

World Wetland Day 2012

Report

By

TCF - Corbett

The Corbett Foundation

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World Wetland Day 2012

TCF-Corbett Team members:

<i>Dr. H. S. Bargali</i>	–	<i>Deputy Director</i>
<i>Dr. J. S. Rawat</i>	–	<i>Sr. Programme Officer (Medical)</i>
<i>Dr. K.K. Yadav</i>	–	<i>Programme Officer (Medical)</i>
<i>Ms. Anushree Bhattacharjee</i>	–	<i>Programme Officer (Wildlife)</i>
<i>Ms. Zaara Kidwai</i>	–	<i>Programme Officer (Awareness)</i>
<i>S. S. Bisht</i>	–	<i>Programme Officer (Accounts & Administration)</i>

List of Volunteers:

Jagdish
Ravindra Singh Bisht
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Mohan Chandra Joshi
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A **wetland** is an area of land whose soil is saturated with moisture either permanently or seasonally. Such areas may also be covered partially or completely by shallow pools of water. Wetlands include swamps, marshes and bogs, lakes and rivers among others. The water found in wetlands can be saltwater, freshwater or brackish water. Wetlands are considered the most biologically diverse of all ecosystems. Plant life found in wetlands includes mangrove, water lilies, cattails, sedges, tamarack and many others. Animal life includes many different amphibians, reptiles, birds, insects and mammals. Wetlands also serve as natural wastewater purification systems. The study of wetlands has recently been termed as **paludology**.

Wetlands provide fundamental ecological services like flood control; ground water replenishment; shoreline stabilization and storm protection; sediment and nutrient retention and export; water purification and reservoir of biodiversity. They are regulators of water regimes and sources of biodiversity at all levels - species, genetic and ecosystem. Wetlands constitute a resource of great economic, scientific, cultural, and recreational value for the community. Wetlands play a vital role in climate change adaptation and mitigation. Progressive encroachment on, and loss of, wetlands cause serious and sometimes irreparable environmental damage to the provision of ecosystem services. Thus, wetlands should be restored and rehabilitated, whenever possible.

World Wetlands Day

The Convention on Wetlands of International Importance (Ramsar Convention) was adopted on **2nd February in 1971**. Each year since 1997, February 2nd is celebrated as the World Wetlands Day by various government agencies, non-governmental organizations, and various other social groups to raise public awareness about importance and benefits of wetlands. This year's focus is on "responsible wetland tourism".



The Corbett Foundation

The Corbett Foundation (TCF) is a registered public charitable trust set up by Mr. Dilip D. Khatau on April 22, 1994. TCF began with an initial mandate of supporting the conservation of the area in Kumaon and Garhwal famous as the “Corbett Country”. Since then, it runs various medical, awareness and wildlife conservation programs in and around the Corbett Tiger Reserve. In 1999, TCF established a division called Kutch Ecological Research Centre (KERC) in Kutch, Gujarat for watershed management, human health awareness, medical & veterinary services, wildlife conservation programs and eco-tourism programs. TCF operates in Bandhavgarh Tiger Reserve since 2009 and in Kanha Tiger reserve since 2010 and soon expanding its operation at Kaziranga Tiger Reserve in the year 2012.

World Wetlands Day 2012 celebrations in Corbett

Corbett Tiger Reserve (CTR) is a designated Important Bird Area (IBA) site. Corbett also sees a great influx of tourists. On the occasion of World Wetlands Day (2nd February 2012), TCF-Corbett organized a gala event in Ramnagar. A number of schools participated in the event. The session commenced with the introduction of wetlands and their conservation issues. A debate competition was organized for school students with the topic "Development around wetlands contribute towards its own conservation". Judges for the competition were Mr. J.S. Hiyanki - DEO Nainital (also, the Chief Guest for the session), Mr. Adhir Kumar- Teacher PNG Degree College and Dr. H.S. Bargali- Deputy Director TCF-Corbett. It was a very interactive session with the students speaking both in the favor and against the topic given. As the session ended, the winners were announced by TCF team and prizes were distributed by Mr. R. K. Mishra, IFS -Director, Corbett Tiger Reserve (CTR).



Welcome note by Zaara Kidwai



Program commencement by Anushree Bhattacharjee



In between the debates, a *nukkad natak* (street play) was performed by the students to educate the audience about wetland conservation and encroachment issues. The kids performed it once in the beginning and once in the middle of the session to make sure they could spread the word to most of the audience attending the event.



Nukkad Natak Team

The whole event was organized at PNG Degree College, Ramnagar from 11 AM to 1:00 PM. Teachers and students from 26 different schools participated actively in the event.



Debate Competition

The overall objective of the event was to develop awareness among the students for wetlands, their role in nature, benefits of wetland for humans, recent threats on the wetland due to development activities and how the situation can be improved and their present status in India. It would also sensitize the students about correlation among forests, water and wetlands, the importance of water in their life and to provide them an opportunity to express their views so as to built confidence in them.

The event was concluded by the prize distribution and words of encouragement from our Chief guest and judges, followed by the vote of thanks from Deputy Director TCF-Corbett.



Prize Distribution by Mr. R. K. Mishra, IFS - Director, CTR



***Mr. Adhir Kumar- Hindi Teacher
PNG Degree college, Ramnagar***



***Mr. J.S. Hiyanki
DEO Nainital***



***Vote of Thanks by
Dr. H.S. Bargali***

The program was open-for-all and had several locals and tourists from Ramnagar who walked in to enjoy the event. The students who participated in the program were greatly appreciated by all the special guests. In all, it was an enthusiastic group of students who left that day, pledging to protect wetlands and pass on the message of wetland conservation to others.

