



Sahyadri Nisarga Mitra,
Chiplun

Sahyadri Nisarga Mitra, Chiplun Annual Report 2010-11



Sahyadri Nisarga Mitra, Chiplun has successfully implemented all its programmes in the year 2010-11. The turtle festival was organized at Velas in the period from 21st February to 31st March this year. Living up to its name, Kasav Mitra Mandal, Velas ensured excellent arrangements for the tourists during this period. The tourists were left fascinated by the festival. Work to set up a permanent Marine Turtle Knowledge Information Centre is already underway at Velas. Your support for this project would be highly appreciated. Vulture conservation work has begun with great gusto at the new feeding location near Anjarla. Similarly, school nature club programmes have been conducted on a regular basis with a view to involve the youth in nature conservation.

Our Mission

Nature Conservation through Field Protection, Awareness,
Education and Scientific based Action



Turtle Protection and Conservation Project :-

Relentless work by SNM since the past nine years has culminated in successful conservation of the marine turtle along the coast of Maharashtra. Today protection of marine turtle nests and the safe release of hatchlings has been implemented in 30 coastal villages. Like 2009-10, the breeding season was delayed again this year. In 2010-11, a total of 82 nests were protected and 3482 hatchlings released into the sea. Thanks to the concept of 'Conservation through Livelihoods', local villagers have come out in full support of the project. The credit for this also goes to the large scale awareness activities that SNM regularly arranges across the projects areas. The last 9 years have witnessed protection of 681 turtle nests and the secure release of 30,465 hatchlings into the sea.

Turtle Festival: –

The Turtle Festival was successfully organized at Velas in the period from 21 February to 31 March 2011. The festival that is held annually since the year 2005-06 is a unique initiative by SNM to enable the local populace to actively participate in turtle conservation. The Forest Department, Velas Gram Panchayat and Kasav Mitra Mandal, Velas were all involved in the festival this year. The Festival benefitted from excellent coverage in the media. Tourists from different places, different professions visited Velas to experience the magic of the tiny hatchlings crawling towards the sea. The villagers invited them into their homes with open arms. The Forest Department and Government Department were also present during the festival. The arrangements made by the villagers of Velas were exceptional. SNM provided them with the latest technology. SNM also uploaded details of the members of the Kasav Mitra Mandal, including their names, contact numbers and the facilities offered, on their website. Due to this, tourists were able to directly get in touch with the members. To reach out to a wider audience, SNM continuously updated its website. Information about the state of the turtle nests, emergence of the hatchlings from the nests, the expected dates of emergence etc. was made available to the public twice a day.



The release of 1186 hatchlings into the sea, and a warm welcome extended to the 520 tourists including 4 foreigners by the KMM members guaranteed the stupendous success of the festival. Tourists expressed an eagerness to help protect the marine turtle in whatever way they could. Some were even willing to volunteer at Velas during the festival. Some tourists helped via donations, others via membership. They purchased books on turtles, DVDs, photo frames, eco-friendly bags and miniature models of turtle hatchlings as memorabilia. Sumant Narayan, Yogiraj Rathod, Ms. Dhanashree Joshi, Mr. Mohan Upadhyay, Ms. Vaibhavi Joshi and Subodh Telang worked hard to ensure that the festival became a huge success.



This year, many locals realized the profit that was to be gained by associating themselves with the Kasav Mitra Mandal. Hence, they came forward and actively participated in its activities. In this manner, 13 members of the Mandal were involved in the organization of the turtle festival at Velas this year. The members contributed 10% of their total income generated during the festival to the Marine Turtle Conservation Fund to help protect the turtle. These funds are utilized exclusively for the conservation of the turtle at Velas. Mahila Bachat Gats at Velas set up stalls that sold tea and homemade food items to the tourists- thus providing them with an additional source of income. The Turtle Festival at Velas has proved again that nature conservation can be accomplished through livelihood management. SNM would like to thank all the tourists and participants that helped make this unique endeavor a brilliant success story.

Vulture Conservation :-

The organization has been working on vultures since the past eight years. Its activities include research, protection and conservation of this Critically Endangered species. There exists an Oriental White-rumped vulture nesting colony at Anjarla village in Dapoli taluka. Our studies indicated that scarcity of food is the main problem that is driving vultures towards extinction here. Hence, the organization focuses on providing diclofenac-free food to the vultures along with spreading basic awareness about the role played by this species in the environment.



Vultures build their nests on coconut trees. However, the acidity of their droppings is responsible for destroying the yield of those trees with nests. Due to this, the plantation owners do not allow vultures to nest on their trees. In response to the appeal made by SNM for compensation for the affected owners and having scrutinized the documentary evidence provided by the organization, the State Government announced a package of Rs. 400 per coconut tree for those whose yield was destroyed by the nesting vultures.

School Nature Clubs:-

Students are an important part of society- they are the future guardians of India's natural wealth. Hence, it is imperative to sensitize them towards the environment and to create awareness about its significance. With this in mind, SNM regularly organizes a variety of programmes through school nature clubs.



From 1st January to 15th January 2011, drawing and painting competitions were organized for school children. The topic for the drawing competition was Seashores and Marine turtles; for essay writing, it was Marine Biodiversity and the Importance of Marine Turtles. Students were divided into 2 groups- Std. 5 to Std. 7 and Std.8 to Std. 10 for the competition. The first three winners from each group per school were presented with cash prizes and certificates. The competitions were organized in 20 schools and close to 5000 students participated in them.

Shri Shankarlal Pokarna Charitable Trust, Pune. :-

Like the last few years, in the year 2010-11 too, the Trust helped implement the Marine Turtle Conservation project in the villages of Maral, Diveagar, Harihareshwar, Srivardhan and Velas in Raigad district. A total of 28 nests and 3118 eggs were protected; 1359 hatchlings were released into the sea.

Awareness programmes continue to be implemented across villages. Similarly, nature education activities are conducted on a regular basis in schools and colleges. These include several competitions, lectures, discussions, slide shows and film screenings. Nature, Marine Biodiversity, Turtle Conservation and its Importance for Human Existence are some of the themes that are touched upon through these programmes.

We are extremely grateful to Shri Shankarlal Pokarna Charitable Trust, Pune for their benevolence that has helped us save our teeny tiny turtle friends since the past years. .

Tata Consultancy Services, Thane :-

TCS, Thane sponsored the conservation of the marine turtle at Velas this year. Twenty-three nests consisting of 2737 eggs were protected, and 1316 hatchlings were successfully released into the sea. Representatives from TCS attended the Turtle Festival at Velas.

We would like to convey our heartfelt gratitude to TCS, Thane for encouraging us through their absolute support.

Turtle Action Group (TAG) :-

TAG is a group of organizations that are engaged in turtle conservation in India. Financial aid and scientific equipment were provided to SNM by TAG this year. Mr. Jayant Kanade and Mr. Bhau Katdare attended the International Symposium on Sea Turtles in Goa from 27-30th April 2010.

Awards and Felicitations :-

- Zee 24 Taas, news channel of the Zee Group, honored Mr. Bhau Katdare and Sahyadri Nisarga Mitra with the **Ananya Sanmaan** award for the year 2010. On 4 February 2011, Mr. Bhau Katdare accepted the award at a glittering awards ceremony.
- Mr. Bhau Katdare inaugurated the Kirloskar Vasundhara International Film Festival at Kolhapur on 2nd November, 2011.
- Samakaalin Prakashan/ Unique Features, Pune published an essay of the work accomplished by Mr. Bhau Katdare through SNM in a book titled 'Kharekhure Idols'. This has helped make the common man aware about the mission of the organization and its achievements.
- Artistry, Pune had organized a programme- 'Dene Samaajache' in the period from 24th to 26th September at Pune. This was a platform for various social organizations to reach out to the man on the street and showcase their work. SNM was honored to be selected for this exhibition.
- Urja Prakashan, Pune published an article by Mr. Bhau Katdare in the first publication of their book 'NisargaPurna'.



Acknowledgements

Our work has been successful largely due to your unconditional support. We would like to express our gratitude to all our donors, well-wishers and supporters who have helped us protect and conserve nature since 1992.

Appeal

A mere glance at the threats faced by India's rich biodiversity convinces us of the urgency with which protection and conservation work needs to be undertaken in this field. SNM has been struggling for the preservation of our natural wealth since the past 19 years. However, it has its limitations. This is why we urge you to help us in this endeavor in whatever way you can.

Donations will be exempt from IT under 80G

You may remit your contribution by way of Cheques/DD's or Credit directly to our following account and inform us immediately.

Name of account: Sahyadri Nisarga Mitra, Chiplun

1. Name of Bank : Bank of India, Chiplun
Account Number: 141110110000077
2. Name of Bank : Bank of Maharashtra, Chiplun
Account Number: 20061344941

Sahyadri Nisarga Mitra, Chiplun

11, United Park, Markandi, At Post Tal. Chiplun, Dist. Ratnagiri,
Maharashtra - 415605. Tel. (02355)253030

Bhau Katdare: 9423831700
Uday Pandit: 9423047700

Jayant Kanade: (02355)237105
Vishwas Joshi: 9422430933

Chandrasen Shirole: 9921296576

E-mail : snmcpn@rediffmail.com
sahyadricpn@gmail.com

Website: www.snmcpn.org

