

PRESS RELEASE

Aaranyak observes World Migratory Bird Day with students across Assam

Guwahati, May 15: World Migratory Bird Day 2023 was observed around the globe with great enthusiasm and commitment. An array of activities has also been held in Assam to commemorate the day by Assam-based biodiversity conservation organisation, Aaranyak (www.aaranyak.org).

In Sivasagar district of Assam, the research-driven conservation non-profit organised an event on water and its significance for migratory birds with the students of Charagua High School. The event was organised jointly with the Assam Forest Department, the British Asian Trust, Darwin Initiative, UK Aid, and Charagua High School. It featured discussions on the significance of the day, birding at Panidehing Bird Sanctuary, uploading checklists to Ebird India, presentation on migratory bird species with reference to Panidehing aimed at sensitising Charagua High School students, discussion with the faculty of the school on the way forward, and collecting feedback from birding participants, school faculty, and locals involved. Aaranyak's senior officials Zakir Islam Bora and Niranjana Bhuyan was present in the programme along with officials Rimpee Moran, Bidisha Borah Vedic Gupta, Tibrajyoti Gogoi and Lekhan Gogoi.

During another outreach event, students from Pachariya Kushal Konwar High School of Kamrup celebrated the day at Assam's only Ramsar site, Deepor beel, where a nature orientation programme was also conducted. The event was attended by more than 26 school students as well as teachers. Well known conservationist from Aaranyak, Dr Purnima Devi Barman coordinated the programme and delivered a talk on the conservation of migratory birds and importance of biodiversity conservation. While wildlife filmmaker and photographer Mr Hendre delivered a talk on varied aspects of birds. The event was organised in collaboration with Wilhema Zoo and Whitley Fund for Nature. Team members from Aaranyak Manab Das, Dipankar Das, Barakha Das, Karishma Das was present in the programme.

Another event took place in Sankarghola village near Doloni beel in association with the Aie Valley Forest Division, Bongaigaon and the Department of Botany of Abhayapuri College. A drawing contest was held among the students of Sankarghola M E School, 125 No. Sankarghola L P School and Sankarghola Tilapara L P School with theme 'Image of a bird' or 'Sorair Sobi'. Madhurima Choudhury, Research Associate of Aaranyak conducted the competition with the help of Ankur Barman, the Assistant Coordinator of Aaranyak's West Assam Zone. All the students from the three different schools gathered in Sankarghola ME School, where an interaction programme cum prize distribution ceremony was held. Dr. Ashoke Kumar Das, Coordinator of Aaranyak's West Assam Zone, delivered a talk with a visual presentation on 'Birds and their identification'. Dr. Subrata Sarkar, Head of the Botany Department of Abhayapuri College interacted with the students about the importance of conservation of local and migratory birds. The prize distribution ceremony was presided by Boloram Rabha, the Head Teacher of Sankarghola ME School. The event was organised as part of an ongoing project being carried out by Aaranyak on conservation and sustainable management of the Doloni beel in collaboration with the Assam Forest Department and the GIZ-India.

Notably, Aaranyak conducted a bird survey at the Doloni beel on February 21, 2023 in association with the same partners under the same project. A total of 47 species of wetland birds were recorded with a total number of 1847 individual birds during the survey. Some of the major migratory birds found in and around

the Doloni beel are: Red-crested Pochard, Ferrugeneous Pochard, Tufted Duck, Gadwall, and Eurasian Wigeon. The number and variety of species of migratory birds indicate the ecological importance of an wetland. An integrated approach to managing the wetlands in Assam is needed to conserve and manage the aquatic habitats of wetlands as habitats of wildlife as well as to deliver equitable benefits from the aquatic resources to the people who are dependent on the wetlands for livelihoods and other requirements for their wellbeing.

*Press statement issued by Dr Alolika Sinha, Publicity Secretary, Aaranyak.
Contact No. 9435021312, Email ID: alolika@aaranyak.org*