

ZSI E-News

Vol. 87 | April 2026 | Monthly E-Newsletter from Zoological Survey of India





from the Director's Desk

Dear Colleagues and Esteemed Readers,

I am pleased to present the successful launch of the monthly E-News of the Zoological Survey of India for April 2026. This vibrant and enlightening publication vividly demonstrates the monthly milestones, achievements, and discoveries in the domains of faunal studies and explorations, thus reaffirming our unwavering dedication to scientific brilliance and documentation of biodiversity. This publication symbolizes the zeal, devotion, and commitment with which we strive to take our endeavors in the domain of zoological studies further and explore new horizons. Whether it is taxonomic discoveries, faunal exploration, or conservation initiatives, this publication truly represents our combined endeavors to comprehend, conserve, and cherish India's unique biological diversity.

The 23rd Research Advisory and Monitoring Committee (RAMC) meeting took place between 23rd and 24th April 202 in Gangtok, Sikkim. Zoological Survey of India extended their warm welcome to Chairperson Dr. Nandita Chatterjee, IAS (R), Advisor to UN Secretary General, former Member (A) Central Administrative Tribunal, and former Secretary to Government of India, Shri Ved Prakash Mishra, Joint Secretary, MoEFCC, Government of India, and all RAMC members for their active participation. In the said month, scientists at the Zoological Survey of India were able to identify 1660 faunal communities. This includes the discovery of eight new species, consisting of one new snake species, two new arachnida species, one new diptera species, and four new ephemeroptera species. It is particularly noteworthy that one species of crab, and one species of hymenoptera have been newly recorded in India.

Besides serving as an excellent medium of publishing our scientific endeavors, the publication also contributes significantly to creating awareness regarding biodiversity conservation and environmental sustainability. It gives me immense pleasure to express my gratitude to all the contributors involved in bringing out this insightful publication. I am confident that this publication will continue to promote scientific interest, cooperation in research, and involvement in the study and conservation of the unique fauna found in our country.

I hope that it continues to be successful in its efforts in the future as well.

Jai Hind,

Dr. Dhriti Banerjee

Director

5th May 2026

Kolkata

Cover: *Crocodylus porosus*
Schneider, 1801
Courtesy: ZSI/ANRC,
Sri Vijaya Puram

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HEADQUARTERS, KOLKATA

Field surveys have been conducted in Andaman and Nicobar Islands and Lakshadweep. A total of 417 species of faunal communities belonging to Arachnida, Diptera, Hymenoptera, Platyhelminthes, Orthoptera, Blattodea, Dermaptera, Phasmida, Ephemeroptera, Odoanta, Hemiptera, Nemathelminthes, and Mollusca were identified during the month. A total of 7 species belonging to Arachnida, Diptera, and Ephemeroptera were described as new to science, and 7 species of Arachnida, Diptera, Nemathelminthes, and Hemiptera were augmented to National Zoological Collections (NZCs). Apart from these, a total of 88 species of archaeological specimens were identified. Identification and Advisory services were rendered to Acharya N.G. Ranga Agricultural University, and Midnapore College. All scientists and staff members have completed over 4 hours of learning on the iGOT Karmayogi platform during the Karmayogi Sadhana Saptah from 2nd to 10th April 2026 and earned the 'AI Daksh' badge.



NORTH EASTERN REGIONAL CENTRE, SHILLONG, MEGHALAYA

A total of 96 species of different faunal groups belonging to Orthoptera, Odonata, Hemiptera, Lepidoptera, Aranae, Pisces, Amphibia, Aves, Decapoda, and Mollusca were identified. Scientists of the centre contributed towards description of a reed snake species *Calamaria garoensis* Purkayastha *et al.*, 2026 from Meghalaya as new to science. Identification and advisory services were rendered to five organizations and two outreach programmes were conducted under Mission LiFE and Poshan Pakhwada 2026, during this month.

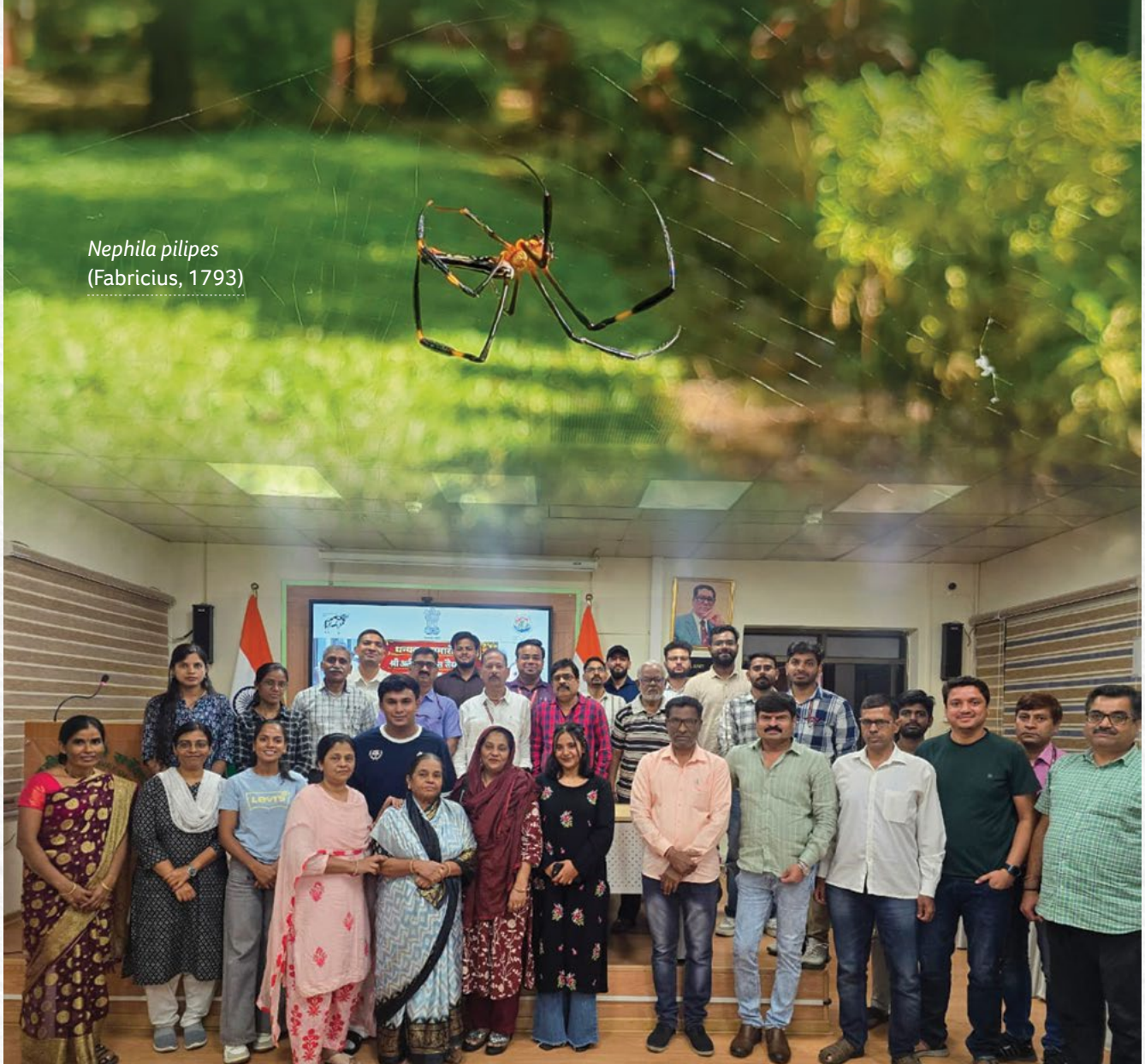


Poshan Pakhwada at Clear Spring Secondary School, Shillong

WESTERN REGIONAL CENTRE, PUNE, MAHARASHTRA

A total of 84 species of faunal communities belonging to Crustacea, Coleoptera, Hymenoptera, Lepidoptera, Mollusca, Mammals, Odonata, and Blattodea were identified. 10 DNA sequences have been submitted to NCBI. Identification and advisory services were rendered to eight different educational institutions. A total of 50 visitors, including students from various educational institutions, visited the museum of the centre.

Nephila pilipes
(Fabricius, 1793)



श्री अलीम सैयद अब्बास (फील्ड अटेंडेंट) के सेवानिवृत्ति

CENTRAL ZONE REGIONAL CENTRE, JABALPUR, MADHYA PRADESH

A total of 77 species of faunal communities including Lepidoptera, Orthoptera, Hemiptera, and Mollusca were identified. Swachhata 5.0 and Mission LiFE initiatives took place in the centre during this month. 140 visitors including students from Ashoka Hall Junior & High School, Jabalpur, visited the museum of the centre.



109 students from Ashoka Hall Junior High School, Jabalpur visited ZSI/CZRC Museum

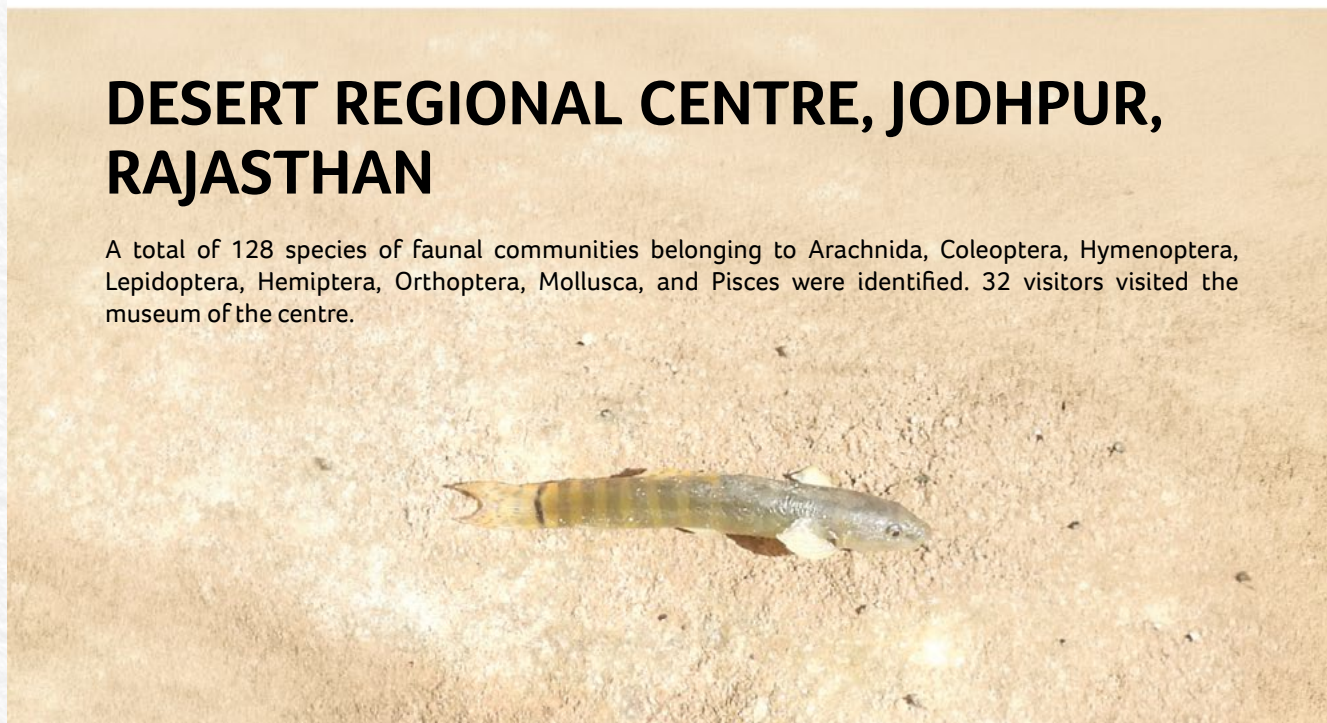


Dr Indu Sharma, Scientist-F, Officer-in-Charge delivered an invited lecture on “*Desert Ecosystem: Faunal diversity, landscapes and Adaptations*” during the Natural History Conference organized at Jodhpur and received the *Appreciation Letter*.

Appreciation Letter recived during Natural History Conference Jodhpur

DESERT REGIONAL CENTRE, JODHPUR, RAJASTHAN

A total of 128 species of faunal communities belonging to Arachnida, Coleoptera, Hymenoptera, Lepidoptera, Hemiptera, Orthoptera, Mollusca, and Pisces were identified. 32 visitors visited the museum of the centre.



Ray fined fish, *Schistura denisoni* Day, 1867

NORTHERN REGIONAL CENTRE, DEHRADUN, UTTARAKHAND

A local survey tour was conducted to Chakrata Region, Uttarakhand on 22nd April 2026. A total of 85 species of faunal communities belonging to Phthiraptera, Lepidoptera, Orthoptera, Coleoptera, Diptera, Pisces, Amphibia, and Reptilia were identified. The Centre organized “Mission Life Programme- Save Water, Save Electricity, Cleanliness Drive”, and “Ek Ped Maa Kae Naam Campaign”. The centre received “Certificate of Appreciation” for support and installing ZSI Fauna exhibition in the “Dehradun International Science and Technology Festival (DISTF), Dehradun” on 22nd April 2026.



Eurasian Wigeon, *Mareca penelope* (Linnaeus, 1758)
at Asan Conservation Reserve, Uttarakhand



Mission Life Activity Sapling Plantation in Dehradun City, Uttarakhand

GANGETIC PLAINS REGIONAL CENTRE, PATNA, BIHAR

A total of 101 species of faunal communities belonging to Insecta, Mollusca, and Pisces were identified. The centre organised an Awareness Programme on Yoga on 21st April 2026, wherein the Chief Guest, Shri Ram Vinay Sinha, Director, Indian Institute of Yoga, Patna, and the Special Guest, Shri Yatindra Sidharth, Secretary, Indian Institute of Yoga, Patna, graced the occasion and on the same day Poshan Pakhwara was also organized on the theme “*Mother and Child Nutrition*,” with Dr. Aditya Kumar Chandel, Chief Executive Officer, Samarpan Trauma & Research Centre, Patna, as the Chief Guest. International Earth Day was observed at the centre on 22nd April 2026.



Adult female of *Anisopteromalus calandrae* (Hymenoptera: Pteromalidae) parasitising the grub of *Lasioderma serricorne* (Fabricius) (Coleoptera: Ptinidae), commonly known as the cigarette beetle, under laboratory conditions at ZSI/GPRC, Patna.



During meeting at Lok Bhawan, Bihar, Patna on 24th April 2026

Assessment of coral recovery in Lakshadweep reefs

MARINE BIOLOGY REGIONAL CENTRE, CHENNAI, TAMIL NADU

A survey tour was conducted to the Kollam coast in Kerala from 19th to 23rd April 2026. 50 species belonging to Nematoda, Porifera, Insecta, Crustacea, Mollusca, and Pisces were identified and registered during this month.

A view of a shallow reef area in Palk Bay

ANDAMAN AND NICOBAR REGIONAL CENTRE, SRI VIJAYA PURAM, ANDAMAN AND NICOBAR ISLANDS

Long-term surveys were conducted to Great Nicobar Island from 1st to 30th April 2026, North & Middle Andaman from 1st to 8th April 2026, and local surveys were conducted on 3rd, 11th, and 15th to 20th April 2026 to study the Marine and Terrestrial faunal diversity. A total of 242 species of faunal communities belonging to Amphibia, Aves, Mollusca, Coleoptera, Hemiptera, Hymenoptera, Lepidoptera, Odonata, Orthoptera, Mammalia, Reptilia, Decapoda, Stomatopoda, Fishes, Ascidiars, and Mollusca were identified. One-day Awareness Programme on Aquatic Biodiversity and Conservation were organised as part of the observance of World Aquatic Animal Day on 3rd April 2026 at Beodnabad for school students. Plantation drive was conducted as part of celebration of “Earth Day 2026” under the theme “Our Power, Our Planet” on 22nd April 2026 at Gram Panchayat Calicut, South Andaman.



Nicobarese Frog, *Amnirana nicobariensis*
(Stoliczka, 1870)



Great Nicobar Island

SUNDERBAN REGIONAL CENTRE, CANNING, WEST BENGAL

A survey tour was conducted from 1st to 20th April 2026 under National Coastal mission 2.0 under the programme 'Development of Coral Reefs and its Management'. A total of 19 species of faunal communities belonging to Arthropoda, and Mollusca were identified during this month.

FRESHWATER BIOLOGY REGIONAL CENTRE, HYDERABAD, TELANGANA

A total of 135 species of faunal communities belonging to Fishes, Aquatic Coleoptera, Aquatic Hemiptera, Branchiopoda, Rotifera, Amphibia, and Mollusca were identified during this month. 18 DNA sequences have been submitted to NCBI. Mission Life and Swachhta Hi Seva Special Campaign 5.0 were conducted to generate awareness among people.



Anastomus oscitans (Boddaert, 1783)



Hirundo smithii Leach, 1818

WESTERN GHATS REGIONAL CENTRE, KOZHIKODE, KERALA

A total of 70 species of faunal communities belonging to Testate Amoeba, Coleoptera, Hymenoptera, Dermaptera, and Reptilia were identified. One species of Hymenoptera, *Antepipona bhutanensis* Giordani Soika, 1975, was recorded for the first time from India. Identification and advisory services was provided to Department of Botany, University of Calicut, Kerala. A total of 24 visitors visited the museum of the centre. “Poshan Pakhwada” was celebrated at the centre on 17th April 2026 where Dr. Jothi James, Clinical Dietitian & Nutritionist at Government Taluk Hospital, Feroke, Kozhikode, delivered an expert talk and an awareness session on this year’s theme, “Maximising brain development in the First 6 years of life”.



“Poshan Pakhwada”

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

A total of 185 species of different faunal communities were identified in this month. One species of crab, *Lyphira ngankee* Rahayu & Ng, 2024, was reported for the first time from the country. 5 DNA barcodes were uploaded to the NCBI database belonging to 4 species. An awareness programme was organized on 20th April 2026 at Anganwadi, Gopalpur, engaging mothers on key aspects of maternal and child health, highlighting the role of the Pankhudi Portal in connecting communities with government initiatives for improved nutrition and care. Students of S.B.R. Govt. Women's college, Berhampur, visited the museum and facilities during this month.

ARUNACHAL PRADESH REGIONAL CENTRE, ITANAGAR, ARUNACHAL PRADESH

A total of 90 species of faunal communities belonging to Blattodea, Hemiptera, Hymenoptera, Orthoptera, Lepidoptera, Diplopoda, Mollusca, Aves, and Pisces were identified during the month.



Dr. Vikram Delu at 14th board meeting of the Arunachal Pradesh Biodiversity Board on 22nd April 2026



Thysia wallichii Hope, 1831



Perna viridis (Linnaeus, 1758)

MARINE AQUARIUM AND REGIONAL CENTRE, DIGHA, WEST BENGAL

Survey tour was conducted on 9th April 2026 under the project “Ecology, diversity, and distribution patterns of meiofauna assemblages from the Bay of Bengal Coast with Special Reference to Polychaete”. A total of 57 species of faunal communities belonging to Nematoda, Mollusca, Foraminifera, Crustacea, and Polychaete were identified. 1 DNA barcode was uploaded to the NCBI database. A total of 6619 visitors, including students from various educational institutions, visited the museum of the centre.



Champa estuary, West Bengal

NEW DISCOVERIES

NEW SPECIES



Psechrus ntu Sudhin, Mali & Sen, 2026



Psechrus phenshunyu Sudhin, Mali & Sen, 2026



Clastobasis bifurca Das, Mukherjee, Pramanik, Naskar & Banerjee, 2026



Ephemera kodai Muthukatturaja & Balasubramanian, 2026



Ephemera kudremukha Muthukatturaja & Balasubramanian, 2026



Ephemera kapilaensis Muthukatturaja & Balasubramanian, 2026



Ephemera subramanyai Muthukatturaja & Balasubramanian, 2026

NEW RECORDS



Lyphira ngankee Rahayu & Ng, 2024



Antepipona bhutanensis Giordani Soika, 1975

PUBLICATIONS

► BOOKS

1. Jahan, S., Kushwaha, S., Yadav, S., Dam, D. and Rai, A. 2026. *Protected areas of central India (Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh)*. Pp. 1–394. Published by Manglam publication, New Delhi.
2. Pant, H. and Kushwaha, S. 2026. *Adhunik Jeewan evam paryavaran sanrakshan*. Pp. 1–167. Published by Bhaskar publication, New Delhi.

► PAPERS

1. Abitha, J., Dubey, A.K., Debnath, R., Dinesh, K.P. and Rajmohana, K. 2026. Host-associated introduction of *Amitus bennetti* Viggiani and Evans (Hymenoptera: Platygasteridae) in the Oriental region, India. *National Academy Science Letters*, 1–5.
2. Ahmed, S., Julka, J. and Banerjee, D. 2026. Two new species of the genera *Tonoscolex* Gates and the little-known *Nelloscolex* Gates (Clitellata: Megascolecidae) from the Himalayan and Indo-Burma biodiversity hotspots, India. *Journal of Natural History*, **60**: 881–889.
3. Banerjee, S., Kumar, D., Jaiswal, D. and Madasamy, K. 2026. Integrative taxonomy of the backswimmer genus *Enithares* (Hemiptera: Notonectidae) from India, with two new records. *Journal of Diversity Studies*.
4. Bharali, M., Sangma, C.M., Amarasinghe, T.A., Bohra, S. C., Swargiary, P., Marak. G.C., Hazarika, A.K., Das, M., Meetei, A.B., Lyngdoh, J., Lalremsanga, H.T. and Purkayastha, J. 2026. A new fossorial reed snake (squamata: calamariidae: Calamaria) from Northeast India, with a nomenclatural synopsis of the Calamaria pavementata complex. *Taprobanica*, **15**(1): 12–25.
5. Das, M., Mukherjee, B., Pramanik, D., Naskar, A. and Banerjee, D. 2026. A new species of *Clastobasis* Skuse (Diptera: Mycetophilidae) from India with a world checklist. *Zootaxa*, **5799**(1): 183–192.
6. Debnath, R., Rajmohana, K. and Dinesh, K.P. 2026. The first complete mitochondrial genome characterization and phylogenetic analysis of a potential biocontrol agent, *Trissolcus elasmuchae* (Watanabe) (Hymenoptera: Scelionidae). *Molecular Biology Reports*, **53**(532): 1–14.
7. Delu, V., Gondhali, U., Gupta, S.K. and Kumar, A. 2026. Genetic analysis reveals resilient historical connectivity among blackbuck (*Antelope cervicapra*) populations in India based on mtDNA control region. *Gene Reports*, **43**, 102490.
8. Dewangan, B., Panda, A.K., Kerketta, S., Kerketta, A., Bhatnagar, P.S., Behera, S.K. and Bisht, S.S. 2026. Traditional Animal-Based Medicines Practiced by the Indigenous Tribes of Surguja, Chhattisgarh, India. *Current Traditional Medicine*, **12**(1): E22150838390095.
9. Gautam, A., Ranjan, R. and Lyngdoh, J. 2026. Eastern range extension of the band-winged grasshopper *Pusana rugulosa* (Uvarov, 1921) (Insecta: Orthoptera: Acrididae) in India. *Journal of Threatened Taxa*, **18**(4): 28734–28738.
10. Ghosh, A. and Mukhopadhyay, A. 2026. First Record of *Turridrupa jubata* (Reeve, 1843) (Gastropoda: Turridae) a Carnivorous Gastropod from the West Coast of India. *The Festivus*, **58**(2): 117–120.
11. Ghosh, D., Girish Kumar, P., Naskar, A., Subramanian, K.A. and Banerjee, D. 2026. Notes on the distribution of vespid wasps (Hymenoptera: Vespidae) in Tawang, Eastern Himalayas, India. *Oriental Insects*, 1–30.
12. Kalawate, A.S., Faizi, T. and Thapasya, K. 2026. A New Distribution Record of Darkling Beetle (Coleoptera, Tenebrionidae, Cnodalonini) from Goa and Kerala, India. *Madras Agriculture Journal*, **113**(4-6): 24–26.

13. Kalita, R., Bardoloi, S. and Gautam, A. 2026. A preliminary checklist of Acrididae (Insecta: Orthoptera) fauna from Garbhanga Reserve Forest, Assam. *Insect Environment*, **29**(1): 75–85.
14. Katke, P.M., Vanjare, A.I., Karuthapandi, M. and Padhye, S. 2026. A comprehensive dataset of the large branchiopods (Branchinopoda, Anostraca, Notostraca, Laevicaudata, Spinicaudata, Cyclestheridae) of India. *Biodiversity Data Journal*, **14**: e182079.
15. Kayal, M.K. and Sen, S. 2026. Taxonomic notes on the Indian whip scorpions (Arachnida: Thelyphonida). *Zootaxa*, **5793**(2): 509–528.
16. Kharbisnop, B. and Saikia, B. 2026. Record of *Amolops siju* from Syndai Cave in Meghalaya, India. *Zoo's Print*, **41**(4): 39–41.
17. Kumar, V.M.S., Kumar, A. and Jaiswal, T. 2026. Molecular Identification of Snake Species from Shed Skin Using DNA Barcoding (Mitochondrial COI) in Agro-ecosystems of Bihar: A Case Study. *Journal of Global Ecology and Environment*, **22**(2): 61–69.
18. Mohapatra, P.P., Ray, S., Das, A.K., Satrusallya, R., Jena, S.K., Bhupathi, B., Das, R. and Mahapatra, A.K. 2026. Description of a morphologically distinct and phylogenetically divergent new species of the leopard gecko in the genus *Eublepharis* Gray, 1827 (Reptilia, Eublepharidae) from India. *Herpetozoa*. ISSN NO: 2682–955X (online).
19. Mohapatra, S.K., Dey, C. and Mohapatra, A. 2026. First report of the leucosiid crab *Lyphira nganke* Rahayu and Ng, 2024 (Crustacea: Brachyura: Leucosiidae) in Indian waters. *Nauplius*, **34**: e20260573.
20. Muthukatturaja, M., Balasubramanian, C., Kubendran, T. and Banerjee, D. 2026. Contribution to the knowledge of the mayfly genus *Ephemera* Linnaeus, 1758 (Insecta: Ephemeroptera) with description of four new species from the Western Ghats, India. *Zootaxa*, **5793**(2): 421–459.
21. Pati, S.K. and Kumari, P. 2026. First record of a brachyuran hosting immature chironomids (Insecta: Diptera: Chironomidae): Commensal association in the Indian endemic freshwater crab *Barytelphusa cunicularis* (Westwood in Sykes, 1836) (Decapoda: Brachyura: Gecarcinucidae). *Crustaceana*, 1–20.
22. Patra, S., Rajmohana, K., Abitha, J. and Hassan, M. E. 2026. Range Extension and Recurrent Phoresy in *Paratelenomus anu* (Hymenoptera: Scelionidae). *Insect Environment*, **29**(1): 101–108.
23. Paunekar, S. and Nair, A. 2026. Moths of Superfamily Pyraloidea (Insecta: Lepidoptera) of Gangau Wildlife Sanctuary, Panna district of Madhya Pradesh, Central India. *Journal of Fisheries and Zoological Sciences*, **1**(2), 96–100.
24. Purushothaman, J., Prasad, H., Parameswaran, U. V., Basu, S., Praveen Raj, C. and Banerjee, D. 2026. First Record of the Brittle Star *Ophiocnemis marmorata* (Lamarck, 1816) (Echinodermata: Ophiuroidea) Hitchhiking on *Cyanea nozakii* Kishinouye, 1891 (Cnidaria: Scyphozoa). *National Academy Science Letters*, 1–8.
25. Raina, R.H., Pathak, P., Choudhary, P., Shah, I.M., Uniyal, V.P. and Sharma, I. 2026. Exploring pollen resources of himalayan bumblebees: A scanning electron microscopy analysis of Angiosperm interactions. *Bangladesh Journal of Botany*, **55**(1): 85–91.
26. Raina, R.H., Shah, I.M., Choudhary, P. and Sharma, I. 2026. Predatory threat to Himalayan bumblebees: *Vespa velutina auraria* and its impact on *Bombus albopictus*. *Current Science*, **130**(7): 655–659.
27. Roy, S., Mohapatra, S.K., Satrusallya, R., Seth, J.K., Balakrishnan, S. and Raghunathan, C. 2026. First Report of *Norileca borealis* Javed & Yasmeen, 1999 of the Family Cymothoidae from the Coastal Waters of Southwestern India. *National Academy Science Letters*, 1–5.
28. Saikia, B., Laskar, M.A., Shabnam, A., Saikia, U., Kharkongor, I.J., Sinha, B. and Dinesh, K.P. 2026. A report of *Raorchestes mindat* Köhler et al., 2025 (Amphibia: Anura: Rhacophoridae) from Mizoram, India with comments on its phenotypic plasticity. *Zootaxa*, **5796**(2): 393–397.

29. Saikia, U., Ruedi, M., Arbenz, T., Chachula, O., Mukhim, D. K. B., Kharpran-Daly, B.D. and Harries, D. 2026. An evaluation of evidence for utilization of cave habitats by terrestrial mammals in Meghalaya, northeast India. *Cave and Karst Science*, **53**(1): 3–12.
30. Sudhin, P.P., Mali, S. and Sen, S. 2026. Two new species of *Psechrus* Thorell, 1878 (Araneae: Psechridae) from India. *Zootaxa*, **5796**(1): 124–134.
31. Temjenmongla, Mozhui, L., Riba, T., Khongsai, L. and Mayi, Y. 2026. New record of *Thysia wallichii* Hope, 1831 (Coleoptera, Cerambycidae) from Arunachal Pradesh, India. *Entomon*, **51**(1): 123–126.
32. Tudu, P.C., Afridi, S.S., De, K., Anand, M. and Balakrishnan, S. 2026. Distributional Range Extension and Existence of *Pugilina axelalfi* Thach, 2023 (Melongenidae: Neogastropoda) in Indian Waters. *National Academy Science Letters*, 1–5.

➤ BOOK CHAPTERS

1. Palot, M. J. 2026. Faunal diversity of Sacred groves in Kerala: An ecological view. Pp. 39–42. In: Soumya, R., Bijoy, C. and Sudhikumar, A. V. Bridging Belief and Biodiversity: The future of Sacred Groves. Proceedings of National Seminar. Pp. 1–75. Christ College, Irinjalakuda.

➤ POPULAR ARTICLES

1. अपर्णा सुरेशचंद्र कलावटे 2025. गोबर के भृंग (डंग बीटल्स): एक अज्ञात नायक। पर्यावरण, 73 वा अंक-जनवरी-2024: 105.
2. केलोथ राजमोहना | रूपम देबनाथ | वी. सुषमा. 2026. एक अंडा, अनेक परजीवी: मकड़ी के अंड म छपी *Idris* वंश (Hymenoptera: Scelionidae) क समूहक परजीविता. *Jeev darpan. Issue 1*. pp: 234–239.
3. Nandy, S. 2026. Pratanjeebvidya O Sundarban (In Bengali). Memoir of Sundarban Ancholik Sangrahashala, 46th year, 123–127.

➤ MEETINGS ATTENDED

1. Dr. Dhriti Banerjee, Director, ZSI, has been elected unopposed as the Vice President of the Entomological Society of India (ESI) as

a testament to her visionary leadership and her unwavering commitment to the field of entomology and faunal conservation in India; was invited to participate in International Conference on “Mahakala: The Master of Time” on 3rd to 5th April 2026 at Ujjain, MP jointly organized by the Madhya Pradesh Council of Science & Technology, Science & Technology Department, Government of Madhya Pradesh, Indian Knowledge Systems Division, Ministry of Education, Government of India, and VijnanaBharati (VIBHA); attended the first meeting of the Steering Committee, for projects undertaken following the 7th Meeting of the National Board for Wildlife, hosted by VC- MoEFCC on 13th April 2026; attended the Convening Meeting of the Steering Committee, for projects undertaken following the 7th Meeting of the National Board for Wildlife, hosted by VC- MoEFCC on 15th April 2026; visited BSI (Botanical Survey of India)–SHRC (Sikkim Himalayan Regional Centre), Gangtok, along with Dr. Nandita Chatterjee, Chairperson, RAMC (ZSI), and a team of ten scientists, on 22nd April 2026, for scientific interaction, knowledge exchange, and strengthening institutional collaboration in the field of biodiversity research and conservation; attended the 23rd Research Advisory and Monitoring Committee meeting along with Dr. Nandita Chatterjee, IAS, Advisor to United Nations Secretary General; Former Secretary to Government of India and Former Member (A), Central Administrative Tribunal Chairperson, ZSI-RAMC, Mr. Ved Prakash Mishra, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Government of India, Dr. C. Raghunathan, Additional Director, Member Secretary-RAMC, Zoological Survey of India, Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Government of India and Dr. Gurupada Mandal, Scientist-E & Head of Office, Zoological Survey of India, and also presented the Annual Progress Report of ZSI (April 2025 to March 2026) held at Gangtok, Sikkim on 23rd and 24th April 2026; signed Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the

- Zoological Survey of India (ZSI) and Centre for Marine Living Resources and Ecology (CMLRE), Ministry of Earth Sciences during the occasion of 23rd RAMC meeting; attended a virtual meeting regarding the status of APAR completion and Comprehensive Assessment on 30th April 2026 hosted by MoEFCC under the chairmanship of Shri Amit Anand, Deputy Inspector General of Forests (DIGF); attended a consultative meeting organised by G.B. Pant National Institute of Himalayan Environment (NIHE) for Nomination of a Scientist for the Committee to study the Forest and Biodiversity of Bhagirathi Eco-Sensitive Zone area on 30th April 2026.
2. Dr. C. Raghunathan, Scientist- F, ZSI/HQ, Kolkata, convened the 23rd meeting of RAMC for ZSI, as the Member Secretary, on 23rd and 24th April 2026 at Gangtok, Sikkim; delivered a brief talk on "*The biodiversity of Sikkim and its contribution in Sustainable Development Goals*" on the introductory session of the 23rd meeting of RAMC for ZSI on 23rd and 24th April 2026 at Gangtok, Sikkim; attended the 46th meeting of Lakshadweep Coastal Zone Management Authority Meeting on 30th April 2026 through virtual mode.
 3. Dr. C. Sivaperuman, Scientist- F, ZSI/ANRC, Sri Vijaya Puram, attended Ph.D. Viva- voce examination at Pondicherry University on 1st April 2026; attended the 43rd foundation day of RMRC-ICMR, Sri Vijaya Puram on 1st April 2026 as a Special Guest and delivered foundation day lecture on "*The mysterious continent of Antarctica*"; attended the 39th Convocation of Indira Gandhi National Open University Regional Centre-Port Blair as Special Guest on 7th April 2026 and delivered convocation day address; attended the Virtual Conference on Data Submission (CBP & GSDP), SIDH Portal Onboarding, and DRC Information Upload Scheduled on 24th April 2026, conducted by EIACP Division, MoEF&CC; attended meeting with Divisional Forest Officer, Nicobar Forests Division, Campbell Bay on 17th April 2026 in connection with the GNI Projects sponsored by Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India; attended meeting with Shri. Deepak Virmani, IAS, Director, Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India and officials of ANIIDCO on 17th April 2026 in connection with the proposed budget estimate of GNI Projects sponsored by Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India; attended meeting with the Assistant Commissioner, Campbell Bay, Great Nicobar Island on 17th April 2026 in connection with the GNI Projects sponsored by Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India; conducted review meeting of the ongoing GNI Projects sponsored by Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India on 16th and 20th April 2026 at Great Nicobar; attended Asian Water Bird Census 2026, post census meeting on 11th April 2026 conducted by Country Coordinator, Asian Water Bird Census.
 4. Dr. V.D. Hegde, Scientist-F, ZSI/WGRC, Kozhikode, attended the online meeting with MoEFCC regarding the pending matter in the ministry on 17th April 2026; participated in the foundation day celebration of KCSTE-Malabar Botanical Garden and Institute for Plant Sciences, Olavanna, Kozhikode, on 24th April 2026.
 5. Dr. Indu Sharma, Scientist-F, ZSI/DRC, Jodhpur, attended a Webex meeting held on 17th April 2026 under the chairmanship of JS (CS-II) to review pending matters.
 6. Dr. S.D. Gurumayum, Scientist- E, ZSI/APRC, Itanagar, attended the Nation Conference on forest resource and management at NERIST, organized by Department of Forestry, on 17th April 2026; attended online meeting on Notice for coordination meeting of regional heads, chaired by CSII, MOEF&CC on 17th April 2026.
 7. Dr. Anil Mohapatra, Scientist- E, ZSI/EBRC, Gopalpur, attended the management for preparation of working plan for Berhampur Forest Division on 16th April 2026; attended virtually the National Level Stakeholder Consultation on Draft Indian Standard for Restoration of Mangrove Ecosystem - Guidelines, Doc. EED 06 (33683) WC on 28th April 2026; attended the 5th Technical and Financial Committee of NIRANTAR on

- 29th April 2026 under the Chairmanship of the Addl. DGF (WL), MoEFCC at Indira Paryavaran Bhawan, Indus Conference Hall, Ground Floor, Jal Wing, New Delhi.
8. Dr. P.S. Bhatnagar, Scientist- E, ZSI/CZRC, Jabalpur, along with Dr. Santosh Singh, Scientist- B, Mrs. Pallabi Priyadarsini, Assistant Zoologist and Mr. Akhil Nair, Assistant Zoologist attended the online Coordination Meeting under the chairmanship of the JS (VPM) on 17th April, 2026.
 9. Dr. Basudev Tripathy, Scientist-E, ZSI/WRC, Pune, attended as a Panelist for Postdoctoral Research Fellow Interview on 7th April 2026 at Flame University, Pune.
 10. Dr. Anil Kumar, Scientist-E, ZSI/GPRC, Patna, attended an International Conference as 'Guest of Honour' (organised by Patna Women's College, Patna) and delivered a speech to highlight the significance of multi-disciplinary collaborative approach for generation of knowledge for sustainable development with peace, harmony, and synergy with nature on 1st April 2026; attended the online meeting organised by Joint Secretary, MoEF&CC, New Delhi, on the issues pending with Administrative Ministry on 17th April 2026; along with Dr. M. E. Hassan, Scientist-E, ZSI/GPRC, Patna, and Dr. V. M. Sathish Kumar, Scientist-C, ZSI/GPRC, Patna, attended meeting along with members of GPRC/ZSI, Patna, with Principal Secretary (In-Charge) and other Senior Officers of Lok Bhawan, Bihar in connection with proposal of faunal documentation of Lok Bhawan Campus on 24th April 2026.
 11. Dr. Aparna S. Kalawate, Scientist-E, ZSI/WRC, Pune, attended a meeting organized by PCCF (WL) for evaluating Research and Academic proposals on virtual mode on 6th April 2026.
 12. Dr. S. Balakrishnan, Scientist – E, ZSI/MARC, Digha, attended Coordination Meeting of Regional Heads, under the Chairmanship of JS(CS-II), MoEFCC, New Delhi on 17th April 2026.
 13. Smt. Jennifer Lyngdoh, Scientist-E, ZSI/NERC, Shillong, attended the coordination meeting of Regional Heads of BSI & ZSI under the chairmanship of Joint Secretary (CS II) on 17th April 2026, hosted by MoEF&CC.
 14. Dr. Souvik Sen, Scientist- E, ZSI/HQ, Kolkata, attended an online meeting on 15th April 2026 to finalize the agenda for 1st joint meeting of Advisory Committee and Monitoring Committee of National Red List Assessment of Indian Flora and Fauna; attended a meeting on 16th April 2026 at ZSI, Kolkata, under the chairpersonship of CCA, MoEFCC, New Delhi to discuss the activities of ZSI; visited the Regional Museum of Natural History (RMNH), Gangtok, on 21st April 2026 to discuss the allocation of space for the development of a dedicated faunal gallery by ZSI; attended the 23rd Meeting of the Research Advisory and Monitoring Committee (RAMC) of ZSI, from 23rd April to 24th April 2026, at Gangtok, Sikkim.
 15. Dr. Tamal Mondal, Scientist-D, ZSI/HQ, Kolkata, attended 39th General Meeting of International Coral Reef Initiative (ICRI) in Saudi Arabia on 20th to 22nd April 2026 virtually, attended 23rd RAMC meeting on 23rd April 2026 at Gangtok, Sikkim.
 16. Dr. Temjenmongla, Scientist- D, ZSI/APRC, Itanagar, attended a webinar on "Myriapod Meet-up-2026" organized by The Marek Lab at Virginia Tech, USA, on 1st April 2026.
 17. Dr. Dimos Khynriam, Scientist-D, ZSI/NERC, Shillong, attended the reconciliation meeting at PAO (BSI/ZSI), Kolkata from 6th to 10th April 2026.
 18. Dr. Mrinal Kumar Das, Scientist- D, ZSI/ANRC, Sri Vijaya Puram, attended the 94th Half Yearly Meeting of the Town Official Language Implementation Committee, Sri Vijaya Puram on 28th April 2026.
 19. Dr. Muhamed Jafer Palot, Scientist-C, ZSI/WGRC, Kozhikode, participated in the foundation day celebration of KCSTE-Malabar Botanical Garden and Institute for Plant Sciences, Olavanna, Kozhikode, on 24th April 2026; attended a webinar on "Flora as Archives: Reconstructing the Biogeographical Evolution, Vegetation History, and Endemism

- of Kerala's Western Ghats*" delivered by Dr. P. V. Karunakaran, Director of the Indian Regional Association for Landscape Ecology (IRALE), Thiruvananthapuram on 27th April 2026, organized jointly by the Kerala Forests & Wildlife Department, Kerala Council for Historical Research (KCHR) and the KCSTE-Kerala Forest Research Institute (KFRI), Thrissur.
20. Dr. Atanu Naskar, Scientist- C, ZSI/HQ, Kolkata, has attended 23rd RAMC meeting from 21st to 26th April 2026.
 21. Ms. Debashree Dam, Scientist- C, ZSI/HQ, Kolkata, along with Dr. Dola Roy, Scientist- B, attended a meeting with Director General, GSI, Dr. Asit Saha and Dr. Saibal Ghosh, Scientist, GSI on 8th April 2026 at Geological Survey of India, Kolkata to discuss about an interdisciplinary collaboration between the Zoological Survey of India (ZSI) and the Geological Survey of India (GSI) to integrate the National Stratigraphic Map of India into an Integrated Fossil Heritage Portal; attended the 23rd Research Advisory and Monitoring Committee (RAMC) meeting at Gangtok, Sikkim from 21st to 26th April 2026; acted as coordinator for the program "*Poshan Pakhwada*" which was celebrated in ZSI from 9th to 23rd April 2026.
 22. Dr. Vikram Delu, Scientist- B, ZSI/APRC, Itanagar, attended and represented ZSI/APRC in the 14th board meeting of the Arunachal Pradesh Biodiversity Board on 22nd April 2026, where he provided inputs on the newly drafted State Biodiversity Rule 2026.
 23. Dr. Rehanuma Sulthana, Assistant Zoologist, ZSI/FBRC, Hyderabad, attended Reconciliation at PAO Kolkata from 6th to 9th April 2026 along with Mr. Amit Kumar, Office Superintendent and Mr. B. Shankar; attended a workshop on "*Access benefit sharing in Marine Resources: Transferring Equity to coastal communities*" organized by National Biodiversity Authority and Andhra Pradesh State biodiversity Board at Vijayawada on 29th April 2026.
 24. Shri. Sreejith S. Kumar, Assistant Zoologist, ZSI/WGRC, Kozhikode, presented a paper entitled '*Freshwater Prawns of Parambikulam Tiger Reserve with Special Reference to their Role as Ecological Indicators*' at the MES Research Colloquium at MES Medical College, Perinthalmanna, on 21st to 22nd April 2026.
 25. Mr. Akhil Nair, Assistant Zoologist, ZSI/CZRC, Jabalpur and Mrs. Chandra, Stenographer attended the POSH quarterly meeting of ZSI/CZRC virtually on 23rd April 2026.

➤ TRAININGS ORGANIZED

1. ZSI/ANRC, Sri Vijaya Puram, organized three-month certificate course on Junior Para-Taxonomy & Nature Conservator-cum-Ecotourism Guide under the Green Skill Development Programme.

➤ TRAININGS ATTENDED

1. Two officers and ten staff members of ZSI/CZRC, Jabalpur, attended Census HLO training for India Census- 2027 from 19th to 21st April 2026 at Govt. I.T.I., Jabalpur.
2. Dr. S.K. Pati, Assistant Zoologist, ZSI/WRC, Pune, participated in the "*TNFD Train the Trainer India*" training programme held at the Indian Institute of Management, Nagpur, from 20th to 22nd April 2026.
3. Mr. Amartya Pal, Assistant Zoologist, ZSI/APRC, Itanagar, attended a hands on "*Phylogenetics Workshop*" in online mode organized by Molecular Plants and Microbiology Laboratory, Department of Botany, Ramakrishna Mission Vivekananda Centenary College, Rahara.

➤ LECTURES DELIVERED

1. Dr. Gaurav Sharma, Scientist-F, ZSI/NRC, Dehradun, delivered a lecture on topic entitled "*Status of Mammalian Diversity, Protected Areas and efforts on their conservation in India*" to students and Faculty of Lala Lajpat Rai University of Veterinary and Animal Sciences, Hisar, Haryana in the Conference Hall of ZSI/NRC, Dehradun on 8th April 2026; delivered a lecture on topic entitled "*Status of Faunal Diversity and efforts on their conservation in India*" to students and Faculty of School of

- Environment Management, Guru Govind Singh Indraprastha University (CGSIPIU), New Delhi in the Conference Hall of ZSI/NRC, Dehradun on 15th April 2026; delivered a lecture on topic entitled “*Status of Faunal Diversity, Protected Areas and efforts on their conservation in India*” to students and Faculty of Oasis School, Dehradun in the Conference Hall of ZSI/NRC, Dehradun on 25th April 2026.
2. Dr. Indu Sharma, Scientist-F, ZSI/DRC, Jodhpur, delivered an invited lecture on “*Desert Ecosystem: Faunal diversity, landscapes and Adaptations*” at the 3rd Jodhpur Natural History Conference organized at Lachoo Memorial College of Science and Technology in collaboration with Jodhpur Natural History Society on 5th April 2026 and received the appreciation Letter.
 3. Dr. Basudev Tripathy, Scientist-E, ZSI/WRC, Pune, delivered a talk on the topic “*Half a Century of Turtle Conservations-Where Are We?*” organized by Maharashtra Vruksha Samvardhini, Pune Institute of Natural History Education and Research in an association with IQAC and Department of Botany, R. J. College Mumbai on 6th April 2026.
 4. Dr. S. Balakrishnan, Scientist – E, ZSI/MARC, Digha, was invited as a Resource Person for the Advanced Certificate course and delivered a lecture on the topic “*Coastal and Marine Biodiversity, and their Economic Prospectus*”, organised by Centre for Continuing and Adult Education (CCAIE), Department of Zoology, Vidyasagar University on 11th April 2026.
 5. Dr. Anil Kumar, Scientist-E, ZSI/GPRC, Patna, delivered a talk on ‘*Significance of common medicinal plants for a healthy life*’, during Poshan Pakhwada celebration at ZSI/GPRC, Patna on 21st April 2026; delivered a talk on ‘*Importance of Yoga*’ during Yoga Day 2026 awareness programme at ZSI/GPRC, Patna on 21st April 2026; delivered a talk on, ‘*Significance of natural resource conservation for the sustainability of life on Earth*’ during International Earth Day 2026 Celebration at ZSI/GPRC, Patna on 22nd April 2026.
 6. Dr. Anil Mohapatra, Scientist- E, ZSI/EBRC, Gopalpur, delivered an invited talk on “*Effect of Oil Pollution (Spilling) on Marine Biodiversity*” in the Local level Pollution Response training and Exercise- 2026, Organized by Indian Coast Guard Station, Gopalpur on 22nd April 2026.
 7. Dr. D. Suresh Chand, Scientist- E, ZSI/HQ, Kolkata, delivered a lecture at “*A Seminar of the Language of Life: Taxonomy, ICZN, and Phylogenetic Theory*” organized by Dept. of Zoology, Sarojini Naidu College for Women, Kolkata on 18th April 2026.
 8. Dr. V. M. Sathish Kumar, Scientist-C, ZSI/GPRC, Patna, delivered a lecture on “*Our Power, Our Planet: Together We Protect*” on the occasion of International Earth Day 2026 Celebration at ZSI/GPRC, Patna on 22nd April 2026; delivered a lecture on “*Objectives, Priorities & Achievements of the Zoological Survey of India and the Plan for the Documentation of the Fauna of Lok Bhawan, Patna, Bihar*” upon kind permission by His Excellency the Governor of Bihar, at Lok Bhawan, Patna, on 24th April 2026.

PHOTO GALLERY



Delegates at 23rd RAMC Meeting, Gangtok, Sikkim



Exchange of MoU in the presence of Mr. Ved Prakash Mishra, Joint Secretary, MoEF&CC



Signing of MoU by Director, ZSI and R S Maheskumar, Scientist-G, Ministry of Earth Sciences



Glimpses of DZSI visit to BSI Regional Centre

A Tribute to Dr. V. C. Agrawal - One of India's Pioneer Mammalogists (1936 – 2020)

by

Dr. K. Venkataraman

Former Director, ZSI; Former Secretary, NBA; Former Member Secretary LoEA



It is both an honour and an emotional responsibility to place on record this tribute to Dr. V. C. Agrawal, one of India's pioneering mammalogists and a devoted scientist of the Zoological Survey of India (ZSI), whose life epitomised intellectual brilliance, personal sacrifice, scholarly integrity, and quiet resilience.

Early Life: Brilliance Born of Hardship

Born on 3rd November 1936 in Varanasi, Dr. Agrawal's early life was marked by profound hardship. An exceptionally brilliant student, Dr. Agrawal completed his high school at the age of 13 and intermediate at 15. Recognising his academic excellence, scholarships enabled him to

continue his education. Though he aspired to study medicine, financial constraints prevented him from even travelling from Varanasi to Lucknow to attend the entrance examination. His B.Sc. degree was completed in 1953, even as he had already begun professional responsibilities.

Teaching and Entry into ZSI

Before joining ZSI, Dr. Agrawal served as a biology teacher at Queen's College, Varanasi, for three years. In February 1960, he joined the Zoological Survey of India, likely posted initially at Jodhpur, marking the beginning of a scientific journey that would span over four decades. He served ZSI with distinction until his retirement in 1994.

A Pillar of Zoological Survey of India

Established in 1916, ZSI has been India's premier institution for faunal documentation. Dr. Agrawal's scientific output falls squarely within the most productive and formative decades of the institution. His work reflects ZSI's integrated approach—combining taxonomy, systematics, ecology, and conservation, and contributing enormously to the National Zoological Collections and authoritative faunal literature. Even after retirement, his dedication remained undiminished. He served as Scientist Emeritus at the Indian Museum for two years, continuing to guide and contribute to Indian mammalogy.

Dr. Agrawal was among the earliest Indian scientists to bring rigorous cranial morphometrics and ecological context into rodent taxonomy. A defining feature of Dr. Agrawal's work was his meticulous attention to intraspecific geographical variation, essential for accurate biodiversity documentation. Beyond rodents, his expertise extended to other mammalian groups, including a study

on the Large Indian Civet (*Viverra zibetha*) from the Indo-Burmese region. Dr. Agrawal's field-based contributions covered almost every major biogeographic region of India. Dr. Agrawal contributed significantly to national conservation documentation which bridged taxonomy and conservation policy—an achievement few scientists accomplish.

Final Years and Demise

Dr. Agrawal suffered from multiple vertebral collapses and was diagnosed with multiple myeloma of the spine. On immunosuppressants, he succumbed to COVID-19 infection on 22nd August 2020, in Prayagraj, while under the care of his daughter.

Legacy

Dr. V. C. Agrawal leaves behind not just publications, but a moral legacy—that science can be pursued with humility, scholarship without ego, and service without expectation.

A Great Salute to His Contributions to Science.