

# **Sundarvan Nature Discovery Centre, Ahmedabad**

## **Annual Report**

**2016 - 17**



# ***Sundarvan***

**A Nature Discovery Centre**

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Sundarvan – A Nature Discovery Centre created in 1978, is popularly known for its snake rescue and snake awareness programmes. The facility is recognised as a Mini Zoo by the Central Zoo Authority of India.

Sundarvan received 82,514 visitors, including 33,664 (40.8%) children and 48,850 adults during the period. A total of 11797 students and 1813 teachers from 118 schools visited during this year.

Reptile Awareness Programmes was conducted for park visitors on every Sunday. It was carried out for 32 schools on other days, where about 1879 students and teachers participated. A seven day snake survey and awareness programme was conducted for Ultra Tech Cement, located in Chhattisgarh. Around 1000 people of different age groups attended the awareness programme.

### **Zoo Keepers Training**

On 18th Jan '17, Sundarvan conducted sessions on 'Reptile Management and Marking in Captivity' and 'How to make zoo visitors friends with your friends', for zoo keepers from zoos in Gujarat and Maharashtra. These sessions were a part of a week-long specialized theme based training programme for zoo keepers on regional basis at Ahmedabad organised by Central Zoo Authority of India.



The usage of natural markings in captive animal management was explained to the animal keepers different Indian zoos of West Zone.

### **Procuring new animals for the zoo**

As part of networking and partnership, Nishant Construction has completed the renovation work of crocodile enclosure at Sundarvan during this period. The Central Zoo Authority has approved our proposal to receive two African Slender-snouted crocodiles from Madras Crocodile Bank Trust (MCBT), Chennai. The national carrier, Air India generously provided the complimentary cargo service to transport these crocodiles from Chennai to Ahmedabad, considering the educational and conservation value of this project. The crocodiles reached our facility on 4<sup>th</sup> August and it was opened to public viewing from 23<sup>rd</sup> August, when different educational activities were carried out to generate interest on this fascinating animals among general public.

### **Grants and supports for education programmes**

Sundarvan received the Rufford Small Grant from Rufford Foundation, UK, to carryout snake awareness programmes for government schools in Ahmedabad. We reached 9043 students and 321 teachers from 82 government or government aided schools. Snake folder in Gujarati developed through this project was given to all the participants. A set of posters on snakes was given to all the school that participated in the programme to display it in a prominent spot.

Two one-day teachers' orientation programmes on reptiles were conducted at Sundarvan for 60 teachers. An activity manual was circulated to all the teachers along with other material such as snake folder and posters. Articles covering vital information such as precautions to avoid snakebite and things to do in case of snakebite were published in local newspapers utilizing this project as an opportunity.

### **Young Naturalists of Sundarvan**

This year, we introduced an annual membership programme for schools – 'Naturalists of Sundarvan', especially for students of 6th to 8th class. Aimed to create connect between the kids raised in an urban environment with their natural surroundings, this initiative banks upon nurturing the innate curiosity within every child. This helps to generate an interest and awaken the naturalist within through three unique sessions each focussing on three different animal groups, namely – insects, reptiles and birds. Each programme is planned at a different location and is packed with hands-on learning modules, resource materials and immediate help of experts.

Our first batch of 70 young naturalists from St. Kabir School was enrolled for the academic year 2016-17.

### **Special day events**

Earth Day photo contest was carried out in collaboration with Geetha Photo Goods. The results were announced on 22<sup>nd</sup> April and prizes were distributed to winners. A photography workshop was also arranged for interested people on the same day. Mr. Subil Shah was the resource person of the event.

The World Environment Day was celebrated in a big way in collaboration with SkyBlue Institute of Design and Het Graphics. A three day art celebration was named as "Wild Art of Ahmedabad, where different age group of children starting from 3 years old were given opportunity to express their thought through art. We received great response and over 250 children participated in this event. Prizes distributed to the children scored first three places in each age category on 5<sup>th</sup> June.



Participants in to bird watching during one of our trips to Pariei wetland.

Young explorers of 8 to 12 year old participated in three separate batches of 4-day summer activities, which included learning about nature through hands-on learning modules, art as well as a night-camp to learn about the nocturnal life that comes alive in the dark. Activities such as guided zoo visit & nature trail, night trail at zoo, knowing different animal groups in the zoo, T-shirt painting, paper mache, bird watching, etc were carried out for the participants.

As part of Wildlife Week celebration, Sundarvan carried out quiz programme on the Wildlife; one for school students of Class 8th and 9th and another one was open to all. A field trip to Polo

forest was also conducted as part of the Wildlife Week programme. Located in Vijaynagar taluka of Sabarkantha district with an intimate group of 32 participants of various age groups, fields of interest and professional backgrounds. Supporting a rich biodiversity including more 200 species of birds, the mountains forming part of Aravalli Range also mingle with streams after monsoons. A trek to the echo point, a short hike to the stream, bathing, discussing diversity, participating in craft activities, visit to the ancient Jain temple ruins and Harnav dam, completed a day of nature and spiritual connectedness.

Two Bird-watching Trips to the wetland Pariej was made twice during this year. An orientation programme was arranged for bird watchers in Ahmedabad to take part in the Campus Bird Count (CBC), which is the sub event of the global event, Great Backyard Bird Count. This effort provided tremendous result. Out of 40 campuses registered for CBC this year from Gujarat, 31 were from Ahmedabad.

**Progress made in implementation of the conditions stipulated during the 2015 grant recognition.**

Sl. No.	Norm No.	Condition Stipulated	Time Period to Comply	Status with Regard Compliance of the Conditions Stipulated
<b>1. General Requirement</b>				
1	1 (2 i)	Landscaping, plantation along pathway which will attract butterfly is useful for two purpose. Food for butterfly and beauty for area.	One year	Raising plants along sides of the pathway has been carried out.
2	1 (2 ii)	Trees plantation near wall with creepers help to hide wall and building.	Six months	Sundarvan has got very good vegetation cover that hide the most part of the boundary walls and nearby buildings. New trees are planted in the gaps.
	2 (iii)	Need tall plantation with creepers to hide wall and human habitation.	Immediately	About 4 feet height plants of tall growing Asopalav <i>Polyalthia longifolia</i> were planted in a row close to the boundary wall that separate the human habitation during the 2015 rainy season. Apart from this, already many other flowering tree species have also been planted in this area three years back. Once they reach good height, they hide the view of the human habitation close to the zoo.
<b>3. Development and planning</b>				

4		The Zoo should prepare and give the master plan approved from the Central Zoo Authority immediately.	Immediately	Sundarvan has already prepared its Master Plan and the same was approved by the Central Zoo Authority in 2009.
<b>4. Animal Housing, display of animals and animal enclosures</b>				
5	4 (6)	Many other enclosures like birds and snake need enrichment.	Six months	Logs, stones, water trough, perches are provided in the enclosures. Construction spacious and with modern amenities, snake enclosures have been started. As these enclosure are spacious, will have all necessary enrichments.
6	4 (5)	The zoo should provide appropriately designed and effective standoff barrier at every animal display enclosure to regulate the movement of visitors.	Six months	As there is no enough space to provide standoff barrier in the aquarium, we can't do here. However, the new aquarium design will have this provision. Other enclosures have the suitable standoff barriers. Moreover, the new snake enclosure design has the provision of appropriately designed standoff barrier as per CZA guidelines.
7	4 (5)	Every enclosure should be provided with appropriate signages with relevant information on biology and behaviour of animals.	Six months	The appropriate signages have been installed in all animal enclosures.
8	4.1	All animal enclosures should be nature immersing.	One year	The zoo has got very good vegetation cover and even some enclosures such as turtle tortoises, python has got vegetation inside them. The new snake enclosure also designed keeping this in mind. Necessary action will be taken to make all the enclosure nature immersing.

9	4.2	The design and dimensions of every enclosure in the zoo should as per the prescribed standards and norms of CZA and should meet the biological behaviour of the animals. Snake enclosures require to change.	One year	Construction of new snake enclosures is in progress. Other animal sections will also be improved phase wise.
<b>6. Veterinary and Infrastructure Facilities</b>				
10	6 (1C)	The zoo should provide a treatment room with basic facilities for treatment of animals.	Within six months	Since it is a Mini Zoo and most of the inhabitants are reptiles, we do not have much medical issues. However, we have veterinarian on call. His clinic is located within 500m from Sundarvan and its equipped with all the modern medical amenities. Please find these details in the attached document in Annexure – I. However, ee will do needful to get this room done soon.

### Landscaping



In March 2016



In April 2017

# Crocs to fly in from Chennai to city zoo

## Sundarvan To Get African Slender-Snouted Species

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

**Ahmedabad:** Two female crocodiles of the endangered African slender-snouted species will fly from Chennai later this week to be part of the city-based Sundarvan nature interpretation centre and mini-zoo in Satellite. This species has never been housed before in any Gujarat zoo. The crocodiles have been gifted to Sundarvan by the Madras Crocodile Bank Trust.

The airline will not charge anything



This species has never been housed before in any Gujarat zoo

for the special cargo, expected to arrive in the city on August 5, said Sundarvan officials. The crocodiles will be kept in a newly made enclosure and will be acclimatized for three weeks to their surroundings before they can be seen by visitors. The

under-construction interpretation zone will allow visitors to see the reptiles from eye-level.

S Sivakumar, the park manager of Sundarvan, said that crocodiles have been part of the zoo, established in 1978 as Nature Discovery Centre, for long. The last crocodile of the zoo died in 2010 of old age. "We had requested the Madras Crocodile Bank in Chennai, home to over 2,000 crocodiles, to spare us a pair and they graciously accepted the proposal," he said.

Meena Nareshwar, senior programme coordinator, CEE, said that crocodiles are fascinating creatures which evolved with dinosaurs and outlived them by overcoming all the calamities. "We are hopeful that the unique species will interest visitors, especially children," she said.

## Sundarvan to get new crocodiles after 6 years

A pair of African Slender-snouted crocodiles will be brought to city from Madras crocodile bank trust; will be on display from August 23



The last crocodile at Sundarvan in 2010

**Ahmedabad Mirror Bureau**  
[infofeedback@timesgroup.in](mailto:infofeedback@timesgroup.in)  
 Tweets @AhmedabadMirror

**H**ere is some good news for wildlife lovers in the city. Sundarvan, the mini zoo in Satellite area, will soon get a pair of African slender snouted crocodiles from Madras Crocodile Bank Trust in Chennai. The newest members of the animal park will arrive by August 5 and will be ready to be displayed before the public by August 23. Sundarvan had to wait for six years to get new crocodiles after the last one died in 2010.

Park manager S Shivakumar said, "We have already prepared enclosures for the crocodiles which will have

a water body as well as land. The African slender-snouted breed is an endangered species. This will be the first pair coming to Gujarat. Both the crocodiles are female."

### AJ OFFERS FREE TRANSPORTATION

The crocodiles will be transported to city by Air India. The airline has accepted to transport the reptiles free of charge in order to contribute towards wildlife conservation. "The reptiles will be given time to acclimatize to the new surroundings before being made available for public viewing," Shivakumar said. It should be noted that at present three species of crocodiles are found in India -- mugger crocodiles, ghadial and salt water crocodiles.

## Snake awareness prog for AMC school kids

**Vishal Patadiya**  
 @timesgroup.com  
 Tweets @VishalMIRROR

**S**undarvan - the nature discovery centre in city which is known for its educational programmes on flora and fauna will educate students of 80 AMC schools regarding nature and its conservation.

It will also include an awareness programme on snakes. Officials at Sundarvan believe that students living in shanties and in rustic settings have greater exposure to the dangerous reptiles. Hence, educating them is the best way to ensure their safety.

The main aim of the initiative is to allow students who do not have access to conventional means of information like television and books to learn about nature and conservation.

Till now more than 1500 students from AMC and panchayat-run schools have benefited from this programme, said officials.

S. Shivakumar, parks manager of Sundarvan, said: "Sundarvan is functional since 1978. Many private schools bring their students here for nature awareness programme. But the students from poor background, who have maximum risk from snakes and other venomous insects, didn't have any knowledge of how to safeguard

**The main aim of the initiative is to allow students who do not have access to means of information like TV and books to learn about nature conservation**

themselves. These students do not have access to television channels like Discovery and NatGeo. So, we decided to step in."

The programme is being funded by UK's Rufford Foundation. The initiative will reach out to 7,000 students of 80 AMC and panchayat-run schools. "We will also give training to 60 teachers so that they can educate students," Shivakumar said.

The initiative was not easy to implement. According to Shivakumar, they have had to convince the schools who have been reluctant to let them bring samples to educate the kids.

He said, "We take samples like skin shed by the snake, charts of snakes and birds. The administration gets worried about exposing the kids to dangerous reptiles. But once we take a class or two, the response is generally positive."

# A primer on snakes for school teachers

dna correspondent  
@dnahmedabad

**Ahmedabad:** Science teachers of 60 secondary schools participated in a snake orientation workshop jointly organised by UK's Reford Foundation and Sundarvan, a nature discovery centre in Ahmedabad on Friday and Saturday.

They were made aware about the types of snakes, their habits and snakebite preventive measures. S Shivkumar, manager of Sundarvan, said, "Until and unless snakes are not teased, they will not harm you. Three hundred species of snakes are found in India, out of which 60 are

## Treatment for snakebite

Keep the patient calm, do not tie any cloth near the bite. The victim should not run or walk and if the bite is on hand, bangles or rings should be removed.

venomous. The four most poisonous ones are Spectacled cobra, Common krait, Russell's viper and Saw-scaled viper."

The participants were advised to keep surrounding clean, ensure there are no cracks in the house or branches do not touch it and carrying a torch while venturing into bushes.

# Sundarvan checks kids' wildlife quotient

Organises quiz as part of National Wildlife Week celebration

Suresh Chakrabarty  
Special, Jaipur

Sundarvan organised a quiz for school students recently as part of National Wildlife Week celebrations which is observed between October 1-7. The event, which was aimed at spreading awareness of wildlife, saw participation from 10 schools.

St Kabir School, Derochi, students Yash Chaudhary and Yashvi Banga secured the top slot while DAV International School and St Kabir School, Drive in New, bagged second and third positions.

Kashish Patel, the coordinator at the event, said: "The quiz will add to students' knowledge on wildlife. This kind of event also sensitises student towards protecting wildlife." Sundarvan manager Siva Kumar said, "Last year, we couldn't organise quiz. But this time, we planned it in advance. Such programmes play key role in conservation of wildlife and environment."



Students attempting quiz paper at Sundarvan

## Others

### Field Report

education

#### Naturalists of Sundarvan



A young naturalist closely examines a bee hive

Sundarvan team strives to conduct awareness programmes using the zoo as a living outdoor classroom and extends beyond its role as a zoo, popularly known as 'A Nature Discovery Centre' situated in the heart of the city. This winter, we introduced an annual membership programme for schools - 'Naturalists of Sundarvan', especially for students of 6th to 8th class. Aimed to create connect between the kids raised in an urban environment with their natural surroundings, this initiative banks upon nurturing the innate curiosity within every child. This helps

to generate an interest and awaken the naturalist within through three unique sessions each focussing on three different animal groups, namely - insects, reptiles and birds. Each programme is planned at a different location and is packed with hands-on learning modules, resource materials and immediate help of experts.

Our first batch of 70 young naturalists from St. Kabir School was enrolled for the academic year 2016-17. First of the 3 sessions was 'Zoo to School' wherein Sundarvan team visited the school and

introduced students to the amazing world of insects. The session began with an interactive presentation about insects during which identification, evolution, adaptation, diversity, communication, social behaviour, etc. was discussed through experience sharing, videos and quick quizzes. 'Importance of Pollinator' kits by Zoo Outreach Organisation were given as prizes to encourage maximum participation. With eyes in wonder touch-tablet artefacts such as insect nests, egg cases, exoskeletons, bee hives etc... were observed and felt.

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### Field Report

education



Observing the house gecko up close

The session was concluded with a walk to identify various insects in the campus and students were given take home insect-assignments with art projects, observing regular visitors to campus, collecting facts and more which would be submitted during the next session.

The second session within this initiative was 'School visit to Zoo' which would include information on 'Reptiles' at Sundarvan. We began this session with a different approach of talking about the reptiles found at home and in the neighbourhood, their

stories, which participants fear them or find them icky. This sparked their interest and as experiences poured out, we even found few students intrigued by these crawling creatures. Being able to observe African slender snouted crocodiles feeding on fish, compare the monitor lizard with a house gecko's body, look at the gecko's lamellae up-close with magnifying lenses, and variety of snakes: changed the look of fear to fascination in many students. While ones that felt snakes were slimy, soon rushed forward to feel the slough and also have a close

look at its preserved skeleton. Myth busting, questions about reptiles that had been shown on TV and then understanding their ecological importance gave the students a brighter perspective on reptiles. A quick presentation on birds and the art of birdwatching was also included as a preparation for the next session, which was to be a field trip for birding.

Designed with a 'Let's go birdwatching' theme, the next session was all about understanding our feathered friends. Starting early morning by bus gave us a good opportunity to do a re-cap on

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## Education Report

### Sundarvan - 2016 Earth Day Photo Contest and Photography Workshop

To encourage people to appreciate the beautiful nature surrounding them, to re-kindle a forgotten joy and to inspire a sense of responsibility towards wildlife, Sundarvan organizes a photography competition every year on Earth Day, 22<sup>nd</sup> April. This year, with the support of a local photography school, Geeta School of Photography, our team also invited an experienced photographer, Mr Subil Shah, to conduct a workshop for a small group of participants.

Contestants were to visit Sundarvan and click a photograph depicting wildlife or our interaction with it through the medium of zoo. We received around 50 registrations of which top ten finalists received goodies. The winner received a professional tripod for his fantastically captured coppersmith barbets and the second and third runners up received camera bag and storage device respectively. Participants submitted lovely photographs of wildlife and creatively framed visitor interactions. To encourage budding photographers we also announced a prize in facebook category in which a student won with more than 230 likes on a photograph of a beautifully perched peacock.

The photography workshop was a huge success with discussions on basic tips and insight on photography and focus on capturing natural elements. This was followed by a walk in Sundarvan as the participants



Winner of 2016 Earth Day Photo Contest

tried out their hand in an expert's presence. The prize distribution also happened during the workshop and it was a moment of joy when the youngest participant, a nine year old realized that he made it to top ten! The session was concluded with a discussion about Earth Day and a promise that we will all play our little part in contributing towards appreciation and preservation of our planet.

**Submitted by: S. Sivakumar, Park Manager, Jignasa Patel, Education Officer, Sundarvan & Meena Nareshwar, Senior Programme Co-ordinator, CEE.**  
Email: jignasa.patel@ceeindia.org



Participants of Photography Workshop at Sundarvan

observation of birds visiting to the school campus. Rachel Joseph, Correspondent and Joseph Reginald, Director planted saplings to highlight the programme. Hannah Cecil, Principal and Vedavalli arranged and coordinated the programme. **Submitted by: Jessie Jayakaran. Email: jessiejay@rediffmail.com**

### Wild Art of Ahmedabad - Children's Drawing Competition

World Environment Day (WED) was declared on 5<sup>th</sup> June 1974, by United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) to celebrate our Environment and draw attention towards some of its pressing concerns.

This WED, Sundarvan organized a city-based drawing competition - WILD ART OF AHMEDABAD using art as a medium to spread awareness about WED 2016 theme - "Go Wild for Life: Zero tolerance towards wildlife trade". Our age-appropriate themes, "Who Shares the Planet with You?", "A Wildlife Friendly Planet" and "Save our Wildlife" encouraged kids of 3 to 13 years old and their parents to really think and appreciate our wildlife. Through this medium, people meditate upon their own actions, the consequences and the steps needed to move towards a sustainable lifestyle and improve the environment. With the hope to touch many hearts, we announced this competition on 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> June '16 at Sundarvan, the perfect place for nature-friendly events.

From tiny tots colouring away with their pastels to fresh teenagers using water colour techniques, the participants won our hearts while even the free-ranging peacocks in breeding plumage seemed to join the celebration. More than 190 children participated in the drawing competition and expressed their creativity and thoughts in beautifully unique ways. Truly mesmerising entries made it difficult to judge the winners and all participants deserve applaud and congratulations. Three prizes, in each of the three age-categories, declared in the evening of 5<sup>th</sup> June '16, were very aptly given as Art Stationary Vouchers and Drawing Scholarships.

We would like to extend thanks to event partners, Skyblue art activities and HET graphics who support our cause. We owe much gratitude to our team of volunteers, Mr. Avichal Tatu, Ms. Kunj Joshi, Mr. Neel Kamal Panchal, Ms. Rutu Gandharv, Ms. Urvi Brahmhatt, Ms. Lavina R Chhangrani, Ms. Namrata Bashani, Ms. Aditi Naresh Iyer and Mr. Yadunandan Pujara, without whose energy and charisma this event would have been incomplete. **Submitted by: S. Sivakumar, Park Manager, Jignasa Patel, Education Officer, Sundarvan & Meena Nareshwar, Senior Programme Co-ordinator, CEE. Email: jignasa.patel@ceeindia.org**



Our youngest participants left us spellbound with their creativity



Winners of Wild art of Ahmedabad at Sundarvan

### Other Education report

#### Summers are cool at Sundarvan Zoo!

Every year, Sundarvan conducts summer workshops for children, engaging them in various nature-appreciation, learning and conservation activities. A young mind is an empty canvas and we filled it with colours of learning and smiles. This year we introduced a "Zoo Keeper for a Day" programme which would appeal to the animal-lover in 10 to 15 year old kids! The day began with a nature trail inside Sundarvan to be familiar with the premises. Young zoo keepers enjoyed activities such as cleaning



Making POP casts of peacock footprints at Sundarvan

Annexure - I

**Pet Plus™**

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Dr. Kishor Transadiya  
Veterinary Surgeon  
98250 67943

- Clinic I : PET PLUS HOSPITAL : 10.00 a.m. to 1.00 p.m. & 9.00 p.m. to 9.30 p.m.  
1st Floor, Gold Coin Complex, Nr. Jodhpur X Rasta, Satellite Road, Ahmedabad-15. Ph. : 26745543
- Clinic II : WORLD PET CHOICE (PET SHOP) : Mon. to Sat. 5.00p.m. to 6.00p.m. & Sun 10.00 a.m. to 12 noon  
B/o. Pinacale Hotel, Town Hall Char Rasta, Ellisbridge, Ahmedabad. Ph. : 26580361
- Clinic III : PET PLUS CLINIC & PET SHOP : 6.30 p.m. to 8.30 p.m.  
14, Astha Complex, RTO Circle, Subhashbridge, Ahmedabad. Ph. : 27557909

23/7/14

I am doing regularly  
Weekly Visit of Sundarvan  
for examine small animal  
birds. etc. I am attending  
Emergency for animal  
in hrs. My Hospital is near  
Sundarvan 500 mtrs. away.

Sonography, cardiogram  
x-ray, indoor Patient, &  
Patient-manitrol etc. facility  
available in my Hospital.

Thanks-

Yours

Dr. Kishor Transadiya - 98250 67943

Critical Care, Medicine & Surgery - USA · Canine Care & Nutrition - London  
Canin Medicine & Surgery - Greece · Small Animal Therapeutics - Australia  
Veterinary Dermatology - Hongkong · Emergency & Critical Care - Switzerland



Kuldeep K. Patel - 9408604440  
Livestock Inspector (Vet. Asst.)

