



NATURE'S FOSTER

(Regn. No. 123 of 1994-95. Under the Indian Societies Registration Act 1860)
Post Box No. 41, Shastri Road North Bongaigaon
PO. Bongaigaon-783380. Assam. India. , Email : natures@sancharnet.in

SECRETARIAL REPORT PLACED IN THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF NATURE'S FOSTER HELD ON 25.04.2004 FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2004

The executive committee has the pleasure in submitting the summary of activities for the session 2003-04 ending on 31.03.2004, as below.

1. REVIEW OF MEMORANDUM OF ASSOCIATION:

It was decided in the AGM held on 27.07.2003 that the Memorandum of Association of Nature's Foster needs some modifications for smooth sailing of the organisation in view of present changing scenario. It was realised that the Memorandum of Association has some shortcomings in some cases which has to be modified and accordingly the responsibility for review and adoption of the Memorandum of Association was imposed on the Executive committee. The executive committee after several sitting and after detailed discussion fully reviewed the Memorandum of Association and the final draft was placed before the general body for adoption, which was adopted in the general meeting held on 04.01.2004. The modified / amended Memorandum of Association has come into immediate effect from 04.01.2004

2. MEMBERSHIP:

Under the Memorandum of Association has come in effect four different membership category has been accommodated including Honorary membership to some renowned person working for preservation of flora and fauna. The Executive committee in their meeting dated 21.03.2004 has selected Mr. T.N. Choudhury, Honorary Wildlife Warden from Lakhipur as Honorary Member for the session 2004-05 of Nature's Foster as per modified Memorandum of Association. A total five nos. of new member has joined the organisation raising the member's strength to 62 from 57.

3. PROGRAMMES:

A. Nature Oriented Summer Camp-2003

A three days long nature camp was organized by the organisation to impart training and make the participants familiar with the art of camping, nature walk, plant identification etc along with slid shows and trekking to the Bhairabchurah hill ranges. The camp was held at the newly developed Tamranga –Konora Eco-tourism complex. The camp was a grand success and a total 18 participants including non-members attended the camp.

B. Socio - Economic Survey of the villages around Kakojana R.F.

Five nos. of villages namely Salbari, Charakola, Ujan Rabhapara, Rabhapara and Jiaguri have been covered under Socioeconomic Survey to have first hand information about the villages, which will be the basis for planning long-term conservation programme with the involvement of villagers.

C. Habitat Survey and Golden Langur Population Estimation:

Like others years our members has visited various RFs, Wetland, and Manas N.P. too for field trips. Apart from that regular field trips were carried out at KRF, Nakkati, Bhairabchurah PRF, Tamranga, Konora, Urapad and Dhamar beels. However participation of young members were limited due to their study time coinciding with the college examinations.

A team of members from our organisation is carrying out habitat survey, estimation of golden langur population in the KRF and adjacent Bamuni Hill. The team will subsequently cover other isolated habitats under Aie valley Division. The work will be continued to till December 2004 when the final estimation will be completed.

The team has also recorded and registered with Zoological Survey of India about range extension of **Annandale's Tree Frog** from Kakoijana Reserve forest. The team also carrying out a total herpetofaunal study of Kakaoijana Reserve Forest and its environs.

D. CELEBRATION OF IMPORTANT DAYS AND EVENTS:

1. Dr. Salim Ali Bird Count:

The organisation has participated in Dr. Salim Bird Count and visited Tamranga – Konora Beel complex on the nearest Sunday of 12th November 2003 i.e. on 9th November 2003.

2. Asian Mid Winter Waterfowl Census:

We also took part in Asian Mid winter waterfowl census in Tamranga, Doloni, Paropota, River Aie, Nayachara Beel, Bhosamari Beel, Dhamar Beel and Urapad beel during January 2004 and the count sheets are under compilation for sending to the BNHS for final compilation.

3. WSSD Programme:

A programme under MOEF comprising quiz, photography competition, and extempore speech among the students of various levels was organized at Kokrajhar.

4. BIHU BIRD COUNT:

Some of our members have participated in the “*Bihu Charai Ganana*” organized by nature's Beckon and Amar Asom News paper.

4. WETLAND & WATERFOWL CONSERVATION CAMPAIGN:

A long-term campaign for conservation of wetlands and waterfowl of Lower Assam has been initiated by our organisation. Already major wetlands of Bongaigaon and Goalpara districts have been covered under the campaign and collecting necessary information on the wetlands. Tamranga-Konora , Hatimutra ,Doloni, Kumri Urapad and Dhamar have been already visited in this connection to have first has information about their richness and threats.

5. PROJECTS

A. CONSERVATION OF GOLDEN LANGUR:

The golden langur conservation work in KRF and its surrounding areas are going on. A five nos. of periphery villages are taken for awareness, motivation and community organisation to ensure their participation in the Golden Langur conservation and also to provide alternative livelihood for the villager who are dependent on the Reserve Forest conservation of Golden langur in Kakojana Reserve Forest. Already communities from three villages out of five have been organised.

A signboard for awareness on Golden langur is under preparation, which will be put near Hapachara Beat Office. A nursery comprising 20,000 saplings of food plants for Golden langur has been developed at Rabhpara. The saplings will be planted with the involvement of the villagers.

B. NWDPRA: (NATIONAL WATERSHED DEVELOPMENT PROJECT FOR RAINFED AREAS).

The NWDPRA project activities are continuing in two project sites namely Kolobari Thorthori and Lungai. As per Project guideline we have already formed two watershed associations, which have been registered under S.R. Act and carrying out project activities effectively. However the Lungai project has suffered a lot due to political interferences. We have taken the matter seriously and informed the concerned authority accordingly. On the other hand Kolobari Thorthori Project has already successfully completed their first year.

C. THE NATIONAL ENVIRONMENT AWARENESS CAMPAIGN: 2002-03

The NEAC –2002-03 which was implemented during the session 2003-04 with the theme “Water: Elixir of Life”. Under the project water samples from the villages along the bank river Tunia has been collected and tested and accordingly awareness drive were carried out to aware the people through leaflet distribution and discussion about the water and the conventional remedies for purification.

6. TRAINING:

- A. A training programme under NWDPRA on Natural Resource management organised by the Watershed Cell of Deptt. Of Agriculture, Assam was attended by Sri Sadashib Nath Sen and Sri Joydeep Chakrabarty held at Guwahati.
- B. A three days long training on Organisation Leadership Development organised Eco Research Group of Guwahati has been attended by Sri Jewel Deka at Guwahati 3rd, 4th and 5th January, 2004.
- C. Two of our members Sri Arnab Bose and Sri Sanjay Sutradhar has attended a two days long training on Golden langur Census organised by Green Heart Nature Club at Chakrashila WLS.

7. RESCUE AND REHABILITATION OF WILDLIFE:

Different species of birds such as parakeet, Koel, woodpecker, egret, water hen etc and reptiles including Python, Cobra and a Rat snake from human habitation were rescued by our member and treated and released in their natural habitats.

8. PUBLICATION:

A) STORK: a quarterly newsletter published by our organisation and will continue to publish for internal circulation covering different issues related to wildlife and environment.

B) Leaflet: A leaflet under NEAC-2002-03 has been published for circulation among the villagers during NEAC campaign.

Another leaflet on Dhamar beel conservation and rejuvenation of its past glory by our organisation along with Jinjiram Valley Nature's Club, Lakhipur has been published.

A leaflet describing about Nature's Foster and its activities has been brought as a ready reference for the aspiring members.

9. HUMAN ELEPHANT CONFLICT:

Our member Mr. Joydeep Chakrabarty has taken initiative to minimize man elephant conflict by organizing meeting and discussions with the villagers leaving in elephant affected areas of Goalpara District. He along with Mr. T.N. Choudhury, Honorary Wildlife Warden of Lakhipur has participated in several discussions with the Nokmas and villagers in Assam Meghalaya Borders.

10. FCRA:

We have almost completed all the requisites / eligibility for registration under FCRA but the recommendation certificate from the Deputy Commissioner is still pending with the office of the Deputy Commissioner, Bongaigaon.

11. OFFICE LAND

We have initiated to move forward for a plot of Railway land on lease for our office building at Bongaigaon. But due to declaration of Lok sabha Election it could not be materialized. The matter has been discussed in DRM level officials of NF railway and have to be taken care of.

12. NETWORKING:**I. Indian Bird Conservation Network:**

The director of BNHS Dr. Asad R. Rahmani who visited Bongaigaon was also met by our members and had detailed discussions on conservation of Urapad beel and wetlands of this area. We being the partner organisation of Indian Bird Conservation Network (IBCN), carrying out as active member of the network.

II. Manas Biosphere Conservation Forum:

A forum of the environmental NGOs working in the Western Assam Circle of Assam Forest and also on Manas Biosphere has been formed and regular quarterly meetings are held at different locations organised by member organisation on rotational basis. During the session 2003-04, Nature's Foster has organised Two meetings, one on 6th July, 2003 at Bongaigaon and another one at Mathanguri on 13th & 14th September, 2003 . The forum has been formed mainly to act as common platform of NGOs with broad view for conservation of Manas Biosphere Reserve.

MANAS CELEBRATION: A programme to highlight the concept of Manas Biosphere reserve among the mass of the area will be coordinated by Nature's Foster during March –2005. For the programme initial blue print has been framed and accordingly the work is going on. The programme will be carried out under common platform of MBCF . The venue of the celebration will be decided during the next forum meeting.

13. OUR GUEST OF THE YEAR

Some of the prominent wildlife activist and scientist has visited during the session 2003-04 . Some of them are

1. Dr. Rob. Horwich. Director, Community Conservation Inc.
2. Dr. Asad R. Rahmani, Director, BNHS.
3. Dr. Koushik Deuti. ZSI, Calcutta.
4. Mr. Soumyadeep Dutta, Director, Nature's Beckon.

14. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT:

We would like to express our heartiest gratitude to Mr. Mohan Chandra Malakar, CCF (WL), Assam, Mr. G.K. Kalita, D.C. Bongaigaon all DFOs of Bongaigaon, Barpeta , Kokrajhar and Goalpara , Field Director Manas Tiger Project , Mr. Mohan Chandra Brahma , Ranger , Basbari Range, Manas N.P. , Dr. Rob. Horwich, Mr. Soumyadeep Dutta, Dr. Koushik Deuti, Dr. A., R. Rahmani, Dr. Hilloljyoti Sinha, Mr. T.N. Choudhury, Mr. Soumydeep Dutta, Director, Nature's Beckon and Members of Aaranyak, Green Heart Nature Club, New Horizon, Green Forest Conservation, Jinjiram Valley Nature's Club, Lakhipur and the villagers from Ujan Rabhapara, Bagriguri Rabhapara, Garopara, Charakola and Jiaguri, Charipunia part I & II, Baruapara for their helping hand, cooperation and support during the session for implementation and smooth functioning of the programmes

For and on behalf of Executive Committee

25th April 2004
Bongaigaon

(Sadashib Nath Sen)
General Secretary