Kerala Bird Monitoring Workshop 2022 - Minutes of the Meeting



Date: 19 June 2022 (Sunday), 9AM - 5PM

Venue: College of Climate change and Environmental Science. Vellanikkara, Thrissur.

No of Participants: 128 (see Appendix for full list).

Topic		Time
Welcome & Introductions	Praveen J	09:00
What is Kerala Bird Monitoring Network	Praveen J	09:20
~~Chief Guest Address~~	~~Anoop K R IFS, CCF Eastern Circle~~	~~09:30~~
District level activities - Status & Ambitions	Premchand Reghuvaran	09:40
Redlist of birds of Kerala	Praveen J	10:10
Heronry Counts	Roshnath R	10:40
Women in birding: Actionable strategies	Sreedevi A	11:15
Climate change & species declines	Ashwin Viswanathan	11:45
Improving data quality in eBird	Maxim Rodrigues	12:05
Pelagic Counts	Satyan Meppayur	12:35

Topic		Time
Address by the KSSB Member Secretary	Dr. Santhoshkumar A V	16:15
Wetland Counts	E S Praveen	14:10
Spreading the Monitoring Network in Panchayats	Harikumar Mannar	14:40
Monitoring specific species or bird communities	Ratish R L	15:10
Digital outreach for CitSci participation	Anish Aravind	15:55
Strategies for conservation of bird habitats	Jayadev Menon	16:45
Closure & Vote of thanks	Nameer P O	16:50

Slides

- Introductory slide, Agenda & Introduction to Kerala Bird Monitoring
- District level activities: Status & Ambitions
- Redlist of birds of Kerala
- Heronry Counts
- Women in birding: Actionable strategies
- Climate change & species declines
- Improving data quality in eBird
- കടൽ പക്ഷി സർവ്വേ ; വെല്ലുവിളികളും പരിഹാരങ്ങളും
- Wetland Counts
- Spreading the Monitoring Network in Panchayats
- Monitoring specific bird species or bird communities
- Digital outreach for CitSci participation
- Strategies for conservation of bird habitats

District level activities: Status & Ambitions. Anchor: Premchand Raghuvaran

Decisions

- Participants value certificates while joining group exercises. If local/district coordinators can promote distribution of certificates, that will encourage participation.
- Administrative difficulties in organising forest surveys may be brought to the attention of Dr. Nameer. However, the request should come in time with the necessary details to get a quick closure.
- The impression that covid years have impacted progress of bird monitoring activities across Kerala is not really supported by data. There has been a slowness in rural/forest birding during lock down months, but otherwise Covid did not have any impact and certainly not at a larger timescale.
- Expansion of sky-island survey (> 1,400m) from Wayanad to adjoining districts (Kannur, Kozhikode & Malappuram) discussed - and eventually further south.

Actions

- No specific actions

Red list of Birds of Kerala. Anchor: Praveen J

Decisions

- All agreed that Kerala should do a regional redlist
- A few raised their hands to join the effort - Vishnudas, Nameer, Sreehari, Arun CG, Premchand, Latha Prabhakaran, Arun V & Jayadev Menon (apart from Abhinand C, C Sashikumar & Praveen J who are already a part of it).
- We wouldn't need any external support except BCI (Ashwin) for generating the required information for redlisting.
- We may seek support for funding for this project.

Actions

- Create a special interest group with volunteers and anybody else who may get interested later. Owner: Praveen

Address by Sri. SajeeshKumar B, DCF (SF), Thrissur

Summary

- Assured all support for bird surveys in non-forests areas through social forestry including pelagic surveys in Thrissur dt.
- Suggested us to write to PCCF (SF) for support for all districts though

Heronries of Kerala. Anchor: Roshnath Ramesh

Decisions

- Reiterated the decision that each district can choose a one-month window for monitoring heronries. The month may vary but stick to the same month year after year.
- Suggestion only - Neither eBird, nor google forms have been effective in counting heronries in the field. People use eBird in the field and google form back at home. We may need additional tools - suggestions to explore the need for a heronry monitoring app made.
- Suggestion only - Ebird-il ചെയ്യുന്നവർ breeding plumage (Stage)ന്റെ കമന്റ് കൂടി note ചെയ്യണം. Long term pattern ഉണ്ടാക്കാൻ (movement pattern) ഇത് സഹായകമാവും.
- Suggestion only - Where possible, ഒരു സീസൺ മുഴുവനും മോണിറ്ററിങ് ചെയ്യണം, Monsoon തുടങ്ങിയ ശേഷം മഴ മാറി ചൂട് കാലാവസ്ഥ അനുഭവപ്പെടാറുണ്ട്, അത് പക്ഷികളുടെ behaviour, food availability and feeding pattern, എന്നിവയെ ബാധിക്കുന്നുണ്ടോ എന്ന പഠനം നടക്കണം.

Actions

- Dive deep and publish the results of how heronries respond to destruction of nesting trees (e.g. highways) - including how change of tree species may not support long-term. Owner: Roshnath
- Publish all datasets, bird as well as non-bird, in some open access forums to ensure permanence and also in the spirit of open science. Owner: Roshnath

Women in Birding; Actionable strategies. Anchor: Sreedevi A

Decisions

- Campus Bird count is bringing a positive effect on the women birding front - most participants of CBC in Thiruvananthapuram, Kollam & Kottayam were girls. This is an ideal campaign that should be promoted further. Engaging school students in birding activities for the past many years also encourages lots of girls.
- നിലവിൽ all kerala whatsapp group for ladies മാത്രമേ ഉള്ളു. അത് ജില്ല തലങ്ങളിലും ഉണ്ടാക്കണം എന്ന നിർദ്ദേശം പങ്ക് വെച്ചു. അടുത്ത CBC ഇൽ പെൺ പങ്കാളിത്തം ഉറപ്പ് വരുത്താനും കൂടുതൽ ശക്തീകരിക്കാനും whatsapp ഗ്രൂപ്പ് active ആയിട്ട് കൊണ്ട് പോവാനും തീരുമാനമെടുത്തു.

Action

- All lady members (1/3rd of the online registrations were females) who participated in the workshop should be added to the all kerala whatsapp group for ladies. Owner: Sreedevi

The impact of climate change on birds; insights from citizen science. Presenter: Ashwin Viswanathan (Bird Count India)

Decisions & Action

- None specific - but suggestions to do a long-term monitoring in a region with a gradual ascent from 100-2000m with set protocols may yield long-term data on climatic changes in the birds of Western Ghats - how they move down or up.
- Site specific monitoring, intensely during migration, will provide answers to whether the vagrants are really a change or just the result of better birding (both people & competency).

Improving data quality in eBird. Anchor: Maxim Rodrigues

Decisions

- It was agreed that any eBirder, not necessarily an editor, can improve data quality in eBird through regular checking of maps and charts. They may post their findings in any of the district Whatsapp groups and bring the attention of the local editor.

Actions

- Conduct a regular data quality marathon (once in 3 months?) where a group of volunteers and possibly editors sit together over zoom and attack such specific problems in a region (here Kerala). Participation is voluntary but it vastly improves knowledge of birds and tools like eBird. Owner: Maxim

കടൽ പക്ഷി സർവ്വേ ; വെല്ലുവിളികളും പരിഹാരങ്ങളും. Anchor: Sathyan Meppayur

Decisions/Suggestions

- മത്സ്യബന്ധനത്തിന് പോകുന്നവർക്ക് pelagic birding നെ കുറിച്ച് കൃത്യമായ അവബോധം സൃഷ്ടിക്കുകയും അവർക്ക് ഡോകുമെന്റ് ചെയ്യാൻ വേണ്ട ബൈനോക്കുലർ, ക്യാമറ എന്നിവ നൽകുക വഴി അവരിലൂടെ ഒരു നല്ല ശതമാനം data ശേഖരിക്കാൻ സാധ്യമാവും.
- ജൂൺ, ജൂലൈ, ഓഗസ്റ്റ് എന്നീ മാസങ്ങളിൽ കടൽ പക്ഷികളുടെ റിപ്പോർട്ട് വളരെ ദയനീയമാണ്, ആയതിനാൽ കാലവർഷങ്ങളിലും കൃത്യമായ മോണിറ്ററിങ് നടത്തേണ്ട ആവിശ്യകത അദ്ദേഹം മുന്നോട്ട് വെച്ചു.
- ഫിഷറീസ് ഡിപ്പാർട്മെന്റ് ന്റെ സഹകരണം തേടണം. അവരുടെ പഠന യാത്രകളിൽ കൂടെ പോവാൻ നമ്മുടെ volunteers സജ്ജമാവണം.
- ഫോറെസ്റ്റ് ഡിപ്പാർട്മെന്റ് മുൻഗണന എടുത്ത് ഇത് നടത്തിയാൽ മാത്രമേ കാര്യമായ മോണിറ്ററിങ് മുന്നോട്ട് കൊണ്ട് പോവാൻ പറ്റുകയുള്ളു.
- Safety concerns ആണ് ഇതിൽ ഏറ്റവും പ്രധാനപെട്ട പങ്ക് വഹിക്കുന്നത്. Life jacket പോലെയുള്ള സജ്ജീകരണങ്ങൾ ഇല്ലാത്ത, അനുവാദം ലഭിക്കാത്ത മോണിറ്ററിങ് ഒരിക്കലും പ്രോത്സാഹിപ്പിച്ച് കൂടാ..
- Collaboration with marine mammal watching എന്നതും ആലോചിക്കാവുന്നതാണ്.

Actions

- DCF (SF), TCR indicted that a proposal may be sent to PCCF and he feels Social Forestry is very much interested and supportive (& is the correct dept as well) of the pelagic monitoring. Owner: Nameer

Wetland Counts. Anchor: E S Praveen

Decisions

- No changes in AWC methods - however, KSBB may join this time early based on NBA's proposal. We have to request them to contact us early in December.

Actions

- No specific actions noted - but see the section under KSBB's MS.

Spreading of monitoring networks in Panchayats. Anchor: Harikumar Mannar

Decisions

- During OBC and GBBC, attempt to cover as many panchayats as we can across Kerala. In the first year, only a limited number of districts, or talukas or panchayats may participate.
- Intent is to cover 'all' habitats in each panchayat being monitored.
- District level organsing is sufficient. Taluk level organisation is not required at the moment by any district.
- Whether to update PBR or not - or use the data from our monitoring exercise for PBR updates is a decision left to KSBB. However, we actively pursue in informing them about the availability of higher quality data.
- Groups that came forward to join are -
    - Districts: Alappuzha (Nodal: Harikumar + Sumesh(?)), Palakkad (Nodal: Praveen V), Thrissur (Nodal: Manoj K) & Wayanad (Nodal: Ratheesh).
    - Specific Panchayats in other districts: Kollam Corp. (Nodal: Sarlin), Thodupuzha (Nodal: Kauthubh), Naduvannoor (Nodal: Sujith)
- Involvement of KSBB - see the section under Member Secretary.

Actions

- Special interest group to be created for panchayat monitoring based on interests expressed. Owner: Harikumar Mannar
- Come out with a protocol to be followed during GBBC & OBC for panchayat monitoring. Owner: Praveen J

Monitoring Specific Bird Species and Bird Communities. Anchor: Ratheesh RL

Decisions

- Decided to conduct some form of wetland count during autumn migration. Details not discussed but several examples & suggestions came up (e.g. Beach combing done by CNHS, peep count).
    - Monitoring following AWC type total count is expected.
    - Rather than exhaustive coverage of wetlands, specific sites and regular year-to-year monitoring is what is recommended.
- Decided to do specific monitoring for raptors in all habitats. This follows from the concern of SoIB that different habitat raptors have different types of declines.
    - Site specific mid-day counts when raptors soar.
    - Infrequent rather than regular monitoring.
    - Protocols for counting to be decided.
- Decided to do site specific monitoring of laterite, open-land landscapes that are undergoing serious threats in Kerala.
    - Protocols to be decided.

Actions

- Form a core group of interested people for each of the three exercises and handover to the core group. Action: Ratheesh
- Use eBird data to find ideal sites for raptor monitoring. Owner: Praveen J
- Create raptor counting protocol for raptor monitoring. Owner: Raptor core group
- Create protocol for monitoring open-landscapes. Owner: Open landscape core group

Digital outreach for CitSci participation. Anchor: Anish Aravind

Decisions

- Instagram for younger people and facebook for older people - with much more focus to start on Instagram soon.
- Posts with discussions needed for greater outreach.
- Handling of instagram accounts can be delegated to the ‘x’th batch student from a ‘y’ college.
- Invite interested people outside the birding circle to promote.
- All in all - fairly new field and hence a core group needs to be formed. People who volunteered are Rustam, Arun V, Ranjit (?)

Actions

- Setup a core group for strategizing on digital outreach. Owner: Anish
- Create the digital outreach strategy for KBM and deploy. Owner: Core group

Address by Dr. Santhoshkumar AV, Member Secretary, KSBB

Summary

- KSBB intends to institutionalise the engagement between BMCs of panchayat and bird-watchers. Both proposals, on AWC and OBC/GBBC panchayat monitoring will be discussed shortly and he will get back to Dr. Nameer on the next steps.

Strategies for conservation of bird habitats. Anchor: Jayadev Menon

Decisions:

- No specific decision on how to make neighbourhoods bird friendly - general opinions were shared.
- Create 'public' ‘records’ like surveys, newspaper reports, memorandum to govt officialsof potential habitats that are liable to be destroyed. That creates a barrier for easy conversion.
- Keep communication channels open with people (& feed data/information), who can influence or have decision making powers.
- Options for total buy-out of bird habitats to be explored more if there are adequate funders via crowdfunding. Details not discussed.

Actions:

- Share the list of bird-friendly plants/trees with the group that can be planted in Kerala. Owner: P O Nameer.

Prepared by Ahmed Omar, Sancia Morris & Praveen J

Appendix 1: Participants

Aamina Ismail	Azhar Muhammad A	Lathika Anoth	Prasanth	Sathyan Meppayur	Yadu Prasad N
Abdul Raheem Munderi	C P Sethumadhavan	Lathish R Nath	Praveen ES	SHINO JACOB	Younis Ahammed C R
Abdul Rahim P A	C Susanth Kumar	Lena Fathima VP	Praveen J	Siva Kumar R	Zende Jayesh Yuvraj
Abhin M Sunil	David Raju	Lijo panangadan george	Praveen V	Smruthi VM	C A Abdul Bashir
Abhinand C	Dilgith Surendran	Manav S	Premchand R	Sneha Binil	Rachana
Abin Aniyan Kunju	DILIP K G	Manoj Karingamadathil	Rahul ER	Sneha V V	
Adheena M	Dr P J Sarlin	Manoj painungal	Raja Joseph	Soja Sharin C K	
Adil A	Dr. C Mohammad	Manu P Malibhagam	Rajana P R	Soura s	
Ahmed	Dr.	Maxim	Raju Kidoor	Sreedevi A	

Omar Haroon	Vigneshwaran B	Rodrigues K			
AK Sivakumar	Eisa Usman	MINI ANTO	Rakesh		
AKHIL P M	Fayad Hameed	Mohammed Ramees K	Ranjeet Menon	Sreehari M Pillai	
Amala Joseph	Govind Girija	Mukundan K	RATHERSH	Sreejith K A	
Ampady S	Hari Mavelikara	MURALI MADHAVA P S	Rathish R L	Sreelakshmi V	
Anagha Devi	Harikumar	Navin P Mathew	Rathna V	Steffin Babu	
Anagha Jose	Jaisankar	Navya Sunny	Reji Chandran	Subin KS	
Annie Feby	Jayadev Menon	Nisha T K	ROSHIN THOMAS DOMINIC	Sujith S	
Ardra Raju	Jayakrishnan G	Nishad eshaal	Roshnath Ramesh	Syama V	
Arjun Suresh	Jeniffer Ann Thomas	Nitheesh Babu	Rustum Usman	Thrinisha T U	
Arun CG	Jiji Sam	Nivedita Lakshmi T	Sachin Joji	TS Hrishika	
Arun Varghese	Jithin Mathew Thomas	Oygan J	Sahla Thasneem MM	Varun V	
Arya Devi K	K Pranav Bhandary	P P Srinivasan	Sajeeshkumar	Varunan T K	
Arya R	Kausthubh K N	Parvathi VM	Sancia Morris	Venugopala Prabhu S	
Ashwin Viswanathan	Krishnakumar K Iyyer	Parvathy M R	Santhoshkumar AV	Vishnudas CK	
Asokan Mash	Krishnapriya M	PO Nameer	Sashikumar C	Vivek Chandran A	

Aysha Suman	LATHA PRABHAKARAN	Polycarp Joseph	Sasidharan manekkara	Vivek Sudhakaran	

Note: If your name is missing, you might not have registered in the participant form, please leave a comment with the name & the district.

Appendix 2: Photos



Photo: Abhin M Sunil