



## News : Training and Workshops

### Post Graduate Diploma in Advanced Wildlife Management commenced

The XXXIII Post Graduate Diploma in Advanced Wildlife Management commenced on September 1, 2011. A total of nine Officer Trainees from different States of the country joined the course.

on ecological monitoring", Dehra Dun, September 5-9, 2011. The National Level Training Programme for Scientists and Technologists sponsored by Department of Science and Technology was conducted at Wildlife Institute of India. The course had the following objectives: (i) to make fully aware scientists on principles/approaches in

hands-on training in the lab with analytical tools. **Contact:** [karthik@wii.gov.in](mailto:karthik@wii.gov.in)

**Second Himalayan Day celebrated, Dehra Dun, September 9, 2011.** The Institute conducted a Consultation Meeting on 2<sup>nd</sup> Himalayan Day. The faculty members, researchers and M.Sc.

State	No.	Sponsored by
Punjab	1	MoEF
Madhya Pradesh	3	MoEF
Manipur-Tripura	1	MoEF
Assam-Meghalaya	1	MoEF
Rajasthan	1	MoEF
Maharashtra	1	MoEF
Bihar	1	MoEF



Two IFS Probationers joined directly after completing their training at Indira Gandhi National Forest Academy, Dehradun as 'Hari Singh Fellows'.

The orientation tour took place during September 25-30, 2011 at Corbett Tiger Reserve. It familiarized the officer trainees to the Terai-bhabar landscape and issues related to corridor management, people-park interface, relocation and mass tourism. **Contact:** [mukul@wii.gov.in](mailto:mukul@wii.gov.in)

### National Level Training Programme on "Biodiversity Conservation with a focus

Ecological Monitoring; (ii) to make scientists aware of causes of decline in natural resources/habitats and species; (iii) to make them aware of good practices in Ecological Monitoring; (iv) to establish linkages and facilitate sharing of information among scientists; (v) to reiterate their role in creation of baseline information and database management.

In all 22 participants from 16 different organizations participated in the programme. During the course the participants were exposed to case studies, field monitoring methods and

students discussed the contribution of Wildlife Institute of India in establishing knowledge base specifically on the biodiversity richness, conservation issues and wildlife management related aspects of the Himalayan Landscape. The deliberations focused on strategies for sustaining Himalayan ecosystem as well as on aspects of better outreach of science based information to authorities in particular and the civil society in general, to facilitate environment friendly decisions enabling conservation of bio-resources without compromising the ecosystem services of Himalayan landscape. **Contact:** [melkani@wii.gov.in](mailto:melkani@wii.gov.in)

### हिन्दी कार्यशाला का आयोजन

भारतीय वन्यजीव संस्थान में सितम्बर 14, 2011 को हिन्दी दिवस के उपलक्ष्य में एक हिन्दी कार्यशाला का आयोजन किया गया। कार्यशाला का उद्देश्य संस्थान में राजभाषा का अधिकाधिक प्रयोग एवं नीति नियमों पर चर्चा करना था। कार्यशाला में संस्थान के कुलसचिव एवं विभागीय राजभाषा कार्यान्वयन समिति के अध्यक्ष, डा० ए०के० भारद्वाज, डा० वी०पी० उनियाल, वैज्ञानिक-ई० तथा श्री पी०के० अग्रवाल, प्रशासनिक अधिकारी एवं समिति के सभी सदस्य उपस्थित थे। इसके अतिरिक्त संस्थान के सभी अधिकारियों एवं कर्मचारियों ने हिन्दी कार्यशाला में उत्साहपूर्वक भागीदारी की। कार्यशाला में समूह विचार-विमर्श पर विस्तृत चर्चा हुई तथा समूह प्रस्तुतीकरण में समस्याओं एवं निराकरण के सुझाव भी सामने आये। **सम्पर्क :** [baljeet@wii.gov.in](mailto:baljeet@wii.gov.in)



**"A walk on the wild side"****- Stotra Chakrabarti  
(XIII<sup>th</sup> M.Sc. batch)**

A series of sudden metallic whistles woke me up with a stir! My watch showed that it was 5:15 in the morning. It was the day of our trip to the famous Rajaji National Park!! The idea itself of setting afoot on the forest trails immortalised by the great Jim Corbett filled me with a surge of exultation, which is impossible to put down in 'black and white'. We left for Mohand, an entrance to the National Park, in the Institute's vehicle at around 8:30 in the morning. As we moved along the highway, the veil of slumber was just loosening its grasp over the human settlements scattered here and there. We moved from the Northern slopes of the Siwaliks towards the Southern ones.

We reached Mohand and were welcomed into the National Park by the loud, typical screech of the Indian Grey Hornbill, which flew right over us, giving us a scornful look! Under the leadership of Dr. Bivash Pandav, we all marched through the forest trail towards the Dhaulchand Forest Rest House, with eyes wide open, scanning every bit of the surrounding area for any sort of movement. A group of Chital crossed the trail, shooting furtive glances at us, making it quite evident that we were mere intruders in their lands. Our group walked, as if a single unit, a part of the forest, governed by the law of the jungle- the '*law of fangs and claws*'. As we came across a small stream (*Rau* in native language) which had a thin sheet of glistening water flowing, we startled a Red-Wattled Lapwing, which took off and complained in its unique high-pitched 'did you do it' calls. As we crossed the *Rau*, a fairly large grassy meadow came in view. Suddenly, a sound very similar to the clattering of teeth in severe cold came to my ears. I searched frantically for its source and - it was a bird!! A bird which in my opinion has borrowed its colours from the sky itself- a magnificently coloured Blue Jay or the Indian Roller sat just a few paces from where we stood.

Jim Corbett in his book 'The Jungle Lore' has mentioned that the forest never stops to surprise. When we reached the Rest House, after about a 15 km walk through the woods, we had our fairly large share of surprises. Darkness crept in. The dimly lit guest house, the moon high up over us, the alarm calls of the Sambars and Chitals echoing through the forest, the rustle of leaves on the forest floor provided us with an ambience of which one can only dream or come across in books. We sat together on the large courtyard of the guest house, conversing only in low whispers. The sudden meteoric presence of the fire-flies here and there added 'jewels' to the night. It was this night, which taught me that if one feels the true essence of Nature, then Nature unfolds herself even in silence and darkness. Suddenly, the silence of the night was shattered by a series of angry growls and a strangled scream! The '*law of eat or be eaten*' had been enforced. For something out there in the dark, unlike us, dinner was already on the table. The night was filled with whispers of speculations about the identity of the killer. Was it with stripes or with spots (a tiger or a leopard)?! In the meantime dinner had been served. With a full stomach and an overflowing bag of experiences, we climbed onto the roof of the guest house for our night sleep. We were warned about a certain leopard, which had an unusual liking for the tank on the roof! At the beginning, we all were a bit uneasy about the notion that our night guard may be an enormously strong cat, but being tired to the bones, I soon heard the low snores of my batchmates...

Sleeping underneath a star-studded sky, I felt like the 'Vagabond' whom Sir R.L. Stevenson had so beautifully portrayed in his poem..

*"All I need is the Heaven above,  
And the road below me"..*

Daybreak brought with it the chillness of North Indian mornings, the beautiful notes of birds, the butterflies resembling flying gems hovering for a place to bask in the first rays of the Sun. We started for our morning trek to a cliff called Goral Ridge. There was a dry Row very near to the Guest House, where we found the result of the previous night's 'drama'. An adult female Nilgai lied motionless on the stream bed. The killer was a leopard, which had left its pugmarks all around the place. Nature sometimes is too ruthless, but this is the way it preserves itself. The trek to the top of the ridge was an up-hill task, but was very rewarding. It was for the very first time, me and my friends came across a wonderful high altitude goat - the Goral. With the ease with which the Gorals climbed up and down the cliffs was just amazing!

This journey imbibed in me the lesson - to know the forest, to be a part of it, one should not be restricted to just seeing and learning. Nature is all about feelings, it is about sense and sensitivity to small things, it's about comprehending the large. It is about the inner self. It is about the outer Unknown.

## Beyond The Ridge

- Nityaprakash Mohanty  
(XIII<sup>th</sup> M.Sc. batch)

There are some experiences in our lives that teach us something about the world and then there are some that give us an insight into ourselves, enabling us to see ourselves in a whole different light; yet we seldom notice, submerged as we are in our all important work.

These experiences need not change us dramatically, but they certainly do lead to a better understanding of ourselves.

I had one such experience on a trip to the Rajaji National Park, a few kilometers away from Dehradun.

The visit was supposed to give us some taste of the Wild, before the Orientation tour that was to be conducted later that month. We started walking down the forest road on a June morning, our destination a formidable 14 km ahead.

This being my first real trek in the wild and being a nature lover, I was a bit surprised by the dispassionate state of my mind. We walked on. The mild morning sun felt hot, the numerous birds around in all their colours and patterns seemed insignificant.

As I watched my friends go crazy over a bird, I didn't even know the name of, a black, gloomy looking butterfly settled on my shirt, mistaking me to be a log. I couldn't blame it, given the level of indifference building up in me.

We crossed a few mountain streams and then some more; I was trying my best not to get my clothes wet. The sight of animal droppings and pugmarks did nothing to lift my spirits, as the noise of the cicadas reverberated inside my head.

It was not as if I didn't try to uplift my spirits, nor was it that I wasn't paying attention. Something in me just wouldn't budge; a voice inside, just wasn't willing to hear anything positive.

Finally, after a day's trek, we reached the forest guest house and the half-boiled rice aptly ended the day. As I slept under the sky overflowing with its bounty of stars that night, I could not help but feel a little sad. Here I was, doing all those things, I had always dreamt of doing, but yet nothing felt right. As standing in the lovely rain may make a man sick, maybe this trip to the wild had got the better of me.

The next morning as we climbed up a ridge to spot gorals, wild goats, I could not help but notice the steep and treacherous climb ahead of me. We climbed on, the sun climbing higher still. We moved up with great difficulty, the tall grasses our only support. I was completely out of energy by the time we reached a clearing, about 100 m below the hill top. The steep climb had got the better of most of us. We were given a choice to rest there, to join the others on their climb back down the ridge. Something inside me told me to go on, to make it to the top. I covered the last stretch, fearing a bout of asthma coming.

As we reached the top of the ridge, I did not feel the wave of exhilaration as one would expect to feel after such a long climb, yet something had changed, the voice inside me today was different.

We spotted a mother goral guiding its kid through the precarious terrain. The few minutes on the top of that ridge felt blissful, the sun now high up in the sky. On the way down, I sprained my ankle, but I did not mind. I thoroughly enjoyed my breakfast that morning; stale bread had never tasted better.

The thought of the walk back did not scare me, I knew, I just had to keep walking. I, along with two more friends, walked ahead of the group, spotting herds of Chitals, the Himalayan langurs and the spectacular Blue jay. It did not matter now if I was not aware of a bird's name, I could always ask.

I drank from the sparkling stream to my fill, preparing myself for the last few miles of the walk ahead. As I lifted my head after splashing water on my face, I saw the WII bus rear into view. I did not feel relieved, as I could have walked a hundred more miles that day. For that day on, I knew which voice to listen to.

You don't have to have a near-death experience to appreciate life; sometimes a climb up a ridge does the trick. As our bus left the forest tracks for the highway, I could hear the voice inside me say "nature indeed speaks most clearly to man through nature".

### Welcome Guests

- ◆ 32 cadets and masters from Rashtriya Indian Military College, Dehra Dun on July 29, 2011.
- ◆ 20 Forest Guards, Instructors and staff personnel from Punjab Forest Department, Conservator of Forests, Research & Training Circle, Hoshiarpur, Punjab on July 28, 2011.
- ◆ 27 In-service SFS Officers and faculty members from SFS College, Central Academy for State Forest Service, Dehra Dun on September 8, 2011.
- ◆ 55 IFS Officers (of 17 years services) and faculty members from Indira Gandhi National Forest Academy, Dehra Dun on September 13, 2011.
- ◆ 11 students, faculty and staff from SIES College, Sion (West), Mumbai on September 26, 2011.
- ◆ 60 students and faculty members from Alpine Institute of Management & Technology, Prem Nagar, Dehra Dun on September 28, 2011. **Contact: [acell@wii.gov.in](mailto:acell@wii.gov.in)**



30 army staff members from 22 Rashtriya Rifles (Punjab), from Jammu & Kashmir on September 30, 2011.

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*The views expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily those of the editor or of the Wildlife Institute of India.*

### BOOK - POST

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