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Centre



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World Natural Heritage Management and
Training for Asia and the Pacific Region



Ministry of Environment, Forest
and Climate Change
Government of India



भारतीय वन्यजीव संस्थान
Wildlife Institute of India



CELEBRATING NATURAL HERITAGE: IN LITERATURE, ARTS AND CULTURE A NATURAL HERITAGE FEST

7th-8th February 2017, Wildlife Institute of India, Dehradun
11th-12th February, 2017, Sai Ropa,
Great Himalayan National Park Conservation Area (GHNPCA),
Himachal Pradesh

Jointly Organized by:

UNESCO Category 2 Centre on World Natural Heritage
Management and Training for Asia and the Pacific Region and
Himachal Pradesh Forest Department,
Great Himalayan National Park



GREAT HIMALAYAN NATIONAL PARK
ग्रेट हिमालयन नैशनल पार्क



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The UNESCO Category 2 Centre for World Natural Heritage Management and Training for Asia and the Pacific Region (NWHMT) at Wildlife Institute of India, Dehradun, organized a two-venue event as part of an innovative festival titled 'Celebrating Natural Heritage: In Literature, Arts & Culture' on 7-8 February 2017 at Wildlife Institute of India Dehradun and from 11-12 February at Sairopa, Great Himalayan National Park and Conservation Area, a UNESCO World Heritage Site in Himachal Pradesh. The primary objective of the festival was to reinforce the appreciation of environmental heritage and connection with nature through popular forms of visual and written media, and to bring together various fields of conservationists that seldom interact, including nature writers, poets, journalists, photographers, filmmakers, travellers, academics and researchers from various backgrounds. This was the first attempt of its kind where a nature-culture linkage through creative writings, poetry and history of the place was being explored. The sub-sessions included plenary talks by distinguished authors and conservationists on various aspects of nature writing in the mountains, historical perspectives through illustrations, poetry and texts on evolution of nature conservation, use of audio visual media for nature documentation with special awareness sessions for media and youth. Key highlights of the sessions at Dehradun, included a talk by world renowned naturalist and conservationist Dr George Schaller who spoke about his various travels through the remote and inaccessible areas across the globe and his pioneering research on some of the most endangered animals inhabiting such landscapes. He was joined by Dr AJT Johnsingh and Dr Asad Rahmani who also shared their own experiences of studying wilderness, and about the nature writers who influenced their work. Other noteworthy authors, editors and media personalities included Mr Stephen Alter, Mr Ranjit Lal, Mr Bikram Grewal, Dr Santosh Bakaya, Ms. Purna Bindra, Mr. Anup Sah, Ms Sree Nandy, Mr Dhritiman Mukherjee, Ms. Rita Banerji among others. Another unique session was held, completely devoted to Hindi and regional languages of the hills (Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh) and saw the recitation of over fifty poems related to nature and a discussion on the road map ahead for nature writing through this medium, which was supported by Shri Mangalesh Dabral, Shri Liladhar Jagoori, Shri Naresh Saxena among others. The programme was further continued at Tirthan Wildlife Range, Sai Ropa, Great Himalayan National Park and Conservation Area (GHNPCA), a UNESCO designated Natural World Heritage site in Kullu district of Himachal Pradesh on 11th-12th February, 2017 with the support of Himachal Pradesh Forest Department. Here again, the festival continued on a similar theme, with special focus on history of nature writing and poetry of Himachal Pradesh along with special interactive training and awareness sessions for journalists, forest frontline staff and school children on Natural World heritage Sites.

Venue: Wildlife Institute of India

DAY 1 – 7TH FEBRUARY, 2017

Inaugural Address

In his inaugural address, Dr. V.B. Mathur, Director WII and UNESCO C2C NWHMT welcomed all resource persons and participants to the festival 'Celebrating Natural Heritage: In Literature, Arts and Culture' organised by the UNESCO Category 2 Centre for World Natural Heritage Management and Training for Asia and the Pacific Region, at the Wildlife Institute of India. He discussed a brief idea behind the festival, which was aimed at bringing conservationists from various fields and disciplines, that seldom interact, including nature writers, poets, journalists, photographers, filmmakers. He also informed the audience about the Nature Writers Competition that was organised by UNESCO C2C at a national level. The festival was organised to celebrate India's spectacular natural heritage through creative arts and literature, and was aimed to encourage involvement of youth interested in nature, wildlife and especially nature writing. He emphasised on the event's significance and uniqueness as this is one of the first ventures of UNESCO C2C at WII to sensitise students, local communities and youth about nature and wildlife, through writing, poetry and the arts, and untold tales that dwell in natural heritage sites. He also gave a brief introduction on UNESCO Category 2 Centre's activities and achievements in inscriptions of three Indian sites viz. Khangchendzonga National Park, Nalanda University and Architectural works of Le Corbusiertrans National Serial Site on the prestigious UNESCO World Heritage Sites List in 2016.

SESSION ONE

Presentation by Dr George Schaller

Dr George Schaller, an eminent wildlife conservationist, biologist and author, interacted with students and audience on pressing issues pertaining to wildlife and natural heritage conservation. He talked about role of youth in conservation of wildlife and forest resources. Giving a glimpse of his work in the conservation in the past six decades, he discussed his experiences and insights on conserving various mammal species across the world. He appreciated India's vast diversity in terms of natural and cultural resources. Through photographic documentation, he portrayed and discussed his experiences while working on the outstanding natural landscapes and wildlife of India and the world. Discussing his flagship works in different continents of the world, he shared some reflections from his work in Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, Democratic Republic of Congo, India, Tibet, China and Brazil. He also discussed some of the serious concerns regarding threats being faced by these landscapes and wildlife like

poaching, illegal hunting, developmental activities, land-use changes which are jeopardizing the future of these fascinating animals. While giving an overview of the global scenario of threats to biodiversity, he emphasized on the role of education and stakeholder's sensitization in contemporary conservation approaches. He stressed on the urgency of the wildlife crises across the planet and that there is a need for immediate action before we lose these invaluable animals and landscape.

He also discussed his work in studying various endangered mammals, like the Snow Leopard in Pakistan, Tiger in India, Mountain Gorilla in Rwanda, Tibetan Antelope in Tibet, Bharal in Dolpo, Nepal, Cheetah in Iran, and shared his perspectives on the ongoing conservation efforts for these animals, and the observations he has made over his career in pioneering wildlife biology.

Book Release

A children's book on tiger conservation titled **"When I Grow Up I Want to Be a Tiger"** by Ms. Perna Bindra was formally released by Dr. George Schaller. The book **"Where are the Lilacs"** by Dr. Santosh Bakaya, which is a collection of peace poems, was released by Dr. V.B. Mathur. On the occasion, both the authors shared their experiences regarding the inspiration for writing the book on nature and how these books are an attempt to merge the worlds of literature and wildlife conservation together. The former book is about the journey of a Tiger cub in Indian Forests, whereas the latter one encompasses poems on nature.

Nature Writing Competition 2017

The session ended with the felicitation of winners of the nation-wide Nature Writers Competition that was organised by the UNESCO C2C. The top three positions were held by Mr. Nishanth S. (for his article The Human Pachyderm), Ms. Kadambari Devarajan (for her article Stories in the Sand) and Mr. Anuranjan Roy (for his article The Storm Within). A total of 67 entries were received for the competition.

These entries received were scored through two jury panels under two rounds of evaluation. The 67 entries were divided into different sets at random, and one set was sent to each jury member for evaluation. The entries were scored out of 100, based on different criteria. The two highest scoring entries were selected from each of the six sets sent to jury members. This constituted a total of 12 entries, which were sent for the second round of evaluation. The top three highest scoring entries from these were the winners of the Nature Writers Competition and won a chance to attend the Natural Heritage Festival being held in Wildlife Institute of India and Great Himalayan National Park.

SESSION TWO

Panel Discussion: History And Legacy Of Nature Writing In India

Panel Members: Mr. Bikram Grewal, Mr. Ranjit Lal, Dr Asad Rahmani

Facilitator: Ms. Perna Bindra

The session began with a brief introduction by Ms. Perna Bindra who spoke on how nature writings have personally influenced and guided her, following which she invited Dr Asad Rahmani, Mr Bikram Grewal and Mr Ranjit Lal to proceed with their talks. The first presentation titled 'An embarrassment of Riches – Glimpses from India's Natural History' by Mr Bikram Grewal focussed on discussing the documentation of natural heritage of India throughout history. Starting with the Mughal period where he mentioned Babar as India's first naturalist, he also discussed the emperors Akbar and Jahangir and their documented interest in wildlife. He mentioned the rich paintings by Ustad Mansur during the Mughal period, not just of native plants, birds, etc. but also of exotic animal species like Zebra, Dodo and others. His presentation also threw light on the coming of East India Company and their extensive and thorough documentation of India's natural history. William Jones formed 'The Asiatic Society of Bengal' in 15 Jan 1784 and started a journal called 'Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal', publication from which later became part of the journal famously known as Bombay Natural History Society.

Mr. Grewal emphasised that even at that time, the tiger and other large cats captured immense public interest. The lesser taxa like amphibians and reptiles were overlooked. He went on to highlight the contributions in the documentation of India's natural history from various administrators, foresters, planters and nobles of the erstwhile British India including of Capt Thomas C. Jerdon (1811-1872), A. O. Hume (1829-1912), W. T. Blanford (1832-1905), Edward Charles Baker (1864-1944), Frank Finn (1868-1937), Douglas Dewar (1875-1935), and Hugh Wishtler (1889-1943), Jim Corbett (1875-1955), Kenneth Anderson (1910-1974), and F. W. Champion (1893-1970). A special mention of Salim Ali and his extensive work on birds was also discussed.

The next talk by Dr Asad Rahmani focussed on the nature writings of M Krishnan, whose contributions to the field of popularising nature are relatively lesser known. He elaborated that Krishnan was famous for capturing animal behaviour in print. He spoke of M. Krishnan as a person who was an ecological patriot and believed that "the identity of a country is dependent not so much on its mutable human culture as on its geomorphology, flora and fauna, its *natural* basis." He quoted some of Krishnan's books; *Jungle and Backyard*, *Nights and Days* and his lesser known book *Indian Wildlife, 1959-70*, published by BNHS in 1975.

The next talk was by Mr. Ranjit Lal, an eminent writer who has written books inspired by nature such as The Crow Chronicles, The Life and Times of Altu Faltu, The Small Tigers of Shergarh; The Simians of South Block and the Yum-yum Piglets, The Tigers of Taboo Valley, Bambi, Chops and Wag; Birds from My Window; The Birds of Delhi; Wild City etc. He shared with the audience that Dr. Salim Ali and his writings has been his inspiration in life. Influenced by it, he emphasized on improving vocabulary to the school kids. Elaborating the beauty of his writing, Mr. Lal explained that every word is a part of a jigsaw puzzle and fits perfectly in the flow of writing, thus the craft of nature writing should be inculcated from school days.

SESSION THREE **The Mountains Speak**

Panel Discussion on Celebrating And Conserving Himalayan Heritage

Panellists: Mr Stephen Alter, Dr. AJT Johnsingh, Dr. G. S. Rawat, Mr. Dhritiman Mukherjee

Facilitator: Ms. Sree Nandy

This session was focussed on bringing together individuals from various backgrounds, like photography, writing and science to speak on the importance of the natural and cultural heritage of the mountains.

Ms. Sree Nandy began the session asking each of the panelists to elaborate why they thought the mountains were significant. To this, Dr. AJT Johnsingh mentioned that the Himalayas hold their significance in geographic, ecological, cultural, historical and many other dimensions. It is responsible for the monsoonal climate of the country. It has historical significance as many invasions were attempted through the Himalayas some of which failed and some succeeded which changed the history of the country. He also spoke on the natural and cultural biodiversity of the Himalayas. Mr. Dhritiman Mukherjee mentioned that throughout its length and breadth the mighty Himalayas offers great diversity of habitats and fauna which is spectacular, and shared several of his photographs of Himalayan forests and wildlife. Dr. G.S. Rawat discussed the fact that the influence of Himalayas is such that they have made a place in culture of people by giving rise to folklore, festivals, rituals associated with nature. He mentioned that mountains have given rise to many local poets like Mr. Chandrakunwar Barthwal, Gumani Pant, Narendra Singh Negi and Gopal Babu Swami.

Mr. Stephen Alter spoke on the importance of nature writing about natural and cultural heritage and focused on how historically the Mughals and Greek were greatly influenced by the Himalayas. An extensive amount of folklore and fables exist that are rooted in the Himalayan people. He added that to protect heritage we should preserve associated stories, and that nature writing crosses over different

genres of literature from fiction to non-fiction and children's books. The connection between natural history and cultural heritage is important because nature's stories get told in many different ways from the scientific to the mythological. He added that nature writing makes an important contribution to conservation because it helps inspire people to protect our planet. He discussed his books *Becoming a Mountain*, *The Secret Sanctuary* and *In the Jungles of the Night*. A brief Q/A session followed, in which an interested audience asked questions about mountain culture, nature and climate change.

SESSION FOUR

Kavi Goshti/Poetry Reading By Eminent Hindi Poets

Panellists: Mr Mangalesh Dabral, Mr. Naresh Saxena, Mr. Leeladhar Jagoori, Ms. Rekha Chamoli, Mr Anil Karki, Mr. Rajesh Saklani, Mr Sureshsen Nishant, Mr Atma Ranjan, Mr. Prakash Badal

Facilitator: Mr. Shiv Prasad Joshi

In a first of its kind event, this session was a Hindi poetry reading session in which award winning poets from across India, who have also penned poems with much concern for nature and environment, recited their poetry. The session was facilitated by Mr. Shiv Prasad Joshi, who began by stating that the genesis of poem writing is from nature and that poetry is an expression of our day to day action. He explained how poetry unravels various ways of understanding nature and there is no single dimension to unfold and thus is multidimensional. He invited the guests by quoting Van Gogh, in a line that highlights nature writing beautifully, "I have nature and art and poetry, if that is not enough what's enough?" This was followed by the poetry session.

The first speaker was Mr Anil Karki, who frequently writes on political issues, said that in his poems nature and human are considered no different than each other. His poem was titled *ईजी, न्योली और पलायन*, and he spoke on issues of habitat loss and urbanization/developmental projects impacting wildlife and water bodies. Ms Rekha Chamoli then recited her poem *पेड़ बानी स्त्री* in which she spoke of pressures faces by forests in India, and habitat destruction. Mr Prakash Badal recited a few lines or 'ghazals' through which he touched on the topics of climate change and melting of glaciers. Mr. Atma Ranjan, a prominent poet from Himachal Pradesh, spoke on issues of forest conservation and the dependency of humans on nature in various forms through his poems *लोक वृक्ष* and *पृथ्वी पर लेटना*. Mr. Sureshsen Nishant, also a prominent poet from Himachal Pradesh, spoke on developmental projects coming up in mountainous regions and destroying the grandeur of nature. His poems were titled *मेरे भूपानी, पहाड़ पर एक और नै सीमेंट फैक्ट्री लगने पर* and *सेब*. They explain the misery of the

mountains due to merciless change in its land form by humans. Mr. Rajesh Saklani recited a poem titled *जंगल वार्ता* which was an attempt to give a voice to the atrocities faced by wild animals due to forest destruction. His second poem was titled *बेनाम फूल* themed on flowers displaced from a garden. Mr. Mangalesh Dabral, who is a native of Garhwal, recited his poem on the emotional connect between people and the mountains titled *पहाड से मैदान*. He recited two more poems titled *आवाजें* and *पेड़*. Mr. Leeladhar Jagudi recited a poem titled *एक बुढ़िया का इच्छा गीत*, which was the lamenting of an old woman remembering the cleaner environment and fresh air around her when she was young, and how it has changed as she is now old. He also recited the poems *मौलिकता* and *नारोत्तर पहाड*. Mr. Naresh Saxena recited a nostalgic poem titled *उसे ले गए* which spoke of the emotional bond of a man with a neem tree that is in his backyard, and the pain he feels when it is cut and sold off. His second poem was titled *मछलियाँ* which was themed on the innocence of a child's perception of her environment. Lastly his poem *पृथ्वी* described the grandeur of planet earth and its geographical beauty. Mr Shiv Prasad Joshi recited his poem *आँसू* which described the turmoil and hardship faced by women who live and work in the mountains. His second poem titled *पानी के नीचे* stressed on the environmental destruction caused by the construction of the Tehri dam. Several poets remarked their happiness at the idea and concept behind bringing together several fields of conservationists that rarely interact with each other, but have much concern for nature.

Plate 1: Pictures showing the first day activities (7th February 2017)



Dr George Schaller speaking on his work in wildlife conservation



Book releases: 'When I Grow Up I Want to be a Tiger' by Ms Perna Bindra (top) and "Where are the Lilacs" by Dr Santosh Bakaya (bottom).



Panel discussion on India's History of Nature Writing



Panel discussion 'The Mountains Speak'



Question and answer session with school students



Kavi Goshthi / Hindi Poetry reading

DAY 2 – 8TH FEBRUARY 2017

SESSION FIVE

Panel Discussion: People's History Of Nature In The Himalayas

Panellists: Mr. Anup Sah, Dr. Santosh Bakaya, Mr. Qamar Qureshi, Mr Ajay Shrivastava, Mr. Krishna Rautela, Mr. Trepan Singh Chauhan, Mr. Subhash Pant, Mr. Bhaskar Upreti

Facilitator: Dr Shalini Sharma

This panel discussion was moderated by Dr Shalini Sharma, in which panellists from varying backgrounds discussed the perspective of local communities that dwell in the mountains, both historically and in present day. Mr Krishna Singh Rautela spoke of 'Rung Mung' or the oral histories that are passed on through people. He spoke of the villages of Darma, Byans and Chaundas in Pithoragarh named after the tribal communities living in these villages, and the trees and stones are worshipped as deities. Stressing on the importance of preserving heritage, he mentioned that museums are there though not many people visit them as there is not much context left regarding the cultural values. Mr. Anup Sah, who is a mountaineer and observer of Himalayan landscape, shared his trekking experience and walking in Himalayas; Nanda devi and Kedarnath. He showcased his photographs of the wildlife species seen during his treks. He also pressed on the need to save cultural and traditional values, practices and safeguarding the old heritage in the form of old buildings, jewellery making, cloth-sewing etc. Shri Qamar Qureshi spoke of intertwined nature of human and nature since olden days and importance of human intervention for conservation. He stated humans as super predators and pressed on the idea to realise as a society and not as an individual, for safeguarding the culture and wellbeing of wildlife before it's too late. Mr. Trepan Singh Chauhan spoke of community involvement in wildlife conservation and importance of local participation, women's empowerment, practicing of traditional practices for protecting nature. Mr. Bhaskar Upreti mentioned the need to uphold community rights over forests as it was evident in the hill state of Uttarakhand. The rich biodiversity in the Van Panchayats or community forests as compared to the Govt owned Reserved Forests is a testimony to an alternative governance model that can be tried out in other areas as well. Travel writing has always had a lot of inspiration from the Himalayas. Nature writers have always been attracted to the Himalayas. Rabindranath Tagore and Mahadevi Verma have lived in the Ramgarh residence in Nainital for quite some time which reflects in their writings. Mr Ajay Shrivastava spoke about how Kullu in Himachal due to its remoteness and the difficult terrain remained cut away from the rest of the world which resulted in protection of its native cultural values. After 15th and 16th century people came and the traditions changed. All the several

higher altitude areas have unique places of worship called 'Jognis', which are signified by a loose collection of rocks with a red cloth tied on them. He mentioned that during his time as Director of GHNP, the existence of 19 Jognis was established. He urged that there is need to protect and preserve such places for their nature and culture linkages. Dr. Santosh Bakaya recited poetry on the conflict-ridden mountains and valley of Kashmir, recalling her own experience of being born and lived there for some time. The title of her poem was 'The Happy Child' from her book which was released earlier in the fest, titled 'Where are the Lilacs'

SESSION SIX

Panel Discussion: Place of Nature and Landscape in India's Poetry

Panellists: Mr. Mangalesh Dabral, Mr Naresh Saxena, Mr. Leeladhar Jagoori, Mr Rajesh Saklani

Facilitator: Mr. Shiv Prasad Joshi

In a unique session facilitated by Mr Shiv Prasad Joshi, the theme of this panel discussion revolved around discussing the significance and symbolism of nature in Indian poetry, specifically in Hindi. Mr Joshi started the session saying human emotions are associated with nature and nature has always been a part of the various means of human thoughts and expression and one of them is poetry. Poetry and nature are interlinked and has been able to impact each other in one way or other. To this, Mr Naresh Saxena added that we are all part of nature, but of all the forces of nature human is the only one who can and is destroying it. Human practices poetry and creates language and nature is an integral part of it. In some cities, the clean air has disappeared completely. Poetry connects to people and thus humans who destroys nature are also destroying themselves. Mr. Mangalesh Dabral added that nature has always been part of Indian History. Many poets initiated their careers through writings on nature. Sumitranandan Pant's initial poetic work was related to nature. He also said that the discussion on depleting nature and its processes is prevalent in modern poetry. Speaking on the evolution of nature poetry through time, Mr. Leeladhar Jagoori mentioned that with the continuous change in time, the experience increases. Experience is the output of the things learnt in the past and is used in desired circumstances in future. Nature existed forever and humans came later, and everything in our society evolved through scientific way through experience. Many festivals in Uttarakhand which are now lost or are on the brink of being lost had a scientific basis. For example- A festival in tehri named "Ayar Katto" in which leaves of Ayar were brought from forest and mixed along with pulses and salt and were finally fed to cattle for their health in months of Chaitra and Baisakh. Nature writing was prevalent from early ages. Great writers like Valmiki have also written that "those who kill or harm living creature should be

punished”. It is the connection with nature that led to the birth of poets. Bhasa’s first poem was on nature. We should learn to communicate with nature and only then can we connect with poetry. Mr Rajesh Saklani added that nature has also been celebrated in life, for example from the point of view of a child, nature for the child is just his or her family. But as the child grows it realizes that the struggles of life, unfairness in society, financial struggles, and thus finds connect and refuge in nature, looking for some order among the chaos of daily life. Mr Naresh Saxena then recited his poem about how human connection with nature continues even after death, in which he speaks about how a tree leaves behind everything to support us even after death. He mentioned that this poem was so beloved that it has been imprinted on a wall at the crematorium of Dehradun. After a very interactive Q/A session with the audience and several keen questions on poetry and literature from school students, Mr. Shiv Prasad Joshi concluded that poetry is a large treasure and there is lot to read and learn. Poetry should be strengthened to enjoy and communicate life in a better way.

SESSION SEVEN

Capturing Nature Through Writings, Lens and Drawings: Workshop for Youth

Panellists: Ms Rita Banerji, Mr Dhritiman Mukherjee

Facilitator: Ms Sree Nandy

This session was focused on introducing youth to wildlife photography and environmental filmmaking. Ms Sree Nandy invited the panel members to the stage to share their experience in their field of interest and how it has helped in conservation so far. Ms Rita Banerji shared her views on her work as an environment filmmaker and showcased videos that have helped involve the local communities and spread awareness about the wildlife species. She spoke of the importance of films in depicting stories such as old traditional knowledge, cultural practices etc. and added that old stories have been disappearing due to change of lifestyle and losing interest. She also presented films on Amur falcons, Leatherback sea turtles, Human-animal conflict, poaching and trade. She highlighted that video documentation can be used as a strong tool for conservation. She also discussed her work with *Green Hub*, a video documentation centre started in 2014. Green Hub is the first youth and community based fellowship and digital archive for work related to wildlife, indigenous knowledge and biodiversity. It aims to use the visual medium to revive and renew the love for nature, and preservation of natural resources among the youth of the region, create livelihood, and ensure a more equitable future. The next panellist, Mr Dhritiman Mukherjee shared his experiences of travelling to India’s remote natural landscapes and photographing them, and of using his work for conservation. He spoke of what it takes

to take the perfect shots and story behind the photos. He discussed his sighting of snow leopards in Spiti, and the Narcondam hornbill, only found in small island, Narcondam Island, Western Tragopan in GHNP, Tiger at Ranthambore NP, black bear in the Himalayas, water birds, Hoolock gibbon, desert fox, Flamingo nesting, Himalayan great fox, Greater Adjutant Stork, Saras crane in fields with people, Wild ass, Great Indian Bustard and grey wolf, amphibians, dolphins, cuttle fish, Arctic landscape, humpback whales, Whale shark, bull shark, Oceanic white tip, Hammer head, Tiger shark, Dugong in red sea. He emphasized on photography that tells a story. Every photo has a story behind it, when capturing animals with their habitat. A dynamic question and answer session followed, where the audiences asked questions about ethical wildlife photography, the difficulties of capturing good photographs.

SESSION EIGHT

Journalism Workshop: Natural Heritage of Mountain Region and its communication needs

Facilitator: Ms Perna Bindra

Ms Perna Singh Bindra, prominent environment journalist and wildlife conservationist, hosted this workshop which was a session for sensitising journalists towards the need for good coverage of environmental and wildlife news. She presented a brief outline of the history of environment and wildlife laws and policies in India. She discussed her work investigating and reporting stories on nature, wildlife, conservation, and the challenges faced in the field as well as in pitching environmental stories to journalists. She mentioned that far too often there is a lot of negative and over-hyped coverage on sensitive issues like human-wildlife conflict, where there is a dire need for sensible and thorough journalism to understand the on-ground situation. Journalists from various external publications participating in the workshop asked questions about the doubts they usually come across when trying to cover environmental stories, and discussed their views on current journalism on environment and wildlife.

Dr Sonali Ghosh in her presentation gave an overview of the UNESCO World Heritage Criteria and its application in the Indian context. She gave examples from her working in two heritage sites of Kaziranga and Manas wherein the World Heritage Convention was being applied through effective protection and management.

Dr V.B. Mathur also spoke about the protected areas of India and the problems that wildlife faces, like habitat destruction, human-wildlife conflict, as well as governmental efforts to solve them. He briefly mentioned the projects that Wildlife Institute of India focuses on.

Dr George Schaller interacted with journalists in this session, and highlighted that news about nature and wildlife doesn't get prominent mainstream attention like it should. He also mentioned that journalists should be encouraged to cover environmental stories in the long term, and that there is a need for institutional training of journalists in this field.

Concluding Session: The Way Forward

In the concluding session, Dr Sonali Ghosh invited the facilitators of various sessions on the stage, namely Ms Prerna Bindra, Ms Sree Nandy, Dr Shalini Sharma, Mr Mangalesh Dabral, Mrs Shanti Varma, Mr Shiv Prasad Joshi and Dr V.B. Mathur. She requested each facilitator to provide their inputs and key message on each session that they facilitated. She briefly summarised the events of the fest, the Nature Writers Competition, and thanked each resource person for their support in developing the fest. Ms Prerna Bindra, who facilitated the session 'History and Legacy of Nature Writing in India', remarked that she was delighted that WII had the vision to bring together several fields that weren't strictly wildlife-centric but all connected to each other through the common thread of nature. Speaking of the winners of the nature writers competition, she mentioned that the way forward should be to encourage more nature writing, because there is a need for the message of wildlife and conservation to be taken to a larger audience. Ms Sree Nandy, who facilitated the session 'The Mountains Speak' expressed that she was glad such a unique event had been organised. She mentioned that the insights of the student audiences were very inspiring, and the event should be taken forward with involvement of students. She mentioned that if any such events come up in other cities across India, SAEVUS Wildlife would be glad to extend support. To this, Dr Sonali Ghosh mentioned that such events should be organised, especially near World Heritage Sites. She added that an anthology must be published of all the Hindi poetry recited during the sessions.

To this, Mr Shiv Prasad Joshi, who was the facilitator for the poetry sessions lauded the efforts of the institute in organising such an event, and supported the idea of an anthology being published with all the nature poems that were recited. He added that he was impressed with student participation, but also suggested that if such an event takes place next time, it would be good to involve more audience from literary and scientific communities, and communicate on a bigger scale that such a unique event is taking place as it would help reach an even wider audience. Dr Shalini Sharma, who facilitated the session 'People's History of Nature in the Himalayas' too suggested several ideas for taking the festival forward, she mentioned that the idea of 'heritage' is crucial to the UNESCO C2C's mandate and that it is critical to understand why the UNESCO Category 2 Centre is situated specifically at the Wildlife Institute of India. Heritage is a socio-cultural construct, and directly builds a relationship with culture and

communities. Communities have oral, written and various other forms of communication, and that the UNESCO C2C should now focus on linking with communities and cultures. She supported the idea behind a nature anthology, and suggested that the festival could also be rotational, with possibly the north-eastern communities, Kashmir, Chattisgarh and other Indian communities should find a place in it. Additionally, not just India, other nations in the Asia Pacific region could also be involved. Mr Shiv Prasad Joshi supported this point, and added that perceiving and understanding heritage in literature, culture, poetry and various other expressions of art in civilisation is crucial. Ms Prerna Bindra also hosted the workshop for journalists, and stressed on the need for media and journalists to be more involved in environmental issues and wildlife issues, link them to the larger idea of conservation and the main message, as supported by Dr George Schaller, Dr V.B Mathur and Dr Sonali Ghosh who were present in the session. She added that the importance of wildlife and nature is not yet institutionalised and in an average editorial newsroom, this gap needs to be fulfilled. Ms Sree Nandy also facilitated the session 'Capturing Nature Through the Lens' and highlighted that the key message from this session was about ethical photography and filmmaking. She stressed that Ms Rita Banerjee's work was crucial and using her skills to empower youth in remote areas of the north east was an inspirational message. Mrs Shanti Varma mentioned that she was glad to have children participation, and spoke briefly of her work with the NGO Friends of Doon Society, which engages in nature and awareness efforts throughout schools in Dehradun.

Mr Mangalesh Dabral mentioned that the effect of poetry on an audience can be very moving and impactful for various causes. He mentioned that there is a huge disconnect between the field of academics, even between environmental and wildlife studies and thus it was a delight to see this barrier broken through this festival and that the trend should continue. Communication between other disciplines is crucial. He added that younger generations are much more receptive than adults and it is crucial to keep efforts ongoing in this direction. Lastly, Dr Shalini Sharma added that it is our responsibility to impact the memory and perception of issues and enhance the sustainability of conservation efforts and peace building dialogues. Mr Mangalesh Dabral also suggested that the centre could possibly publish an anthology of nature poems for children in Hindi and English. Dr V.B. Mathur then briefly highlighted the mandate of WII and UNESCO C2C in the cultural and natural heritage management and training, and mentioned that once we start looking at nature, then ideas of culture and cultural landscapes start developing a greater synergy between the three. He spoke of India's first mixed site the Khangchendzonga National park and the possibilities of inscription of the Kailash Sacred Landscape which also has rich natural and cultural history.

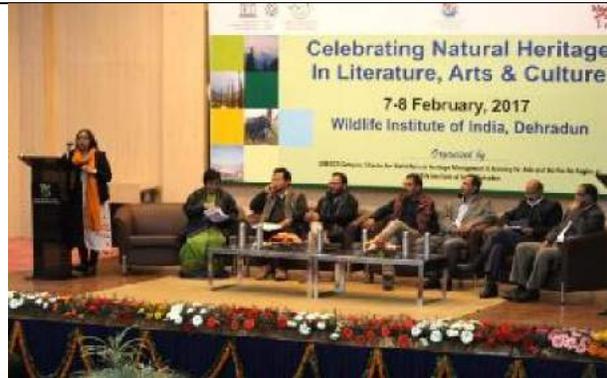
CONCLUSION

1. The festival was an attempt to bridge the gap between scientific communication and popular writing for India's wilderness areas and world heritage sites, and it achieved its target of sensitizing the audience for the same.
2. The session saw the confluence of eminent writers, poets and conservationists who deliberated on the need to take science to the local communities.
3. The overwhelming response to the writers' competition and the quality of the writing is an encouraging indicator that youth of today from various fields, that aren't strictly wildlife, are keen and eager to learn and understand nature and this must be encouraged.
4. The school children who participated in the sessions were keen, aware and showed tremendous potential as budding poets and authors; the same must be encouraged by including nature poetry in their curricula.
5. A dedicated anthology of nature poetry has not been compiled so far, although there are several instances in folklore and local languages which show the integral connect of man and nature. One potential outcome of this festival would be to work towards an anthology of poetry.
6. Several prominent writers, academia and conservationists gathered and shared their useful insights into history and art of nature writing. A souvenir that combines all these elements with special focus on natural world heritage would also be attempted as part of documentation of this festival.

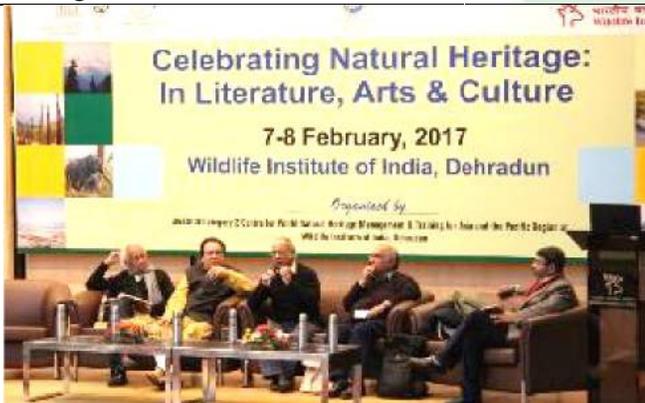
Plate 2: Pictures showing the second day activities (8th February 2017)



Birding in WII Nature Trail



Panel discussion on People's History of Nature in the Himalayas.



Panel discussion on place of nature and landscape in India's poetry.



Capturing nature through writings, lens and drawings: workshop for youth



Session for journalists: Environmental Journalism



Concluding session

ANNEXURE -I



Celebrating Natural Heritage: In Literature, Arts & Culture

07 - 08 February, 2017

Venue: Auditorium, Wildlife Institute of India, Dehradun

Program Schedule

	Tuesday, 7th February, 2017
Time	Inaugural Session
0930- 0940 hrs	Introduction, Felicitations and Opening Session
0940-1040 hrs	Interaction with Dr George Schaller Vice President, Panthera Senior Conservationist, WCS
1040- 1100 hrs	Book Release: 'When I Grow Up I Want to be a Tiger' - Ms Prerna Bindra 'Where are the Lilacs' - Dr Santosh Bakaya Felicitations of Winners of Nature Writers Competition
1100-1130	Group Photo and Tea break
1130- 1300 hrs	Panel Discussion: History and legacy of nature writing in India Mr. Bikram Grewal, Mr. Ranjit Lal, Dr Asad Rahmani <i>Facilitator: Ms. Prerna Bindra</i>
1300-1330 hrs	Lunch
1330-1600 hrs	The Mountains Speak: Panel discussion about celebrating and conserving Himalayan heritage. Panellists: Mr Stephen Alter, Dr. AJT Johnsingh, Dr. G. S. Rawat, Mr. Dhritiman Mukherjee <i>Facilitator: Ms. Sree Nandy</i>

1600- 1615 hrs	Tea break
1615- 1900 hrs	<p>Kavi Goshthi/ Poetry Reading/ Mushaira by eminent Hindi and Regional poets themed on nature and natural landscapes and the connection between nature and people in India's poetry.</p> <p>Mr Mangalesh Dabral, Mr. Naresh Saxena, Mr. Leeladhar Jagoori, Ms. Rekha Chamoli, Mr Anil Karki, Mr. Rajesh Saklani, Mr Sureshsen Nishant, Mr Atma Ranjan, Mr. Prakash Badal</p> <p><i>Facilitator: Mr. Shiv Prasad Joshi</i></p>
1900 hrs	Dinner

Wednesday, 8th February, 2017	
0700-0830 hrs	<p>Nature Trail: Walk in WII campus</p> <p>Facilitators: <i>Dr. Manoj Nair and Mr. Vivek Sarkar</i></p>
0930-1130 hrs	<p>Panel discussion: History of Nature in the Himalayas</p> <p>Mr. Anup Sah, Dr. Santosh Bakaya, Mr. Qamar Qureshi, Mr Ajay Shrivastava, Mr. Krishna Rautela, Mr. Trepan Singh Chauhan, Mr. Bhaskar Upreti</p> <p><i>Facilitator: Dr Shalini Sharma</i></p>
1130-1200 hrs	Tea break
1200-1300 hrs	<p>Panel Discussion: Place of Nature and Landscape in India's Poetry</p> <p>Mr. Mangalesh Dabral, Mr. Naresh Saxena, Mr. Leeladhar Jagoori, Mr Rajesh Saklani</p> <p><i>Facilitator: Mr. Shiv Prasad Joshi</i></p>
1300-1400 hrs	Lunch
1400-1600 hrs	<p>Journalist Workshop: Natural Heritage of Mountain Region and its communication needs (Venue: Porta Cabin)</p> <p><i>Facilitator: Ms Prerna Bindra</i></p>
1400-1600 hrs	<p>Capturing Nature Through Writings, Lens and Drawings: Workshop for Youth</p> <p>Ms. Rita Banerji, Mr. Dhritiman Mukherjee</p> <p><i>Facilitator : Ms Sree Nandy</i></p>

1600- 1645 hrs	Concluding Session Ms Prerna Bindra, Ms Sree Nandy, Dr Shalini Sharma, Mr Mangalesh Dabral, Mrs Shanti Varma, Mr Shiv Prasad Joshi, Dr V B Mathur <i>Facilitator: Dr Sonali Ghosh</i>
9 th & 10 th Feb, 2017- Travel to Great Himalayan National Park, Himachal Pradesh	





GREAT HIMALAYAN NATIONAL PARK
ग्रेट हिमालयन नैकाल पार्क



भारतीय वन्यजीव संस्थान
Wildlife Institute of India

Celebrating Natural Heritage: In Literature, Arts and Culture Sai Ropa, Great Himalayan National Park Conservation Area Himachal Pradesh

11th-12th February 2017



Venue: Sai Ropa, Great Himalayan National Park Conservation Area

Day 3 - 11th February 2017

INAUGURAL SESSION

The inaugural session at Sai Ropa, Great Himalayan National Park, Himachal Pradesh began with Dr M. Kirupasankar, DFO, GHNP. He thanked Dr George Schaller, Mr Sanjeeva Pandey, Dr Sonali Ghosh, Mr B.S. Rana, Mr Gopal Krishan, and other participants of the workshop. He remarked that this was the first time such an event was being held in the Great Himalayan National Park and was glad to be a part of the festival.

Dr Schaller, Dr AJT Johnsingh, Mr Sanjeeva Pandey and Mrs Pandey were felicitated by Mr S.S Kataik, Director, GHNP. Following this, Dr Sonali Ghosh was felicitated by Ms Shivani Sen. Dr Kirupasankar then felicitated Mr B.S. Rana. The felicitations were unique as they comprised of traditional Kullu caps and shawls and handmade folders and material by the local people.

Mr S.S. Kataik then thanked the audience, Dr Sonali Ghosh and the UNESCO-C2C team, BTCA, and welcomed the audience for being a part of this unique event. He then briefed audience about history of GHNP, which was established in 1999 and inscribed as UNESCO World Heritage Site in 2014.

SESSION ONE

‘Natural Heritage Of Great Himalayan National Park’

PRESENTATION BY DR KIRUPASANKAR, M. IFS

Dr Kirupasankar’s presentation was an overview of the vibrant natural and cultural heritage of the Great Himalayan National Park. He briefly described the geographic location of GHNP, which was constituted in 1984 and formally declared a National Park in 1999. Through a map, he explained origins of the four rivers that flow through the park, Tirthan River, Sainj River, Parvati and Jeevanala River. He added that the idea behind an ‘Eco Development Zone’ is to give alternative income generation activities to right holders, who have lost their rights at the time constitution of national park. The National Park, Sainj Wildlife Sanctuary, Tirthan Wildlife Sanctuary and the eco-zone constitute the total of GHNP Conservation Area.

He then spoke of the rich biological diversity of GHNP which has a recorded 31 mammal species, 209 bird species, 12 reptile species, nine amphibian species and 125 insect species.

Next, the idea of 'heritage' and its tangible and intangible values were discussed, and the local traditions and culture of Himachal Pradesh were discussed, like traditional local food or 'Dhaam', local dressing, local architectural styles and wooden shelters and especially local festivals. "Natti"— the Traditional dance form performed by 12000 women during the International Kullu Dusshera festival entered in the Guinness book of world records, which shows the importance of cultural heritage of the region.

He also spoke about Forest Department's ongoing efforts to spread awareness about the park amongst local communities; recently, a three-week workshop on traditional wooden carving culture in Sainj valley was organised.

Then, the cycle of passing of this heritage and culture to future generations was also explained, in which he cited several household practices that have been going on for long periods of time, and have been recently scientifically explained. For example, the culture of storing drinking water in copper utensils is a very old tradition, but its anti-bacterial properties have been recently explained. Similarly, health benefits of traditional intermitted fasting was explained by Dr. Kirupasankar, with reference to the Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine 2016 awarded to Yoshinori Ohsumi for his discoveries of mechanisms for autophagy. The presentation was concluded with a brief explanation of the relationship between natural heritage and the communities that dwell in it, and the need for us to respect, protect, conserve, and celebrate the nature.

'SPLENDOURS OF GREAT HIMALAYAN NATIONAL PARK, A WORLD HERITAGE SITE'

BY MR SANJEEVA PANDEY, IFS

Mr Sanjeeva Pandey, PCCF Himachal Pradesh and former Director of GHNP recalled his experience towards the process of inscribing GHNP as a UNESCO World Heritage Site, and discussed the history and conception of Great Himalayan National Park. Beginning the presentation, he remarked that one cannot manage wildlife without the involvement of local communities. He recounted a brief history of the conception of GHNP and spoke about Dr AJ Gaston and his team of international researchers and their preliminary survey of the forest areas in 1980.

He then spoke of the various stages that took place in inscription of this area as a World Heritage Site. GHNP was nominated under criteria VII and X representing exceptional natural beauty and in-situ conservation of rare and endangered flora and fauna, respectively, for its inscription into list of UNESCO World Heritage Sites. He also highlighted the Outstanding Universal Value of the park, which includes

the presence of endemic and endangered species like Western Tragopan, Cheer Pheasant, Common Leopard and Snow Leopard, Musk Deer, Bharal, Himalayan Black Bear and Himalayan Brown bear.

Highlighting the biological diversity of GHNP, Mr Pandey also discussed the richness of floral diversity including medicinal taxa of the park. He stressed on the ancient system of sacred groves in GHNP, like the Nagni Sacred Grove that is worshipped and protected by local communities. He also remarked that the area that comes under Great Himalayan National Park is 'roadless', which helps in protection of the park. He has also shown some images of pristine forests in Sainj Valley and Tirthan Valley.

Speaking on the rich cultural diversity of GHNP and its people, he highlighted the relationship of local communities with nature and wildlife. Some local cultures include the Juwari tradition of participatory farming and worship of sacred groves. He also highlighted the importance of 'Let the Conservation Pay' in which conservation initiatives of the park also provided financial assistance to the local communities in the form of medicinal plant propagation, Micro credit schemes in women saving and credit groups, vermicomposting, local handicrafts.

Concluding the presentation, he discussed the importance of protecting biodiversity and rich natural and cultural heritage of the park.

'World Heritage Conservation'

BY DR SONALI GHOSH, IFS

Dr Sonali Ghosh's presentation was based on the World Heritage Conservation. She spoke about Manas, Keoladeo and Kaziranga which were the first natural heritage sites of India. She mentioned that the World Heritage Convention is a unique International Legal Instrument for the protection of both cultural and natural heritage. It shows the International co-operation in favor of the promotion of peace. The concept of world heritage was created by an emergency. In early 1970s due to the construction of a high dam of Aswan, the temples of Abu Simbel and Philae were saved by shifting them from the affected site. The World Heritage Convention was adopted on 16 Nov, 1972 and presently has 191 member countries. At present there are 1052 world heritage sites which includes 203 natural heritage sites. The convention tries to protect the heritage sites broadly under 4 categories (a) Cultural Properties (b) Natural Properties (3) Mixed properties and (4) Cultural Landscapes. She spoke of her experiences in world heritage nomination, and mentioned that to be declared as a Natural Heritage a site should meet the conditions mentioned in the Article 2 of the World Heritage Convention. The sites should meet Outstanding Universal Values (OUV's) to be declared as heritage sites. She added that there are seven natural heritage sites in India and Khangchendzonga National Park falls under mixed category. She

added that it is often a long process, and inscribing a site on the World Heritage List is only the first step. Site managers and local authorities continuously need to work towards managing, monitoring and preserving the World Heritage properties. It needs to be ensured by (a) involving local communities and civil society in the process (b) fostering local community engagement, livelihood security and well-being (c) by facilitating responsible tourism (d) Long-term conservation. Speaking on the nomination process of the Great Himalayan National Park Conservation Area, she added that it was inscribed on the list of UNESCO World Heritage Site during the 38th session of World Heritage Committee meeting held on 23rd June 2014 at Doha, Qatar. Its inclusion is attributed to the OUV's of biodiversity richness and exceptional natural beauty in the Western Himalaya. World Heritage can leverage progress towards our objectives by building broader public / political support for conservation, defining clear limits to development, increased financing options and better monitoring and reporting options.

SESSION TWO

NATURE CONSERVATION IN MOUNTAINS 'Tibetan Plateau'

By Dr George Schaller

Dr George Schaller spoke about his work in the Tibetan Plateau. The Tibetan plateau is an important natural feature as it controls the climate of the whole world. It is the origin of a lot of rivers that contributes to the people in the lowland. Rise in temperature, melting of glacier in the plateau and overgrazing of cattle are the biggest challenges facing the plateau. He started working in 1985 in the Tibetan plateau, the area is known as Changtang to the locals. He started his journey from western part of the plateau and crossed the whole plateau to reach Xinjiang. Among the mammal species of the plateau, George encountered Wolf, Lynx, Woolly hare, Wild yak and Tibetan antelope. Tibetan antelope known as Chiru, was largely famous for its fine wool which was sold as Shahtoosh. Around the year 1990, around 300,000 Chiru were killed for the wool. The wool was then smuggled to Srinagar in J&K via Nepal for weaving of shawl. The antelope migrates north to their calving ground for some reason still not known to us. He mentioned that with some colleagues, he radio-tagged individual to follow their migratory route. While traversing the route, he found evidences of stone tool, which were 10-25 years old, which was evidence that people used to live in that areas and hunt Chiru for their wool. He also found that the Chiru wool is smuggled with sheep wool for cover the illegal trade. Around 3-5 antelopes were killed for a single Shahtoosh shawl. With the global development, railroad and highway also came into the area. Truck drivers on the highway used to kill the antelopes while they are migrating. The

amount of money generated from killing and smuggled the antelopes were enormous for the locals, which is why modern amenities such as motorcycle became popular to nomads in the plateau. He stressed that for successful protection of Chiru, local community participation was necessary. It would help and protect wild animals to graze in the areas. They could involve lamas to convey the message to the locals. With religious beliefs, they asked locals not to kill the animals.

Dr Schaller also gave a presentation about Pamirs. It is spread over four countries, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Afghanistan and China and the area is connected through Wakhan corridor. The corridor also helped the movement of animals there, and the Marco Polo sheep is the flagship species in the area. It is also distributed over international borders of the countries. Tajikistan has the highest number of the sheep followed by Pakistan and China. Kirgiz people are the inhabitants of the area. The major route for opium trade also goes through the area. As hunting has been going on for very long, it was very difficult to convince the communities not to hunt for conservation of the sheep. Tajikistan also has the tradition of trophy hunting but it was not there in Afghanistan. The local people and communities were later convinced about the money involved in trophy hunting. With the money coming from the trophy hunting it was used for the conservation of the species. He added that the scenario was very different in China, where the animals were increasing steadily due to the strict legal protection in the area.

BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION IN HUMAN DOMINATED LANDSCAPES

By Dr AJT Johnsingh

The theme of Dr AJT Johnsingh's presentation was "Biodiversity conservation in human dominated landscapes". He spoke about how the Himalayas are relatively younger than other mountain ranges in our country. It is also the most threatened of the other ranges. The upcoming dams in the Himalayan rivers are posing as a major threat to the wildlife and nature in various parts of the Himalayan ecosystem. He also spoke about the biogeography of India and the significance of Himalayas in the historical evolution of the people and wildlife of India, and the direct and indirect ecosystem services they provide. He also spoke on the effect of human populations on biodiversity, and depends on the lifestyle, economic status of people and productivity of habitat. He gave the example of the western world, where because of low population density and well managed wildlife areas, their wildlife populations are doing well. He briefly spoke of various threatened mammals in South Asia and the factors that contribute to loss of their populations in Pakistan, Bangladesh, India, Bhutan and Myanmar. He specifically mentioned the example of fragmented habitat of Chilla-Motichur corridor across Ganges.

He also spoke of invasive plant species across landscapes that need to be controlled. Then, he gave specific examples to highlight the impact of climate change: the Golden Eagle of Scotland, *Aquila chrysaetos*, the Steller's sea eagle, *Haliaeetus pelagicus* and the Polar Bear.

He also highlighted various threats like illegal poaching, exploitation of habitat, use of pesticide etc for species across the planet like white rhino, gharial, Great Indian Bustard, Sparrows, Brahminy Kite. He also highlighted the plight of lesser known species of butterflies, the golden mahseer. He then tackled the larger question of how the above problem can be addressed in human dominated countries, and mentioned that restoring corridors and landscapes are crucial and the problem of invasive species needs to be tackled. He stressed on the importance of involving more people in conservation.

He also brought attention to the situation in Sariska Tiger Reserve, Panna National Park and Dudhwa Tiger Reserve and the restoration ecology and reintroduction projects ongoing there.

BIRDS OF HIMACHAL

By Dr. Asad Rahmani

Dr Asad Rahmani spoke on the “Birds of Himachal” for his session in GHNP. To provide an overview of birds, it is very necessary to know the condition in the world and in India. Birds are present everywhere, from the *vahanas* of God they are present in fashion, cartoons and advertisements. India is among the top ten most bird rich countries of the world. He gave the definition of endemic and near-endemic birds of our country. He spoke about the diverse range of adaptability of different birds. After the general overview about the birds of the world and India, he focused his talk on the birds of Himachal.

There are three critically endangered and three endangered birds in Himachal. The state bird western Tragopan is also in the vulnerable category of IUCN red list. Add to that there are 17 near threatened birds in Himachal. Among the four data deficient species, one species- large billed reed warbler has been reported from Sutlej valley, Himachal in 1867. He showed an analysis of bird species presence and absence in different Tiger reserve to understand the role of tiger reserves in bird conservation. It has been found in the analysis that most of the red-listed birds are found outside the Tiger reserve. He also raised the issues of species centric conservation measures. He gave the example of rhino conservation in Jaldapara, Bengal led to lower grassland bird abundance.

SESSION THREE

Journalist Workshop: Reporting Natural World Heritage And Mountain Conservation

Chair: Mr Shrinivas Joshi

This workshop was a discussion centered around the need for environmental journalism and creating conservation awareness among public, in which various invited journalists from Himachal Pradesh participated.

Mr. Shrinivas Joshi, an octogenarian is an eminent and highly respected former civil servant from Himachal Pradesh who publishes regular columns in *The Tribune*. He started the discussion by speaking on the importance of environmental journalism as a means to generate public awareness. He added that in India Himachal Pradesh a crucial state from this perspective and has an impact on India's climate. Thus, the understanding and awareness regarding this issue is important among the inhabitants and the policy makers of the state. He then opened the floor to discussion by posing a question to all present journalists: "Are our local people and politicians well-aware of the fact that environment is important?"

Mr. Rajesh Mandotra said that sensitivity to wildlife lacks in common people and the policy makers, and that state inhabitants themselves are unaware of the special cultural and natural heritage they possess. Mr. Ravinder Makhaik said that today the biggest issue that we face is of Development versus conservation, and that most of the people look for development as they perceive it as directly affecting their livelihood. He added that there is lack of individuals protecting our forest on the ground and our reserves lack sufficient management facilities, example- camps and units. Mr. Deepender Mehta said that development versus conservation is a crucial issue as both are important, and that efforts are on from the government side and people should be made educated. Mr. Om Prakash Thakur said that to save the environment we should change the politics. He expressed that in Himachal, the government has played a major hand in environmental destruction. Mr. Sanjeev Kumar said that on paper the planning from the government side is good but the implementation on the ground is not good enough and is inappropriate. Thus, the policy makers should focus on proper implementation of the policies. Mr. Sanjeeva Pandey added that the government officials are implementers and new robust policies are required. As several issues change over the time, thus the policies also need to be evolve. Different policies are required for some of the major issues such as Human-Animal Conflict Policy, Let Conservation Pay Policy and Participatory Forest Management policy etc. Mr. B.S Rana said that creating awareness among the people is very important, and since forests are like open treasure with very porous boundaries. It becomes difficult to monitor every nook and corner in such large and remote landscapes. Yet, the forest department is trying its best to protect them. Mr. S.S. Kataik added the

session remarking that future of Himachal Pradesh is bright, local people, Forest Department and Media are much more aware than they had ever been in past, and that the Forest Department will try its best to solve the various environmental and conservation issues. Speaking on future-plans for GHNP, he mentioned that they aim to have better connectivity of GHNP from airports, establish new trekkers route with night stay facilities in tents, and also watch towers with night stay facility. He added that ropeway development in the national park is also planned. Mr. Joshithen remarked that a local NGO BTCA had done good work and invited the chair Mr Gopal Krishan to speak a few words. Mr Krishnan then provided a brief background of all the work done by BTCA in establishing Self Help Groups, Community involvement, income generation for women and providing employment to locals in ecotourism, organic farming and vermicomposting. Concluding the session, Mr. Joshi remarked that most journalists perceive that local people, politicians and forest department are not aware and serious about environment related issues. He added that the policies on the paper should be properly implemented on the ground. He added that we should surely think of charging the ecosystem services provided by the Himalayan states on the rest of the country inhabitants who have already destroyed their forest.

SESSION FOUR

PANEL DISCUSSION: HIMACHALI WRITING ROOTS

Chair: Mr Srinivas Joshi

Panellists: Dr. Kulrajeev Pant, Mr Yadvendra Sharma, Mr Sureshsen Nishant, Mr Atma Ranjan, Mr Ajey, Mr Gurmit Bedi, Mr Murari Sharma, Mr Niranjana Dev Sharma, Mr Keshav, Mr Srinivas Joshi, Ms Rekha, Mr Tejram Sharma, Mr. Prakash Badal

Himachal's Writing Roots was a literary session where various regional writers and poets came together and discussed Hindi and regional writings and poetry on hills and the mountains. The session began with Mr Joshi recounting the writers that have penned literature and poetry on hills over time. He mentioned the writings of M K Sharma on Spiti Valley, Sudarshan Vashisht on Rohtang Pass, Kanhaiyalal Nandan and BN Goswami. He also spoke of filmmakers like Vivek Mohan, Rajendra Rajan, Shri Devkanya, who have made documentaries on the environment, wetlands and lakes of Himachal. Molu Ram Thakur has written a book *कुल्लू के सर सरोवर* which speaks of the 27 wetlands of Kullu. He mentioned KC Prashan, a geologist-poet from Kullu who has written on garbage thrown by tourists ruining the beauty of nature, and on global warming. Sanjay Pathak, who has written on the Beas-Sutlej ring. Mr Prakash Badal shared

his poetry themed on mountain conservation, the plight of leopards in India, and recited a few poetic lines themed on forest destruction and climate change. Mr Yadendra recited poignant poetry based on the hardships that women living in the hills in remote areas face in daily life to get resources. Mr Murari Sharma recited a poem titled *बसंत* which was a poem on seasons and their effects in mountain life. His second poem *पहाड़ की ढलानो पर* was a description of the grandeur of the mountain slopes. Mr Suresh Sen Nishant recited a poem highlighting the destruction of natural beauty due to development titled *पहाड़ पर एक और नै सीमेंट फैक्ट्री लगने आई*, and this poem also highlighted the dangers of such development in the mountains for the people living there. His second poem was titled *सेब*. Mr Niranjana Sharma is a writer from Himachal and he recited a prose about the work done by various poets of the mountains, and the role of a poet in people's lives, social activism and how poetry has been used in environmental activism in various movements across the country. Mr Kulrajeev Pant recited a poignant poem titled *पहाड़ सोचता है* which personified a mountain and mused about what a mountain would think, if it could, about seasons, clouds, people living on it. He also recited a poem about various fishes found in natural ecosystems. Mr Atmaranjan recited a poem titled *संभावनाएं* which highlighted the need for recognising the importance of natural landscapes and saving them. His second poem titles *कटताहुआ बूढ़ा पेड़* was a personification of an old, dying tree. Mr Tejram Sharma recited poetry which was themed on loss of habitat for birds, and his second poem was about shortage of water on earth.

Mr Ajey's first poem was titled *इस गांव को बच्चों की नज़र से देखना है* which was a touching poem about the lost innocence and simplicity of a village. His second poem was titled *एक बुद्ध कविता में करुणा हूँड रहा है* which was a poem about writing poetry on the remote and pristine corners of natural beauty in India, which the poet longs to visit. Mr T.R. Sharma recited a poem titled *पानी, पहाड़, पेड़ और मैं*, which highlighted the importance of nature in one's life.

PLATE 3: PICTURE SHOWING FIRST DAY ACTIVITIES IN GHNP ON 11TH FEBRUARY 2017



Natural heritage of GHNP: presentation by Dr. Kirupasanker



Splendours of Great Himalayan National Park, a World Heritage Site: Presentation by Mr. Sanjeeva Pandey



World Heritage Conservation: Presentation by Dr Sonali Ghosh



Plenary Talks: Nature Conservation in Mountains



Journalist Workshop: Reporting Natural World Heritage and Mountain Conservation



Panel Discussion: Himachali Writing Roots

Day 2- 12th February, 2017

SESSION FIVE

Birdwatching and Awareness Session for Students

Facilitator: Dr. Monica Kaushik and Mr. Vivek Sarkar

Some outreach material was developed to introduce the basics of bird watching to the students between 6-20 years under Conservation Leadership Programme. This booklet had information about the different body parts of the birds to aid in identification, along with the information on Western Tragopan, locally called *Jujurana*, the state bird of Himachal Pradesh and is also an official logo of Great Himalayan National Park. A total of 89 students participated in the bird watching session from different school and colleges. First, they were briefed about the tools and techniques of bird watching and what to keep in mind when going bird watching. Then the groups were divided in 5 teams led by Dr Monica Kaushik, Mr Vivek Sarkar, Mr Panki Sood, Ms Ankita Sinha and Mr Nilanjan Chatterjee. The youngest members were taken by Dr. Kaushik and Mr. Sarkar and the elder most members were taken by Ms. Sinha and Mr. Chatterjee. Mr. Sood, being a member of the local community, decided to lead the mixed group. Interesting observations of this session were the Golden Eagle, Vultures, Russet Sparrow, Brown Dipper, Bullfinches, and different Redstarts etc. On an average 30 to 40 species of birds were recorded by each group. After the bird watching Dr. Kaushik interacted with the younger members of the bird watching teams and local kids for nearly an hour. She gave a detailed account of biology of Western Tragopan in a form of storytelling. To support her story line, illustrations were used from the bird watching booklet.

SESSION SIX

PRESENTATION BY DR GEORGE SCHALLER FOR LOCAL CHILDREN OF GHNP

In a dynamic and interactive session, Dr George Schaller also presented a talk for the local school children of GHNP, in an effort to sensitise children about conservation. He spoke of his work studying Mountain Gorillas, Snow Leopards, Tigers, Lions and various enigmatic species of the planet, and stressed on how animals are not very different from humans and we shouldn't see animals as 'other' species very separate from us. The presentation was translated from English to Hindi by Mr Sanjeeva Pandey.

SESSION SEVEN

Jungle Tales: Session For Discussing Stories Of The Forest Staff

Chair: Mr. Sanjeeva Pandey

Facilitator: Dr. Sonali Ghosh

The session was focused on sharing stories/tales of GHNP natural and cultural heritage from forest department officials, locals and other participants. The session highlighted the work of forest frontline staff and their crucial role in protection of natural heritage. It also included sharing of their personal experiences and interesting field stories with other participants. The stories of the forest officials were beautifully crafted around biodiversity of the GHNP and its interaction with people around the park. Most of the officials were immensely astonished by the beauty of Himalayan Monal and Western Tragopan as male of both the species have incredibly beautiful display. Most of the frontline staff of GHNP shared their understanding with rescue of wild animals starting from Western Tragopan, Goral, Black Bear, Brown Bear and Leopard which are often encountered by villagers residing in the edges of GHNP. It was suggested that a few stories were so mesmerizing to hear and if compiled a Jungle Tale book can be published with a series of chapters including – *Can a Black Bear Knock the door?*, *Untold story of Brown Dipper* (An aquatic song bird found in the mountain stream which dives into stream to eat benthic organisms), *Running with the Brown Bear* and *People Park and Panther* etc. Apart from the forest officials eminent resource persons like Dr. A.J.T Johnsingh and Dr. Asad Rahmani shared their experiences in the session. Dr. Rahmani's visit of Desert National Park in 1983 and his interaction with hunter Sh. Likhuram in village Dhani and Dr. Johnsingh's encounter with King Cobra in Corbett grabbed the attention of all. Finally, the session ended with Dr. Sanjeeva Pandey's recalling the journey in the making of the Western Tragopan as the State Bird of Himachal Pradesh.

CULTURAL PROGRAMMES–HIMACHALI DANCE, MUSIC AND CUISINE

In between the sessions, the Park authorities organized traditional cultural events like "Natti" -the local dance forms and "Phagli"- the local festival, which highlighted the rich culture of Himachal Pradesh. All the events were oriented towards the value of nature and its relationship with the life of the local people.

Women folk starting from pre-school children to college students to elderly grandmothers gathered and expressed their performing skills in the form of traditional dances (*Natti*). Holding each other's hands in circular manner is the traditional symbol of the *Natti*, which not only shows their unity, strength, determination and integral role in wildlife conservation but also passes the linkage to next generation.

Almost all the delegates of this festival danced to the local tunes to express their respect to natural and cultural heritage.

Phagli is local festival celebrated to mark the onset of the spring season. It depicts the victory of good over evil. A person is disguised as demon by putting a mask on his face and tying some grass around his body. The God is represented by a Gur (God's spokesman). They perform a special dance that shows the struggle between God and Devil for supremacy and ultimately God emerges victorious. This dance was performed by a group of 12 villagers belonging to Eco-zone of GHNP.

Further, a skit was also presented by school students, which was based on a theme of "Human-Wildlife Interface" to sensitize about the role and duty of forest guard in protecting wildlife as well as interest of the local people.

To relish the real taste of the local food, the park authorities organized local food festival called 'Dhaam' in which local delicacies like "Rajma" (Kidney beans), "Sephubadi" (Nuggets made up of Mixed Pulses), Jaggery rice, etc are served in leaf plates to the delegates and local villagers.

Closing Ceremony

The festival was concluded with the closing ceremony, in which the delegates, local women groups, Journalists, poets and students were presented with unique souvenir like Pine needle Baskets containing a bottle of Apricot oil, Dried Apple chips made by the BTCA and the T-Shirts and Ceramic mugs printed with Logo and themes of GHNP, i.e. "Respect Nature", "Conserve Nature", "Protect Nature" and "Celebrate Nature".

The events starting from the reception, inaugural ceremony, technical sessions, bird watching, heritage walk, Jungle Tale, Panel discussion of Journalists and Poets, cultural events and closing ceremony was convened by Sh. Thilak Raj Sharma, DFO Kullu Wildlife Division and facilitated by Ms. Shivani Sen, ACF GHNP. The fest was successfully concluded with the Vote of Thanks given by Sh. S.S. Kataik, IFS, and Director of GHNP.

CONCLUSION

1. The festival at GHNPCA WHS was an attempt to understand and highlight the local natural and cultural heritage of the Great Himalayan National Park.
2. To understand this underappreciated aspect of GHNPCA WHS's rich heritage, the festival aimed to engage local communities and giving a platform for them to showcase their cultures, traditions, their relationship with the nature and wildlife.
3. Through various sessions involving local writers, poets, journalists, forest staff, forest guards and opening a forum of discussion for their points of view, the festival was successful in its effort to initiate a dialogue between various fields of conservationists that seldom interact, but all have a strong connect and concern for nature.
4. Through plenary talks and presentations by several renowned scientists and forest officers, an effort to sensitise audiences about various conservation efforts worldwide was also made.
5. There were also bird watching sessions held for the school children of GHNPCA WHS, in which they were taught to identify the various birds found in Tirthan Valley area and given information about their habitats. The school children were keen, aware and showed interest in understanding birds.
6. It was suggested that an anthology/compilation of all the nature poems recited by various Himachali poets at the event should also be compiled and published.

Plate 4: Picture showing first day activities in GHNP on 12th February 2017



Bird Watching with the local children of GHNP



Traditional dance performance



Presentation by Dr George Schaller for local children of GHNP, translated to Hindi by Mr Sanjeeva Pandey



Jungle Tales: Session for discussing stories and experiences of the Forest Staff



Heritage Walk in GHNP



Trek to 'Chhoie Jharna' waterfall

Plate 5 : Various cultural events at Sai Ropa, GHNP



Interaction of students with Dr George Schaller



Local food festival 'Dhaam'



Celebration of 'Dhaam' with esteemed resource persons



Local dance and celebrations by college students



Mask dance or 'Phagli'



Skit performed by local school children



Skit on human-wildlife interaction



Distribution of souvenirs to local participants

ANNEXURE II



11-12 FEBRUARY, 2017

Venue: Sairopa, Great Himalayan National Park

Programme Schedule

Saturday, 11th February 2017

0800- 0930 hrs	Breakfast	Dining Hall, Sai Ropa
0930- 1000 hrs	Registration of participants	Reception centre
1000- 1045 hrs	Felicitation of Chief Guest/Guest of Honour/ other Guests	Conference Hall
	Welcome Address by S.S. Kataik, IFS CF, GHNP	
	Introduction of participants	
	Inaugural Address by Chief Guest/ Guest of Honour	
1045- 1100 hrs	High Tea	Ground
1100-1230 hrs	Plenary talks: Nature Conservation in the Mountains Dr George Schaller, Vice President Panthera Dr A.J.T. Johnsingh, Former Dean, Wildlife Institute of India Dr Asad Rahmani, Former Director Bombay Natural History Society	Conference Hall
1230-1330 hrs	Lunch	Ground
1330- 1530 hrs	Journalist Workshop: Reporting Natural world heritage and Mountain conservation Discussion centred around the need for environmental journalism and reporting, it's relevance in creating conservation awareness Facilitator: Mr. Shriniwas Joshi and Dr Sonali Ghosh	Conference Hall

1530-1600 hrs	Tea break Demonstration of mask dance (Local Performing Art Form) by Youth Group	Ground
1600-1730 hrs	Panel Discussion: Himachal's Writing Roots Discussion among distinguished writers and Poets about natural and cultural heritage of Himalayan region <i>Dr. Kulrajeev Pant, Mr Yadvendra Sharma, Mr Sureshsen Nishant, Mr Atma Ranjan, Mr Ajey, Mr Gurmit Bedi, Mr Murari Sharma, Mr Niranjan Dev Sharma, Mr Keshav, Mr Srinivas Joshi, Ms Rekha, Mr Tejram Sharma, Mr. Prakash Badal</i> Facilitator: Mr Atma Ranjan	Conference Hall
1830-2130 hrs	Cultural Evening- Dance/Song (Naatti) by Winners of "Mahila Mela" & Dinner	White Stone Resorts
Sunday 12th February, 2017		
0700-1600hrs	Heritage Walk: from Gushaini to Rolla & back (16 Km) for Selected participants (Max. 20) Facilitator : Sh. Roshan Lal	
0800 -1230 hrs	Bird watching with children and Forest Frontline staff Facilitator: Dr Monika Kaushik & UNESCO C2C-WII team Student/Trainers' Workshop: Natural Heritage and Community Development Interactive workshops on nature interpretation and awareness Facilitator: <i>Dr Monika Kaushik and Mr. Vivek Sarkar</i>	Conference Hall
1230- 1300 hrs	Drama by School Children & Local Dance (Horn dance) by College Students	
1300-1400 hrs	Local Food Festival- Dhaam	

1330-1500 hrs	<p>Jungle tales</p> <p>A session focussed on stories from forest staff, foresters, and locals about nature and culture of GHNP. An interactive session focussing on highlighting work of forest frontline staff and their crucial role in protection of our natural heritage, including an introduction about the nature of their work, their experiences and interesting field stories.</p> <p>Facilitator: <i>Dr Sonali Ghosh</i></p>	
1500- 1630 hrs	Cultural programmes- Poetry by BTCA members, Vocal Song & Natti by College students	Stage, Sai Ropa
1630-1700 hrs	Concluding Session	Stage, Sai Ropa
Monday, 13th February 2017		
0600	Departure	

ANNEXURE- III

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

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108	Sh. Cherramari Dival.				
109	Sh. Rami Dival.				
110*	Sh. S. S. Katarik	CF GHP			
111	Dr. Kimpasankar, M	DFO GHP			

Media Coverage

Natural Heritage Fest at UNESCO Category 2 Centre, Wildlife Institute of India and Great Himalayan National Park, Kullu, Himachal Pradesh, India

Printed from
THE TIMES OF INDIA

Festival celebrates natural heritage in arts, literature

TNN | Feb 8, 2017, 10:45 AM IST



DEHRADUN: A two-day festival with the theme of natural heritage in literature, arts and culture was held on Tuesday at the Unesco category 2 centre at the Wildlife Institute of India.

A number of authors, artists, poets and conservationists were present on the occasion. Bird expert Bikram Grewal, Asad Rejmani, naturalist Ranjeet Lal and renowned biologist George Schaller were among those who addressed the gathering.

V B Mathur, director WII said, "It is for the first time that we have not focused solely on wildlife but also taken aspects like literature, arts and culture into consideration."

Writer Stephen Alter and biologist AJT Johnsingh also interacted with the audience on nature and wildlife. A poetry session held in evening saw recitations by eminent poets like Ashok Bajpai and Leela Dhar Jaguri.

Two sessions of the festival will be held on February 11 and 12 at Great Himalaya Park in Himachal Pradesh.

Web link: <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/dehradun/festival-celebrates-natural-heritage-in-arts-lit/articleshow/57026274.cms>

Human-animal conflict dominates Nature Fest at GHNP

DIPENDER MANTA
TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

SAIROPSA, FEBRUARY 11

The increasing human-animal conflict is a big threat for nature conservation, says Dr George Schaller, vice-president. Panthers during an interaction with the participants on the inauguration of the two-day Nature Fest at Great Himalayan National Park (GHNP) in Kullu district.

To conserve nature under the world heritage site in the Great Himalayan National Park (GHNP) Kullu, UNESCO, in collaboration with the Wildlife Institute of India (WII), is organising the fest at Sairopo.

Dr Schaller threw light over the depleting natural habitat and poaching for illicit trade and said due to this, many animal and bird species were on verge of extinction.

"There is need to connect community with nature conservation and make efforts to protect our environment," he said.

In collaboration with Chinese and Tibetan scientists, Dr Schaller has worked for nearly two decades studying conservation initiatives for snow leopard, Tibetan antelope, and wild yak, among other species. His most recent conservation projects have been based in Laos, Myanmar, Mongolia, Iran and Tajikistan.

Dr AJT John, former Dean Wildlife Institute of India, and Dr Asad Rahmani, former Director, Bombay Natural History Society, also gave information regarding wildlife and discussed about the challenges to conserve it. They said there was need to ensure active participation of local community to conserve nature.

Director of the GHNP SS Kataik said, "We were focusing on creating awareness about the conservation of nature and wildlife which was under constant threat because of the growing animal-human conflict due to depleting of forest area. However, after the declaration of the GHNP as world heritage site, there was increase in number of tourists and we hope that we will be able to boost eco tourism."

The Great Himalayan National Park (GHNP) was declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site on June 23, 2014. The GHNP is home to 200 bird species, which attracts birdwatchers from across the globe. These include the endangered western tragopan and four other pheasant species.

The Tribune Sun, 12 February 2017
e-paper.tribuneindia.com/c/16784894

Web link: <http://www.tribuneindia.com/news/himachal/human-animal-conflict-dominates-nature-fest-at-ghnp/362860.html>

UNESCOs Nature Fest to begin on Feb 11



PTI

February 7, 2017 | UPDATED 20:55 IST

A + A -

Shimla, Feb 7 (PTI) The UNESCO would organise the two-day Nature Fest at the Great Himalayan National Park (GNHP) at Sairopa in Kullu district on February 11 and 12.

The fest will held in collaboration with the Wildlife Institute of India (WII) and would be attended by prominent conservationists, including Dr George Schaller and Dr A J T Johnsingh, a WII spokesman said.

A media workshop would also be held on the sidelines to discuss various aspects of environmental journalism, he said.

The fest will see discussion on nature conservation in the mountains followed by panel discussion on natural and cultural heritage of the Himalayan region and heritage walk in GHNP, the spokesman said.

GHNP was given UNESCO World Heritage Site status in 2014 in recognition of its outstanding significance for bio-diversity conservation.

The park protects over 1,000 plant species, including medicinal herbs, 31 mammal species and 209 bird species, as well as amphibians, reptiles and insects.

Four of GHNP's mammal and three bird species are globally "threatened", including the musk deer and the western horned tragopan. PTI PCL ANB

This is unedited, unformatted feed from the Press Trust of India wire.

Web Link: <http://indiatoday.intoday.in/story/unescos-nature-fest-to-begin-on-feb-11/1/877187.html>

Outlook

THE NEWS SCROLL

07 FEBRUARY 2017 Last Updated at 7:16 PM

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UNESCO Nature Festival begins in Himachal Pradesh

short by Aarushi Maheshwari / 03:36 pm on 11 Feb 2017, Saturday

The two-day UNESCO Natural Heritage Festival began on Saturday at Great Himalayan National Park in Sai Ropa, Himachal Pradesh. The Wildlife Institute of India said the festival will feature a media workshop on environmental journalism, discussions on natural and cultural heritage of the Himalayan region and a heritage walk. Notably, GHNP was named a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 2014.

[read more at India Today](#)

Web Link: <https://www.inshorts.com/news/unesco-nature-festival-begins-in-himachal-pradesh-1486807604755>

दिमाचल दम्तुक 13/02/2017

नेशनल पार्क आश्चर्यजनक शोधशाला : जॉर्ज शैलर

धरोहर सैर में सहभागियों ने वन्य प्राणियों व वनस्पतियों को नजदीक से निहारा

मोहन लाल टाकुर / ईजा

ग्रेट हिमालयन नेशनल पार्क के सुरुवात केन्द्र साईरुपा में पंचम स्तुत गण्य अभयारण्य के उपस्थित डॉक्टर जॉर्ज शैलर की अध्यक्षता में प्राकृतिक धरोहर समारोह मनाया गया। दूसरे दिन शैलर की प्रकृति चक्र, प्राकृतिक अधिकार व कलकत्ता, आरक्ष्यजनक पक्षियों और जन्तुसहयोगिता पर बुद्धिजीवियों ने महान मंचन किया। जॉर्ज शैलर ने पर्यावरण संरक्षण का अहमत्व करते हुए कहा कि ग्रेट हिमालयन नेशनल पार्क विश्व के स्थानीय जीव-जंतुओं व लोगों का आवास है, यहाँ यह विश्व भर के प्रकृति व पर्यावरण प्रेमियों तथा शोधार्थियों के लिए एक आश्चर्यजनक शोधशाला है।

प्रकृति ने यहाँ अनमोल प्राकृतिक दृश्य का नजारा बिखेरा है। इससे विश्व भर में नए आश्रम स्थापित हो सकते हैं और नए अनुभवों के माध्यम से नई कलात्मक सामग्री आसानी। इस अवसर पर एक हरिटेम चीक का भी उद्घाटन किया गया। इसके तहत इस दैनिकसमय कार्यक्रमों से जुड़ने पर 20 सहभागियों व शोधार्थियों ने मुलेणी से रोहता घाट पर एक 1.6 किलोमीटर की धरोहर सैर पार्क



नेवर फेस्ट
ग्रेट हिमालयन नेशनल पार्क

समापन पर हुआ सांस्कृतिक कार्यक्रम

प्रबंधन के वन अधिकारी रोहन लाल के नेतृत्व में की। इस धरोहर सैर में सहभागियों व शोधार्थियों ने वन्य प्राणियों व वनस्पतियों को नजदीक से निहारा और अनेक महत्वपूर्ण जलसन्तरी एकत्रित की। इसके बाद पार्क के सम्पन्न में लाइव ब्रीड कॉन्सर्ट के माध्यम से बच्चों व वन विभाग के अधीन स्थित प्रकृति और संस्कृति की कहानियों का वर्णन किया व वन विभाग के अधीन कार्यक्रमों की कार्यवाही और प्राकृतिक धरोहरों के संरक्षण में उनकी पहिचान व संकटग्रस्त प्रजातियों को संरक्षण करते हुए उनके कार्य-अनुभवों और सेवा की हरियाली पर संबंधित कहानियों के माध्यम से विश्वसनीय प्रकाश डाला। अंत में अध्यक्ष ने सम्मानित प्रतिनिधियों और पर्यावरण के अहमत्व के निहाय के लिए ग्रेट हिमालयन नेशनल पार्क के निदेशक एसएम कटोक ने स्वामी शैलर, मोहन लाल, शोधार्थियों, कला, पर्यावरण व प्रकृति प्रेमियों, कविता सहित स्थानीय जनता का धन्यवाद किया।

इस अवसर पर सांस्कृतिक कार्यक्रम के तहत स्थानीय बच्चों, स्थानीय लोगों व कलाकारों के छात्रों द्वारा नाटक, नाट्य, लोकनृत्य, कौटुंबी, सदस्यों द्वारा कविताओं व गायन का आयोजन भी किया गया। भारतीय वन्य जीवन संस्थान के फॉर्मर डी.डी. डॉक्टर एनटी जॉन सिंह, बॉम्बे प्राकृतिक ऐतिहासिक सभा के फॉर्मर निदेशक डॉक्टर अरुण रामानी, ग्रेट हिमालयन नेशनल पार्क के निदेशक व मुलेणी विश्व धरोहर साइट के सदस्य एसएम कटोक भी मौजूद रहे।

Monday, March 06, 2017

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Posted at: Feb 21, 2017, 12:52 AM; last updated: Feb 21, 2017, 12:52 AM (IST)

VIGNETTES: SHRINIWAS JOSHI

Celebrating nature through art and culture

The UNESCO Category 2 Centre (C2C) for World Natural Heritage Management and Training for Asia and the Pacific Region has been functioning at the Wildlife Institute of India, Dehradun, since 2014. The centre's mission is to strengthen the implementation of the World Heritage Convention by building the capacity of professionals and institutions involved with world natural heritage site inspection, protection, conservation and management in Asia and the Pacific Region through various methods.

The Wildlife Institute of India and C2C, Dehradun, organised an event at the Great Himalayan National Park, Kullu, "Celebrating Natural Heritage: In Literature, Arts and Culture" in the spirit of encouraging the celebration of nature through literature and arts. It was first of its type when poets, mediapersons and foresters sat side by side to hear the views on natural heritage of the fourth pillar and cultural ambassadors. I really felt proud to be amid the galaxy of the greats of the world and India (see photo). George Schaller from the USA was there (see photo), who is arguably the greatest living field biologist in the world, the master biographer of our planet's most charismatic large mammals. He earned the international fame by making intensive studies on the lives and ecological backgrounds of various animals in various continents. He spoke on Tibetan Plateau, China, 1985 to date. He has covered a vast area on the Tibetan Plateau. He says, "It conjures a vision of totemic loneliness of space, silence and desolation, a place nowhere intimate-yet that is part of its beauty."

I was ashamed when he said the environment from Chandigarh to Kullu was so modified that nothing was left. Talking about the Tibetan Plateau, he said 75% of the glaciers there were receding and only 15,000 yaks were left in the field which deserved protection. He said the gathering that 3,00,000 chiru (Tibetan antelope) had been killed since 1990 to weave the shawls. Although shahtoosh shawls are now banned because chiru is an endangered species, yet illegally the business is on. He says that major routes of opium

smuggling in Afghanistan are through the Pamirs and cautions that the region's drug corruption is more lethal than any terrorist threat.

Dr AJT Johnsingh is an ecologist from Tamil Nadu and is a Padma Shree awardee. He is a wildlife enthusiast and his study of free ranging animal in the Bandipur National Park earned him the recognition in the country. He is the first Indian environmentalist to study the threat caused to the Western Ghats. Opinionating on several other issues, he strongly raised his voice against the use of DDT. It was restricted in 1989 but 6,000 tonnes of DDT were still being produced annually in India to eradicate mosquitoes and other pests. DDT, now, has become ineffective and, in the last decade, most insects have developed a resistance to it. The resulting instinct among the people is to use greater amount of DDT which has infused India's soil, water and air with a concoction of noxious chemicals. It was a great warning for the rural people of Himachal Pradesh.

Asad R. Rahmani is former Director of Bombay Natural History Museum and is an expert on birds. He has written several books and research papers. He said there were about 11,000 species of birds worldwide, of which 13 per cent were threatened with extinction. Of these, the total species 1263 are found in India. It is remarkable that the USA with much larger area than that of India has only 900 varieties of birds.

Brazil and Colombia, however, share the trophy for having the most 1,900 species. Peru has 1,800 but the UK has only 600 species. Rahmani said Himachal Pradesh had about 400 species of birds of which 17 were on the list of globally threatened species. Critically endangered species are white-backed, slender billed and red-headed vultures, western tragopan, cheer pheasant and wood snipe are in the vulnerable category. I believe that the cinereous vulture falls in the near threatened bracket.

The excellent presentations of these three world-known experts filled the intellectual pots of all those present there.

— The writer is a retired bureaucrat

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 Posted at: Mar 3, 2017, 1:01 AM; last updated: Mar 3, 2017, 2:38 AM (IST) **VIGNETTES**

No road link a blessing for Great Himalayan National Park

Shriniwas Joshi

The Great Himalayan National Park (GHNP) Conservation Area in Kullu comprises 1,171 square kilometres of which the GHNP is 754.4 square kilometres. The rest of the square kilometres are spread on the Eco-Zone (265.6), the Sainj Wild Life Sanctuary (90) and Tirthan WLS (61). Quite a few of us from Shimla, Dehradun and the other parts of Himachal Pradesh, besides the luminaries from the world over, were staying at the Forest Rest House, Shai Ropa, a small village by the side of the



Tirthan river and in other nearby hotels to celebrate the natural heritage, in literature, art and culture. Shai means mustard and Ropa means flat piece of land.

One morning, Sonali Ghosh, a forester belonging to the Assam Cadre of Forest Officers and at present working with the Wildlife Institute of India, Dehradun, motivated me to trek a bumpy-choppy pathway, about 12 kilometres to the gate of the GHNP. I agreed. We, a party of about a dozen, and Roshan Lal, Deputy Ranger in the Forest Department, as our navigator, started from Shai Ropa at 8.30 am. Five kilometers up to Gushaini were covered in a vehicle and the trek started from Gushaini temple, painted in gaudy colours a perfect eyesore.

The temple at Ropa, a few kilometers away on our trek, was, however, reconstructed in the pure Pahari style and looked elegant. One of the trekkers with us was Kadambari from Tamil Nadu, a young girl who had won the first prize in a writing competition on natural heritage. This trip to Shai Ropa was an item of the prizes for the top three winners.

I am mentioning her because she had undergone a lung operation for cancer only six months back and was here matching step to step with us. This young girl is an inspiration and an epitome of courage shooing away the past, saying, "What has happened has happened; forget it."

To reach the head of the GHNP, we were trekking on the eco-zone area where inhabit 160 villages having a population of 14,000 only. The entire area is enormously primitive and walking up a trail that comprises glossy rock, smooth mud, slick leaves and thick roots of the trees coming out of the soil gives a sense of deep adventure. I would say that no-road connectivity is the GHNP's asset and I was told that not more than 1,000 visitors come to the GHNP in a year.

It was a calm and cold morning and while traversing, I thought of Coleridge who had said, "Tis calm indeed! So calm, that it disturbs/ And vexes meditation with its strange/ And extreme silentness." We did not see any wildlife on the way except a few monkeys jumping by the side of the Tirthan but we heard quite a few chirpings from the trees all around. Kadambari, of course, photographed the local avifauna.

One must have heard about the Hippo- Point of Kenya where hordes of hippos are visible and is a known tourist resort. But here just before the gate of the GHNP, there is a Hippo-Point. This point has a hippo-like rock formation dipping itself in the water of the Tirthan. The place is called Chuli-Chaw in Pahari. Chuli is hollowed handful made by joining the two hands and Chaw is waterfall. The white water here falls as if flowing through Chuli made of two rocks. A few steps ahead is the gate of the GHNP (see photo) where we reached in the noon. Here is a hut for the stay of forest guards and permits for Indians at Rs100 per day per person and Rs 400 per foreigner per day are issued. The water, air and the atmosphere is so pure here that one exclaims that a beautiful place simply delights the eye but a pure one, the soul.

Here, Roshan Lal, had arranged tasty meals for us. Well cooked rajmah and chutney of Bichhu Booti (Prickly Plant) plus pure Pahari ghee. A few from the party went to Rola, two kilometers ahead, and a few went to see Chatri Devi • (83-year-old) living all alone within the GHNP, the only human being in the park. Sonali, Roshan Lal and I returned.

Monday, March 06, 2017

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Posted at: Mar 6, 2017, 12:35 AM; last updated: Mar 6, 2017, 12:35 AM (IST) **VIGNETTES**

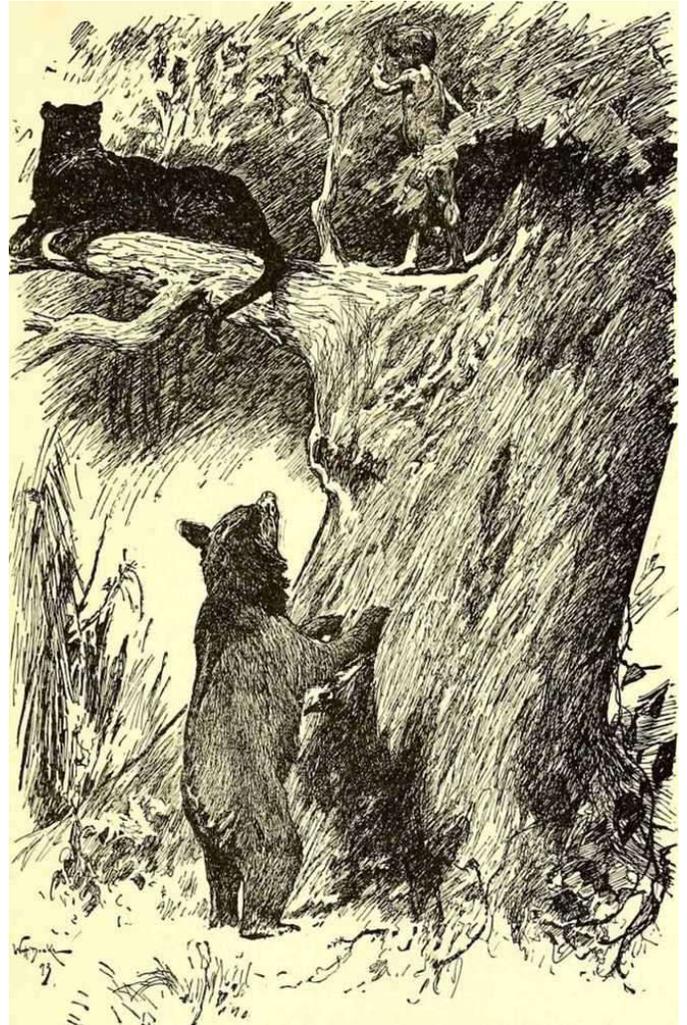
Protecting endangered animals a challenge

Shriniwas Joshi

I believe that most of my readers, like I, have read 'The Jungle Book' by Rudyard Kipling during their childhood. Remember, the man-cub Mowgli who was raised in the jungle by wolves and Sher Khan, the tiger, and Baloo, the bear (see sketch) and their adventures.

Recently in a seminar at Shai Ropa, Kullu, organisers had kept a session on jungle tales coming from the mouths of those who spend most of their times in jungles facing and protecting the wildlife and thus swung me back to the golden days of the jungle book. They were the uniformed segment of the foresters who do wildlife conservation and protect endangered animal and plant species, along with their natural habitat.

Roshan Lal, Deputy Ranger, explained how he saved monals from the clutches of leopards several times. Monal weighs about two kg and makes a small meal for the leopard. The bird tries to hide in bushes and the leopard jumps on it there or crouches itself by the bushes and preys. Roshan Lal made it a point to shoo monals away to an open area where they could save themselves from the predators.



Monal is the state bird of Uttarakhand and was that of Himachal too till 2007 when western tragopan (Jujurana) replaced it. Its hunting in Himachal Pradesh has been banned since 1987. Till then its crest feather was used as decoration over Himachal caps. Roshan Lal said they had to keep eyes on the poachers within the Great Himalayan National Park (GHNP) or in eco-zone. There are about 2,100 monals in the GHNP according to monitoring done in 2009.

Bhupendra Singh, Deputy Ranger, said an instance when a drunkard told him that at a particular place, a man was buying a colourful bird (see photo) from another for Rs 80,000. Bhupendra Singh went to the spot and rescued a western tragopan from being sold. The bird was injured probably it happened when being caught, so he used oil and turmeric on its body and sent it to Shamshi Ayurvedic Dispensary. It was alright in a couple of days when it was freed in the jungle.

Kashmir Singh told an instance when a bear came out of its enclosure at 1 am at a place different from the GHNP. His focus was to check that the bear did not go out of the protection boundary into the civil areas. He took a battery of lathi-wielding people with one wearing a protective leather jacket. He saw the bear descending the steep at 4.30 am. He got ready and flashed a stream of torch lights towards its enclosure. It resisted in the beginning but then followed the path of the light and entered the enclosure whose latches it had already broken. He closed the door and kept it shut with the help of rocks. He could win this war against the bear in about four hours during a wet night.

Rakesh Kumar said taking rounds of the GHNP with two men and a woman, he saw a brown bear walking on the other side of the river. It walked parallel to us for about 200 metres and we all were tremendously terrified. The bear then took a turn and went away. All senior officers told Rakesh that the brown or grizzly bear was less dangerous than the black one. But when I googled, I found this note, "Brown (or grizzly) bears tend to live mountain forests but they evolved in treeless habitat that influenced their behavioural response to perceived threats. They are more likely than black bears to defend themselves when threatened. A black bear's first line of defence is retreat but grizzlies can be very aggressive." Who is correct?

Usha Thakur, Lenin Sharma, Ramesh Kumar, Mahesh Chandra and Indra Singh Pathania also shared their experiences with those present.

The jungle tales disclosed that the uniformed services of the Forest Department have to be ready ever to face any situation that arises from somewhere or nowhere.

TAILPIECE

Bashleo Pass was one of the earliest places of the GHNPCAS that inspired Dr Tony Gaston (Canadian) to work for the biodiversity conservation of the park. — **The writer is a retired bureaucrat**