

World Sparrow Day : March 20

On March 20, as the world celebrates World Sparrow Day, we urge all our readers to come out in hordes and support the diminutive sparrow. You can do this by participating and initiating fun events in your own locality, city or town, and build a word-of-mouth movement to save the sparrow.

The conservation of the sparrow, a cause taken up by NGO Nature Forever Society, is a fight not just for the sparrows, but all the common birds and biodiversity found in our immediate environment and often overlooked as being too commonplace.

Last year, the day was celebrated as World House Sparrow Day, in

collaboration with international and national conservation organizations like Eco-Sys Action Foundation (France), Avon Wildlife Trust (UK) and others.

While the mega-event, Project SOS by Burhani Foundation (India) is a run-up to the World Sparrow Day; other programmes to look forward to include the BiodiverCity Photography Competition organized by NFS in collaboration with Bangalore Photography Workshops.

You can participate in this competition by clicking pictures of common birds on your family camera, digital camera or even mobile cameras and emailing it to NFS.

Other events will include bird watching trips, public discussions and presenta-

tions across the world. However, Burhani Foundation (India) encourage all your eco-conscious citizens to initiate your own impromptu events in your housing society, schools and college and localities. For registration, you can visit NFS website at www.natureforeversociety.org and www.worldsparrowday.org

With your support, the World Sparrow Day can be used to form a network of like-minded people who can carry out advocacy and collaborative research in the future. National and international linkages will help garner government attention and shift the focus of the scientific community to the common flora and fauna.



We welcome your comments and feedback. Remember to subscribe with us to receive :

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Do visit our website.



10 Ways to Go Green & Save Green

- Save energy
- Plant a Tree
- Save Gas
- Eat healthy foods
- Skip Bottled Water
- Reuse
- Save water
- Keep electronics out of the trash.
- Borrow instead of buying.
- Recycle

Details in next issue

BFI Celebrates

100th Milad Mubarak

Burhani Foundation (India) SINCE 1991
RESEARCH AND AWARENESS OF THE ENVIRONMENT

Monthly Eco-Newsletter

VOLUME 20 ISSUE 26

FEBRUARY 2011

SPECIAL ISSUE FOCUS : PROJECT SOS

IN BRIEF

The decline of sparrows is an indicator of the degrading environment around us.

SOS is a mass functional bird conservation project.

On 6th March 2011 as part of 100th Milad celebrations, 52000 Bird-Feeders will be distributed by Burhani Foundation India in collaboration with Nature Forever Society.

This programme will be held worldwide.

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For every ton of paper produced, 17 trees and 7000 gallons of water are used. Do rethink before using paper. BFI uses recycled paper for this newsletter, thereby saving trees and conserving water.

Project SOS: Save Sparrows, Save Mankind!

This year on the occasion of the 100th Milaad Mubarak, we have chosen a rather humble – albeit valuable – ambassador of nature, to propagate the message of conservation. The diminutive sparrow, a common bird once found in plenty in our backyards can today be barely seen in urban as well as rural environment. This year, we plan to initiate **Project SOS: Save Our Sparrows**, a mega conservation programme to give a boost to the dwindling population of this much cherished bird.



Bird-Feeder shown to His Holiness by Shehzada Saheb

As part of the birthday celebration of His Holiness Dr. Syedna Mohammed Burhanuddin Saheb TUS, on March 6, we will distribute a record 52,000 bird feeders around the world to save our little winged friends, whose disappearance have been seen by experts worldwide as an indicator of the degrading environment around us.

SOS will be a mass functional conservation project preceding the second World Sparrow Day celebration scheduled on March 20.

The project will distribute bird feeders free-of-cost to interested citizens, institutes, forest departments and conservation organizations. These feeders can be installed easily in gardens, balconies and backyards and would be an easy and functional conservation tools for the common citizens to save the birds.

We have for long been advocating environmental awareness and research around the world and working on significant projects like vermiculture and organic farming. Our latest step to save the ecosystem is Project SOS and in order to make it a success we call upon all our friends from different walks of life, institutes, corporates and nature conservation organizations to come forward and involve themselves in this worldwide project to save the sparrows.



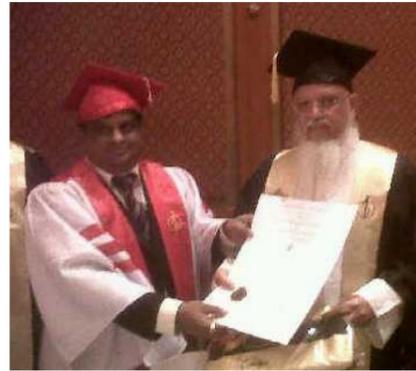
Bird-Feeder

How can you participate?

- Register at www.burhanifoundationindia.org before 6th March 2011, to receive Bird Feeders. On receipt of your request we shall provide them free of cost, which you can collect from our distribution centre.
- Organize an event on 6th March 2011, in your locality for distribution of Bird-Feeders and spread the message. Remember to send us photos of the event.
- Send us your feedback as well as ideas to save the environment. We shall publish the same on our website as well as in our newsletters.

CONGRATULATIONS TO

Shehzada Aliwaqar Dr.Qaidjohar Bhaisaheb Ezzuddin Saheb DM
 On being conferred with
DOCTORATE OF PHILOSOPHY
 by University of Madras, The International Open University of
 Complementary Medicine, on 5th Feb 2011, for Outstanding
 Contribution to the Community and to the Society.
Shahzada Saheb is a Trustee of BFI.
 We, the Trustees and Members of Burhani Foundation India,
 wish Tehniyaat and Congratulate Shahzada Saheb on receiving
 this Honour.



Rain Water Harvesting project in Dongaon

What Is Rain Water Harvesting?

Conscious collection and storage of rainwater to cater to demands of water, for drinking, domestic purpose & irrigation is termed as Rainwater Harvesting. It is simply collecting, storing and purifying the naturally soft and pure rainfall that falls upon your roof.



Village : Dongaon Taluka: Dahanu

District: Thane

The village Dongaon is situated at 60 Kms from Aurangabad on Aurangabad –Beed state highway. It is 25 km away from Taluka head quarter Ambad.

The population of Dongaon is 2000. The major occupation of the villagers is farming and labour works. The average annual rainfall over the area is 700 mm and mostly comes under arid region. The water in the area is below 200 feet.

Here also is the Durgah of MOULAI NOORUDDIN SAHEB. At this holy place around 3000 to 4000 pilgrims visit during the Urs Mubarak & Holidays.

Existing Water Supply Status:

The durgah area is having a percolation well of 9m diameter & 15m depth but the yield of the well is very low. It dries in the month of Jan/Feb, further recharged by the pipeline of 110 mm dia. PVC brought from another well source situated at Siratgaon, 3 kms away from durgah area.

There are 5 bore wells up to depth of 300 feet but they are dry. The water storage structures are 1 lac lt. capacity. Elevated Storage Reservoir (ESR) and a 40,000 lt. Ground Storage Reservoir (GSR). Hence the situation in summer is very critical and the whole scenario is managed by tankers which is uneconomical as well as non hygienic. It is a very temporary solution to the water crisis situations.

Proposed measures:

As the site condition explains the scarce zone with very less rainfall and water table below 250 feet, it is very essential to save the available water collected over the roof and use it for the recharge of existing bore wells.

And to know the quantity we can collect for recharge is = area x rainfall x collection efficiency = 3383 x 700 mm x 80% = 1894.5 m3 = 1895000 litres = 18.95 lac litres of rain water will recharge the exiting bores which will help in increasing the yield of existing bore wells.

This project was successfully completed in January this year, by BFI

Where has the sparrow gone?



Barely over a decade ago, we'd wake up every morning to the chirping of sparrows in our backyard. Then gradually over the years, the delightful cacophony began fading, while we remained oblivious, lost in the humdrum of daily responsibilities. Today, the once omnipresent house sparrow has become a rare sight and we seldom hear its chirp. Ever wondered where the sparrow has gone? Or what its disappearance means to us?

The humble sparrow is more than just loveable bird of our neighborhood – it has been deemed by experts worldwide as an indicator of our immediate environmental health, and its decline as the degradation of our ecosystem.

Several factors have led to this decline in both urban and rural

scenarios. The major ones are:
Lack of insect food for fledglings: Research show that the lack of insect food was one of the main causes of decline of sparrows. The sparrows fledging feed exclusively on insects for the first 15 days. The lack of insects in their surroundings, indirectly related to the invasion of exotic trees often planted for beautification, reduces survival rate of chicks.

Lack of food for adults: With packaged and pre-cleaned raw material crowding the market, availability of food grains, the prime diet of sparrows, have been hit.

Lack of nesting sites: Modern buildings seldom provide adequate nesting sites for sparrows which usually build their nests in building or tree cavities.

Factors like mobile towers and use of pesticides in farms also cause trauma to the sparrow.

Good news is that, you as an individual, can save our little winged friends by taking small steps. You can plant native trees in your locality today. The trees will attract insects and pests which form the food chain of the sparrow. Replace chemical pesticides and fertilizers in gardens with organic fertilizers.

Avoid exotic, foreign plants as they are a burden to the local habitat.

You can also feed the sparrows by providing them year-round supply of grains. Compact bird feeders can be installed in your balcony/backyard for this purpose. Grains like broken rice or bajra are apt nutrition for sparrows.

Also while constructing new buildings ensure that adequate nesting sites are provided. If natural nesting places are absent, then adopt nest boxes.

Schools Can be Sparrow Havens



Schools in cities as well as towns can play a key role in conserving House Sparrows and all common birds, not only through education and raising awareness, but also by creating a suitable habitat within campuses for birds to take refuge in.

Schools with campuses and playgrounds can provide apt sanctuaries for birds. Schools in the middle of a city, which don't have a large campus, can also make a few arrangements in their compounds and create a

comfortable resting and nesting site for birds. Here's how schools can help :

Providing nest boxes: One of the prime causes of the disappearance of the common cavity nesting birds -- like House Sparrows, Mynas, and Rose Ringed Parakeets -- from our immediate environment, is the destruction in habitat and lack of mature, native trees.

Schools can help by providing nest boxes for these birds which can be easily installed on

walls, trees, outside balconies and terraces.

Providing bird-feeders : Also easy to install and fill with grains the bird-feeders will help tremendously in conserving these chirpy birds.

Birds feed primarily on seeds like kaang, broken rice and bajra. However, insects such as aphids and caterpillars form an important part of the diet of young chicks.