

BANABANDHU

ZOO NEWS



Quarterly News Letter

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The Bengal Safari Newsletter
North Bengal Wild Animals Park, Siliguri, West Bengal



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GALLERY



IN THIS ISSUE

We welcome you to another issue of Zoo News. In this quarter, the park has been visited by many designated guests and visitors such as Principal Secretary to the Hon'ble Chief Minister of West Bengal, ADG MOEF&CC, Member Secretary, WBZA etc. During this quarter, we reached to many colleges of Siliguri and celebrated “National Energy Conservation Day” on 14th of December, 2018. On this occasion, we organised 1st Inter- College “PowerPoint Presentation” Competition. The park also welcomed Daddy and Phurbu, two Himalayan Black Bear from Himalayan Zoological Park, Sikkim.

STAFF CORNER

Welcome of Director, NBWAP, Shri. Rajendra Jakher (IFS)

Shri Rajendra Jakher (IFS), Director, Padmaja Naidu Himalayan Zoological Park, Darjeeling, took over the charge of Director of North Bengal Wild Animals Park, Siliguri from Shri. Arun Kr. Mukhopadhyay (IFS) on 9th November, 2018. Shri. Jakher (IFS) is in dual charge of PNHZP as well as NBWAP.

Welcome to the newly appointed Veterinary Assistant and Education Assistant

Bengal Safari welcomed Shri. Biswajeet Sarkar who joined the veterinary section as Veterinary Assistant from 1st October, 2018 as well as Shri. Samir Thapa as the Education Assistant replacing outgoing Dr. Rajib Biswas from 1st December, 2018.

RESEARCH AND EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES

PowerPoint Presentation Competition

North Bengal Wild Animals Park (Bengal Safari), Siliguri, celebrated “National Energy Conservation Day” on 14th of December, 2018 in the Seminar Room of the Administrative Building. Bengal Safari organized Inter- College “PowerPoint Presentation” Competition with a theme of “Conserve Energy to Preserve Future” on the occasion of foresaid event. The chief guest of the event was Shri. Asim Kr. Chaki (W.B.F.S), Assistant Director, Bengal Safari. The event was judged by Shri. Biplab Das (Asst. Prof) Kurseong College, Shri. Subrata Paul, Member, PFA, Siliguri, and Shri. Aditya Mitra (Zoo Biologist), NBWAP.

The competition included participation by five different colleges of Siliguri. Each college was represented by two students and one faculty member. The PowerPoint Presentation session was actively participated by all the participants, faculty members and the judges with beautifully orated and presented slides along with fiery scientific queries and healthy discussions among them. Out of five colleges, Siliguri College won the said event, while APC Roy Govt. College and Gyanjyoti College became the 2nd and 3rd respectively.

The main purpose behind organising the PowerPoint Presentation competition was to make the young minds aware of the need to conserve energy in order to preserve the ecosystem and sharing constructive ideas for a better future.



Internship Program

Ms. Ruma Mandal (M.Sc in Zoology, Darjeeling Govt. College) has joined Bengal Safari in a six week internship program. She will conduct “an ethological study of the leopard cubs” housed at the park.

Status of the Project titled “Status Survey of Free Living Flora & Fauna”

A status report of the project has been submitted to the West Bengal Zoo Authority recently. During the second year of the extension period of the project a total of 80 quadrates for vegetation structure of the Bengal Safari, 80 quadrates for natural fodder status of herbivores within Bengal safari and 40 quadrates for the status of epiphytes of Bengal Safari have been studied in the floral survey. During this period, 2 tree species, 1 climber species, 1 shrub species and 14 herb species have been identified in addition to the already recorded 456 species of flora during the first phase of the study. During the second year of the extension period of the project transect quadrates have been studied within four zones of the park, viz., visitors area, riverine area, herbivore area and the biodiversity zone for insects, birds and arachnids. A total of 56 species of insects, 7 species of fishes, 20 species of aquatic benthic fauna and 13 species of birds have been identified during the second phase of the faunal study in addition to the already recorded 495 species of fauna during the first phase. The compilation of collected data and the draft report of the second phase of the study will be submitted by March, 2019.

VETERINARY CORNER

Visit of Advisory Committee

On 03.11.2018, the Advisory Committee of West Bengal Zoo Authority comprising of Dr. Basudev Maity (Joint Director, RDDDL), Dr. Pralay Mandal and Dr. Malay Maity had visited to inspect the husbandry, upkeep and managerial practices of the Park as well as the veterinary section. Their inputs and suggestions proved quite effective and the park has taken effort to follow them.

ANIMAL'S CORNER

Acquisition of two Himalayan Black Bears

In accordance with the approval received from Central Zoo authority, New Delhi, a pair (1:1) of Common Leopard (*Panthera pardus*) was transferred from South Khairbari Rescue Centre, Alipurduar to Himalayan Zoological Park, Sikkim on 20th December, 2018 and a pair (1:1) of Himalayan Black Bear (*Ursus thibetanus*) was acquired by Bengal Safari from the HZP. The transportation team comprised of officials from NBWAP and PNHZP.

Himalayan Black Bear (*Ursus thibetanus*) (1:1)



a) Phurbu (Female, Right)



a) Daddy (Male, Left)

VISITOR'S CORNER

Visit of Doordarshan kendra

On 02.12.2018 & 03.12.2018, a team comprising of Mr. Anup Sen (Programme Executive), Mr. Chandrakumar (Cameraman), Mr. Pradip Karmakar (Engineering Assistant) and Mrs. Sonali Chakraborty Ghosh (Production Assistant) from Doordarshan Kendra visited the Park. On the first day, shooting comprised of shots of staff in the morning filing, the visitor walking areas of the Park, the playground, aviaries, lesser cats, gharial, crocodile enclosures, medicinal plant garden, bonsai garden and the veterinary hospital. The team also took interview of visitors, Veterinary Officer and Animal Attendant at the hospital. They even documented videos of the Tiger Safari, Leopard Safari and Black Bear Safari accompanied by the Zoo Biologist and Education Assistant. On the second day of their visit, they went for the herbivore area shoot with the feeding vehicle. Later that day they took interview of the Range Officer, Zoo Biologist and the Assistant Director.



VISIT OF NEPAL AND INDIAN FOREST OFFICIALS

On 12.12.2018, Indian as well as Nepal forest officials visited Bengal Safari. During their visit, the Director of NBWAP, Shri. Rajendra Jakher (IFS) gave them a warm welcome along with an introductory speech. It was followed by a brief explanation on Bengal Safari and its administration, infrastructure as well as facilities and utilities provided for the animals as well as visitors by Shri. Aditya Mitra, Zoo Biologist.

INSTITUTION VISITS

Sl. No.	Date	Name Of Institution	No. of Teachers	No. of Students
1	06/10/2018	St. Philomena School, Kalimpong	04	28
2	07/10/2018	Vivekananda Shishu Mandir, Malda	07	33
3	09/10/2018	Child Welfare Home Primary School	02	24
4	10/10/2018	Nadipar H.C. High School, Balurghat	04	40
5	10/10/2018	G.Z.P.S (Green Zone Public school)	10	60
6	10/10/2018	A.P.C.Roy Govt. College, Dept. Of zoology	03	29
7	11/10/2018	North Point Residential School, Ranidanga	12	195
8	16/10/2018	Phulmoti Memorial Universal Smart Academy	05	36
9	25/10/2018	Kalimpong College, Kalimpong	02	20
10	27/10/2018	Mahbert High School, Dagapur	16	150
11	27/10/2018	Turung Sec. School, South Sikkim	06	36
12	02/11/2018	Dolphin Institute of Education, Mungpoo, Darjeeling	05	15
13	03/11/2018	Vidya Jyoti Academy, Bijanbari, Darjeeling	09	45
14	18/11/2018	Govt. Sec. School, Rhenok, E. Sikkim	05	29
15	24/11/2018	St. Michael's School, Siliguri	03	26
16	24/11/2018	Maulana Azad International School	08	150
17	24/11/2018	R.K.H.S School, Kurseong	10	34
18	08/12/2018	St.Joseph's School (Todey Jaldhaka)	06	12
19	08/12/2018	Himalayan Nursery School, Lebong	05	16
20	08/12/2018	UMS Karwamari SonaChandi	03	39
21	13/12/2018	Bright Life Academy	09	41

Dignitaries & Their Comments

Date of Visit	Name	Designation	Comments
14/10/2018	Shri. U.K. Lal		I was pleasantly surprised by this safari. It has really good infrastructure and arrangements for safari. The animals seemed well- cared for and the forest is beautiful. Needs to be publicised more.
21/10/2018	Shri. Gautam Sanyal	Principal Secretary to the Hon'ble Chief Minister of West Bengal	Thoroughly enjoyed a new experience in the safari. Very nice upkeep all rouse.
24/10/2018	Shri. Saibal Dasgupta	ADG (F) MOEF&CC, New Delhi	A thoroughly enriching experience. Bengal safari has shaped up well. I wish this endeavour all success. Congratulations to Shri. Arun Mukherjee (IFS) & his staff. May also think of adding Bison & a female rhino.
01/11/2018	Shri. Binay Krishna Barman Shri. V.K. Yadav	MIC, Dept. Of Forests, WB Member Secretary, WBZA	
13/11/2018	Shri. Arpan Mitra	Animal Lover	Health of birds is ok. But different species should be kept separately for better identification, breeding and sunflower seeds to be feed regularly to all parrots.
28/11/2018	Dr. Wangdup Bhutia (IFS)	Principal, Central Academy of Forest Education, Kurseong (West Bengal),	
28/11/2018	Shri. Anil Kumar	A.C.F A&N Island	Place is nice. Nicely maintained. Staffs are disciplined & cordial. Maintain the food work. All the best.
01/12/2018	Shri. P.C. Tyagi	PCCF & HOFF (TN) Retd.	Visited WB Safari and observed that the master plan prepared for the Safaris & the exhibit along with the support infrastructure, hospital, store, public utility facility have been constructed with all safety means for animals, animal keepers and the visitor. The requisite staffs are in place and with addition of more animals will be one of the best safaris in the country. My good wishes to the park staff for maintaining the standard for upkeep & maintenance of the animals.
29.12.2018	Dr. Ravikiran Govekar	Member Secretary, Maharashtra State Zoo Authority, Nagpur, Maharashtra	As a part of my official tour programme to West Bengal, I visited the NBWAP, Sukna. The range Officer Mr. Rasaily & Asst. Director Mr. A.K. Chaki briefed me about the entire project, plannings, management & funding. This project has been meticulously planned, executed and being managed in very efficient manner. The inputs from WBZA in the form of finance as well as technical support are appreciable. Maharashtra's 1 st safari park at Tadoba can gain lots of inputs from this project. Nice upkeep & efficient model. All the best.

Visitor Database

CATEGORIES	OCTOBER 2018	NOVEMBER 2018	DECEMBER 2018
No. of Zoo (OTC) Visit	5574	38185	12883
No. of Zoo (Online) Visit	141	12	161
No. of Herbivores Safari (OTC) Visit	493	35	0
No. of Herbivores Safari (online)Visit	0	0	0
No. of Elephant Ride (OTC) Visit	313	255	224
No. of Elephant Ride (Online) Visit	79	71	91
No. of Tiger Safari (OTC) Visit	1143	758	1437
No. of Tiger Safari (Online) Visit	0	6	0
No. of Combo-I (OTC) Visit	3813	3781	5034
No. of Combo-I (Online) Visit	28	31	0
No. of Combo-II (OTC) Visit	0	4428	0
No. of Combo-II (Online) Visit	0	24	0
No. of Grand Safari (OTC) Visit	10366	5034	10990
No. of Grand Safari (Online) Visit	1382	724	1847
Camera	4	2	5
No. of Zoo (Students Celebration) visit	0	94	0
DISCOUNT	40850	11250	26600
NET REVENUE (Rs.)	2743820	2282050	3173705

NEWLY INTRODUCED VISITOR FACILITY

To cater to different needs of visitors during their visit to the park, one of the new facilities introduced recently is “Golf Cart Ride” mainly for the senior citizens and others.



ARTICLES CORNER

BUTTERFLIES: THE PARAGON TO THE RICHNESS OF BIODIVERSITY IN BENGAL SAFARI

Namrata Ghosh, Research Scholar, Bengal Safari

Ever since its inception, Bengal Safari strives to showcase its enigmatic floral and faunal diversity throughout its existing vegetation structure. It houses more than hundreds of species of butterflies belonging to order Lepidoptera which are distinctly identifiable from their colour, large, scaly wings, elongated soft bodies and two elongated antennae. In Bengal Safari, the Lepidopteran butterfly families such as Nymphalidae shows the maximum richness, followed by Lycaenidae and Papilionidae as per the phase-1 survey on free living faunal diversity at the park. Some of the commonly occurring butterfly species easily visible to the visitors are *Euploea core core*, *Junonia lemonias*, *Neptis hylas*, *Tanaecia lepidea*, *Tirumala limniace leopardus*, *Ypthima baldus baldus*, *Phalantha phalantha* and many more.

Butterfly diversity at park varies with season. They are abundant for only a few months and rare or absent during other months of the year. The abundance of diverse species were positively affected by approaching summer (March-April), increase in relative humidity and more rainfall. During the present study, the numbers of the butterflies were peaked during post-monsoon season (late August to October). There is an obvious association of butterfly species richness in the park with vegetation parameters such as plant species richness, herb and shrub density and canopy cover. Herb and shrub density are major predictors of butterfly abundance. The preference of butterflies for particular habitats is associated with the availability of larval host plants and adult nectar plants. The rich diversity of butterflies, especially the Nymphalids and Lycaenids in Bengal Safari indicates a varied assemblage of floral species such as *Alstonia scholaris*, *Chomolena odorata*, *Lantana camara*, *Cleome viscosa*, *Citrus sp*, *Terminalia arjuna*, *Murraya spp*, *Hibiscus sp*, *Nerium sp*, *Bougainvillea sp* and grasses which provide diverse habitat, food and breeding sites for butterflies.

Butterflies exist as an easily recognizable biotic component of the ecosystem due to their visible attractiveness and colour. Besides being a functional herbivore, the ecological role of serving as pollinators is significant. Beside their attractiveness, butterflies are of interest because they can also be used to monitor environmental conditions as bio indicator species and thus change in butterfly abundance indicates change in habitat conditions.

Plantation of larval host plants and maintenance of pre-existing herbs and shrubs is implemented within the Bengal Safari throughout the year. Still an objective revision of the wildlife protected scheduled list is necessary in providing appropriate and adequate legal protection to Indian butterflies.



Painted Jezebel



Common Grass Yellow



Five-bar Swordtail



Leopard Lacewing



Common Lascar



Common Mormon



Painted Jezebel

Publications

- Ghosh Namrata, Biswas Rajib and Mitra Aditya (2018) *Species diversity, abundance and habitat association of spiders with relation to their guild composition in different habitats of North Bengal Wild Animals Park (Bengal Safari)*. Int.J.of. Life Sciences, Volume 6(4): 911-918.
- Mitra Aditya, Doley Nick (2018) *How the peacock lost its colour*. Banabithi. Wildlife Issue, December 2018:20-

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