Department of Ocean Studies and Marine Biology, Pondicherry University to review the ongoing research activity of Ph.D. Research Scholars on 10th & 20th May 2021.

LECTURES DELIVERED

1. Dr. C. Sivaperuman, Scientist-E, delivered a talk on the Coastal and Marine Faunal Diversity of India in the webinar organized by the ENVIS Centre, Department of Science and Environment, Government of Puducherry on 22nd May 2021 on the occasion of International Biological Diversity Day 2021.
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2. Dr. T. Kubendran, Scientist-C, delivered a Lecture on the topic integrative Taxonomy of endangered species: A molecular approach" to PG Students & Scholars, organized by Department of Biochemistry, Kongunadu Arts and Science College, Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu on 21st May 2021.
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3. Dr. Muhamed Jafer Palot, Scientist-B, delivered a lecture on 'Biodiversity of Kerala and its Conservation' at the International Biodiversity Day Webinar jointly organized by the Kerala Forests & Wildlife Department (Social Forestry & Extension Division), Kerala and the Providence College of Teacher Education for Women, Kozhikode on 22nd May 2021.
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4. Dr. Gopal Sharma Scientist - E delivered an online invited lecture on "Dead bodies floating in the Ganges: an invitation to a new epidemic" on 22.05.2021 organized by SNS Sahibganj College Sahibganj, Sidhu Kanu Murmu University, Dumka, Jharkhand.
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5. Dr. Gopal Sharma Scientist-E delivered an online invited lecture on "Role of Youth in Nature Conservation" organised by Nehru Yuva Kendra Sangathan, Bihar, Patna on 22 May 2021.
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6. Dr. Uttam Saikia, Scientist-C, delivered one lecture, "New species discovery in Meghalaya" in a webinar organized by Meghalaya State Biodiversity Board and St. Anthony's College Shillong on the occasion of International Day for Biological Diversity.
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7. Dr. Kaushik Deuti, Scientist-C, delivered an invited lecture in a webinar at Durgapur Government College, West Bengal on 22nd May 2021 on the occasion of International Biodiversity Day.
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8. Dr. R. H. Raina, Scientist-D, on the occasion of International Bee Day 20th May 2021 made a brief deliberation to the National Correspondent of AMAR UJALA - A National Daily Newspaper for its Uttarakhand Edition and news published on the present Status of the Himalayan bees and their role in the pollination of High altitude floral diversity.
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9. Dr. S.K. Pati, Assistant Zoologist, has delivered a lecture on "Animal Taxonomy" as a resource person during the "PhD Course Work in Zoology" conducted online by the Modern College of Arts, Science and Commerce, Ganeshkhind, Pune, on 9th April 2021.
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10. Dr. Karuthapandi, Scientist-C delivered an invited talk on "DNA barcode" to the UG students of Telangana Social Welfare Residential Degree College for Women (L.B. Nagar, Hyderabad) on 28.05.2021.
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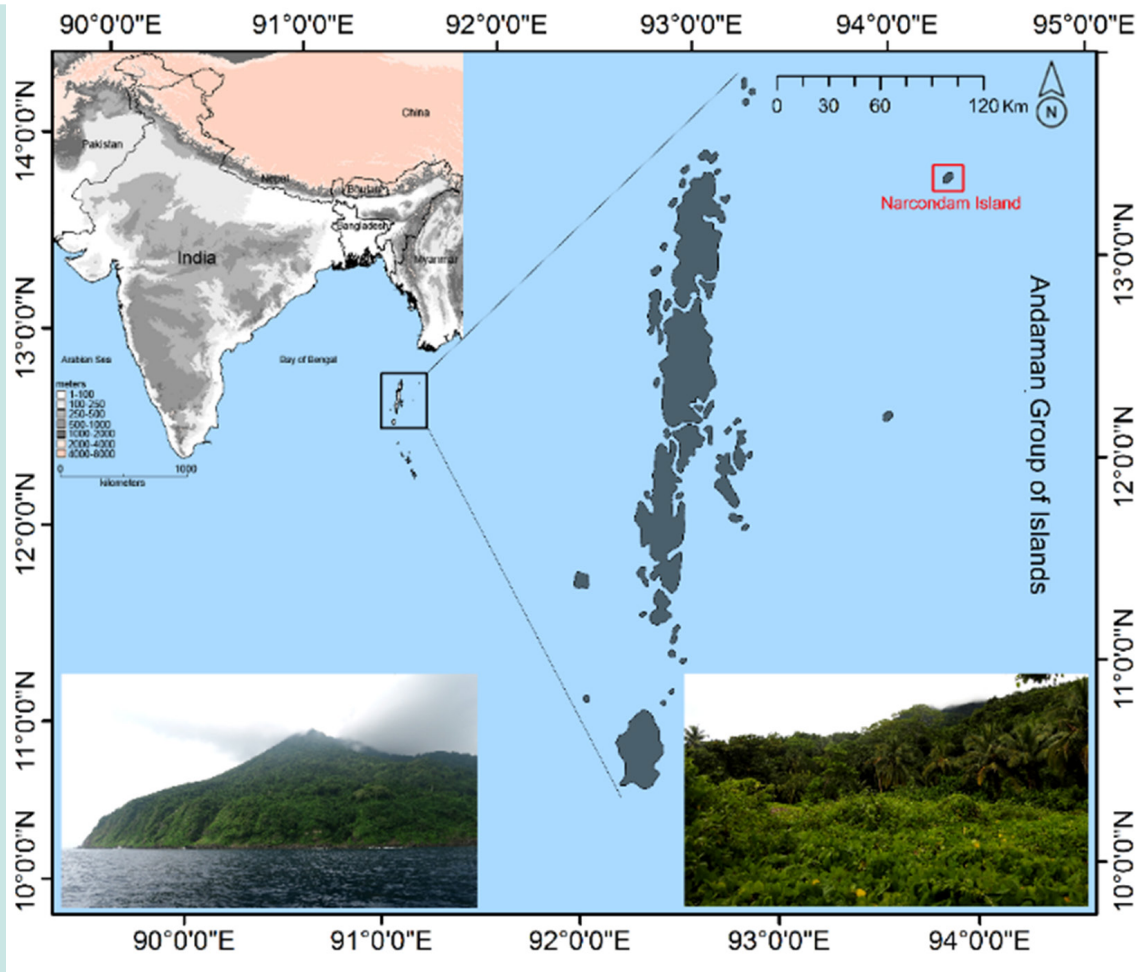
STORYLINE

NEW MAMMAL DISCOVERY FROM NARCONDAM ISLAND, ANDAMAN, AFTER 43 YEARS



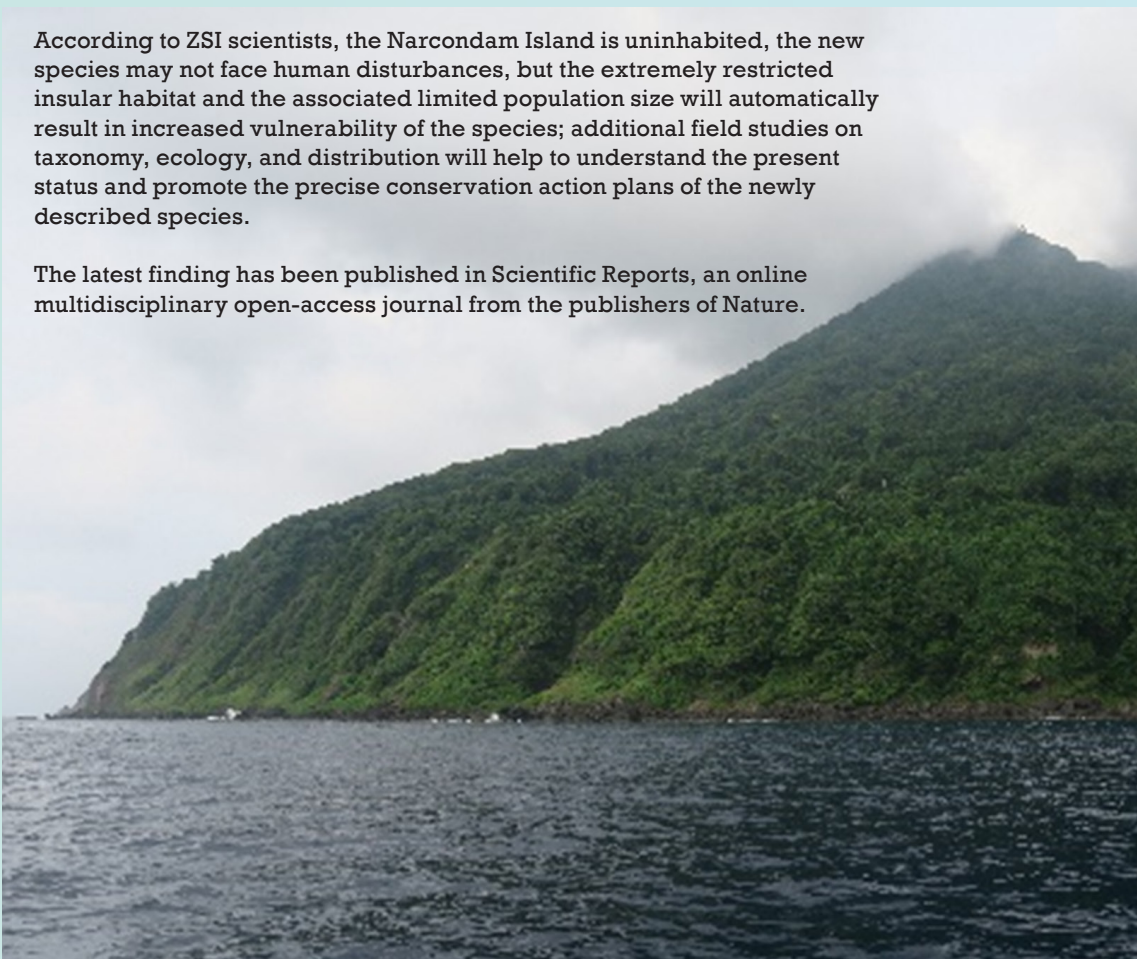
Scientists of the Zoological Survey of India recently discovered a new insectivorous mammal species from India after 43 years by using both morphological and molecular approaches. The new white-toothed shrew species is named after the type locality, Narcondam Island, regarded as a volcanic island situated in the Andaman and Nicobar Archipelago, India: Narcondam Shrew *Crociodura norcondamica*. The new species is of medium size (head and body lengths) and has a distinct external morphology with darker grey dense fur with a thick, darker tail compared to other species of the genus, and also the craniodental characters of the species such as braincase were rounded and elevated

with weak lambdoidal ridges makes the species distinct in comparison to other close congeners. This is the first discovery of a shrew from this volcanic island and increases the total number of *Crociodura* species catalogued in the Indian checklist of mammals to 12. The last insect-eating mammal species were discovered on South Andaman Island in 1978. This mouse-like mammal lives in the sub-leaf stratum in the forest and feeds primarily on insects. Thus, it is a really important organism for helping control the insect population in the dense forest of Narcondam.



According to ZSI scientists, the Narcondam Island is uninhabited, the new species may not face human disturbances, but the extremely restricted insular habitat and the associated limited population size will automatically result in increased vulnerability of the species; additional field studies on taxonomy, ecology, and distribution will help to understand the present status and promote the precise conservation action plans of the newly described species.

The latest finding has been published in *Scientific Reports*, an online multidisciplinary open-access journal from the publishers of Nature.



M. Kamalakannan
C. Sivaperuman
S. Kundu
G. Gokulakrishnan
C. Venkatraman
Kailash Chandra