



Biodiversity Monitoring
NEWSLETTER

2024-25

BIODIVERSITY MONITORING'S FINDINGS

Species: Green keelback

When cleaning up the pond, we have found this gorgeous being. Green keelback are shy little snakes, often found near water bodies. They are not-venomous and harmless, so don't worry if you ever spot them. You can safely observe them when they flatten their neck and raise their head to look like king cobra!

Date: 21.02.2025

Time: 5:48 pm

Spotted by: Biodiversity Triveni



Species: Indian Palm Civet

The Indian palm civet is a small, cat-like animal with a long body, pointed face, and a bushy tail. It has grey or brown fur with dark spots and stripes that help it blend into trees and forests. Active mostly at night, it climbs trees to eat fruits, insects, and small animals.

Date: 10.12.2024

Time 9:59pm

Spotted by: Biodiversity Monitoring Triveni



Species: Barking deer

The barking deer, also known as the Indian muntjac, is a small deer with reddish-brown fur and short antlers. It gets its name from the dog-like bark it makes when it senses danger. These shy animals are usually found alone or in pairs, quietly grazing on leaves and fruits in forests.

Date: 11.12.2024

Time: 10:43 am

Spotted by: Biodiversity Monitoring Triveni



BIODIVERSITY MONITORING'S FINDINGS

Species: Indian Wild Boars

The wild boar is an animal you can spot by his noisy movement through leaf litter and soil. They have strong snouts and tusks, to dig for roots, insects, and tubers, unknowingly aerating soil and dispersing seeds making them important ecosystem engineers. They live in family groups and although usually shy, they're very protective of their young so keep an open eye on them!

Date 18.02.2025

Spotted by: Biodiversity monitoring triveni



Species: Peninsular Rock Agama

This lizard in contrast to muwci students loves heat. During the breeding season, males turn a fiery red and black, looking like they've just walked out of a superhero comic. They are harmless insectivores that play a key role in controlling insect populations in dry ecosystems.

Date 25.04.2025

Spotted by: Biodiversity monitoring triveni



Hanna's Findings

Species: Northern plains gray langur

The Northern plains gray langur,, is a natural parkour expert, leaping across muwci rooftops with the speed of a ninja. As all the other Indian monkeys, they are mischievous food thieves, so keep an eye on your momos in caf!. They also have a habit of sitting in yoga-like poses, so yoga triveni invite them for your session!

Date: 12.11.2024

Time:10:18 am

Spotted by Hanna



Species: Bonnet Macaque

The bonnet macaque is often spotted by our community, either on the library rooftop, wada 2 courtyards or near the road. Their name "bonnet" relates to their hair, which gives them a comically serious look. They are often found in groups (once I have counted 23 of them!) and just like us they form adorable "hugging chains" when grooming each other, making them look like they're gearing up for a monkey group selfie!

Date:16.11.2024

Time 7:54 pm

Spotted by Hanna



Species: Indian peafowl

If you ever wish to spot an indian peafowl a perfect spot for it is the obstacle course! Head there towards sunset or really early morning to catch these royal birds. Btw. did you know that peafowls can actually fly? They do it very messy and dramatically but it allows them to get into the rooftops or trees!

Date: 5.12.2024

Time: 9:34 am

Spotted by: Hanna



Surpriya's Findings

Species: Gubernatoriana

Gubernatoriana is a very special species for Maharashtra, it is endemic, which means that it is found nowhere else in the world.

These tiny crabs are extremely important in cleaning the ecosystems. They are able to break down leaf litter to keep the forest floor tidy

Date: 10.02.2025

Time: 3:54pm

Spotted by Surpriya



Species: Indian Leafwing

The Indian Leafwing does not only look like a leaf, but it behaves like one too! When in a risky situation it falls onto the ground and does not move, blending into the leaf litter. When looking at it in this photo, it may seem like an Indian Leafwing is not too beautiful nor interesting, but wait until it opens its wings! Then you will be hit with orange and blue.

Date: 12.03.2025

Spotted by Surpriya



BIRDWATCHING - A REFLECTION

Written by: Viraj

Despite my brave promise of waking up by 6:00 am, I only reached the parking lot at 7:30. There, perched on the tires by the pool lawn, sat Vivek, Devika, and Alex. We looked tired, as if we were a group of mongooses who had fallen out of their holes into blinding daylight.

The air was soft and crisp like bleached cotton, and a light, warm breeze ruffled our already-messy hair. We got up, and began to walk. Down the road, behind the arts centre, and up to Pagoda. From here, we entered the Biodiversity reserve, and went as far as the large pond. Vivek led us like a herdsman, tripod held aloft like a shepherd's crook.



Our heads and eyes were continuously angled up. We looked carefully for any slight movement or sound: the rustle of branches or a faraway bird-call. Oftentimes, it was just a Bulbul. We'd laugh at our own excitement, and occasionally curse the stupid, stupid, stupid bulbul. Other times, however, we saw special things. A flash of orange - a ground thrush. A violent cry - a shikra. A birdsong that sounded like a leaking tap - the purple sunbird.

Two hours passed, and I didn't even notice. It's funny how lost one can get while searching for something. It's funny how the birds can see us, but we can't see them. It almost seems as if they want to make us try - tease and tantalise us.

It's also strange how we value what is rare more than what is right in front of us - like the bulbul. Sometimes, our might just glaze over it. It makes me wonder what else I'm missing: what other things I've stopped paying attention to.

We stop at 9:15, and leave to eat. Afterwards, I return to my room, and continue with my rather bland rest-of-the-day. Occasionally, I might look out the window for a moment, then return to my typing. Birdwatching, and nature as a whole, is also a kind of window - one which can give us respite, quiet, and a sense of belonging. When birdwatching, everyone is seeking. When birdwatching, we move together.

FROM RESCUE TO REAL CHANGE: A DAY AT RESQ.

Written by: Ashare



Close to the end of term 3, where the triveni was focused on accommodating the micro areas of interests of all individuals involved: we went on a field trip to RESQ Charitable Trust, about 45 Minutes away from campus. Even though this specific interest aligned with not everyone in this triveni, the members were more than excited for this visit.

Upon reaching the centre, we were welcomed with a personalized tour of the organization, involving its history, location, infrastructure, members and volunteers. This involved talking to individuals working in this organization, witnessing volunteers and professionals at work with utmost care and interest. We were in awe to see a spectacled cobra in surgery, rescued monkey's learning to trust humans again, wild cat cub being fed, various birds tend to with care and kindness, deers adapting to their rescued homes and very many turtles basking on top of each other. As much as it was amazing to see all these species, what stood out more was the passion each professional and volunteer at this facility held for their role in RESQ. Pursuing their interest as a profession, contributing to the cause you believe in, showed us the extent to which each individual actions can take us. They showed us the lengths that could be achieved by following your passion.

Everyone is welcome to join us, when the triveni will go to volunteer on some weekends at RESQ. We will be sure to shoot a text on interbatch.

BIODIVERSITY MONITORING - POND CLEANUP!

Written by: Nathan

Hark! My hill dwellers! Let me ask you now if you've ever gone for a little walk out of AQ from Mahadwar, past our old biodome and veered off to wander up to a little pond up in the walkway.

Ever noticed how dirty it seemed?

How disgusting the water must be? Oh and how you must've thought about why a strange little pond like that is there in the first place.

Well, we, the Biodiversity Monitoring triveni, would like to talk to you here about that pond and what we've done to help clean it up.

The project started over a month ago now, where we set off from Mahadwar and many of us, like you perhaps, pondered about the pond. Well, the pond is actually a little reservoir for animals, fed clean water by the tank to the side of it. We've seen birds come and sip, squirrels hurry down and lap, and deer stroll and drink from the pond.



But the pond was made a near 7 years ago. It's done a great service to the local wildlife but it needed a bit of a fixer-upper for a while now.

We dug up the rocks that held the water in, real heavy. It was quite a workout.

We drained the stagnant water in the pond, that may or may not have splashed a few of us in the place.

We pulled the tarp under in a great giant heave, all of us together, where it flung off and flew like a magic carpet for a while.

The whole time we found little critters running amok in the mud. Tiny little frogs. Crabs scurrying sideways. Bugs and worms through it all. We made sure not to hurt them of course but the water was dirty and possibly stagnant for a while now and needed a change.

We put the tarp back in. We laid each stone, one by one, spiraling down the length of the hole. We let that fresh, fresh, spring water flow back in to make for a new, rejuvenated pond, where animals can come and go, drink and rest as they please.



Our mission is done. It was hard and grueling sometimes, with a lot more sweat, tears and dirty pond water involved than we'd expect.

But it sure was damn fun and hopefully provides sanctuary and respite for animals.

On behalf of the Biodiversity Monitoring team, thank you.



MONKEY LOVE IS IN THE AIR (AND SO IS THEIR ATTITUDE)

Written by: Hanna

We've all had our fair share of monkey moments—whether it's a curious langur running like crazy next to wada 2, or a troop casually strolling past space. Coexisting with monkeys has become part of daily life here. But as we move into their breeding season, it's good to be aware of a few seasonal shifts in behavior—and how we can adjust our own to keep things peaceful for everyone.

But what changes during the breeding season and why should I care?

Firstly the monkeys become more territorial, and vocal, hearing them making noise, while walking to the AQ, may soon become every-day reality. Moreover when in troops they will be more aggressive and more sassy when approaching humans (from personal experience, try to not eat any snacks while taking a walk down the hill, it may result in a short trauma.) Also be aware of the males showing their dominance, standing on two legs, making scary noises, and even coming up a few steps towards you! Lastly, you will encounter females carrying their literally days old infants on their bellies.

It is important to stay respectful towards the monkeys to make sure that our campus is a safe space not only for us but also for the wildlife coexisting with us. That's why here is a list of a few things to keep in mind during the next month:

Give them space! - just like students before the exams, monkeys may be easily stressed during the breeding season, so just leave them alone!

Avoid staring - I know that especially the day-old babies are cute, but give them some privacy,

Watch your snacks! - when walking up or down the hill, or when seeing monkeys try to hide your food or simply do not eat. If monkeys steal it from you it will be no good neither for you nor for them!

Keep your phone down - As monkeys become aggressive, and more "sassy" in human interactions they may take the phone pointed at them as a sign of aggression, or danger.

Alert others mindfully - if you see someone being disrespectful towards the monkeys, acting inappropriately or simply doing something which does not seem right, tell them! Not everyone knows about the breeding season, and not everyone keeps in mind that the monkeys on campus are wild animals.

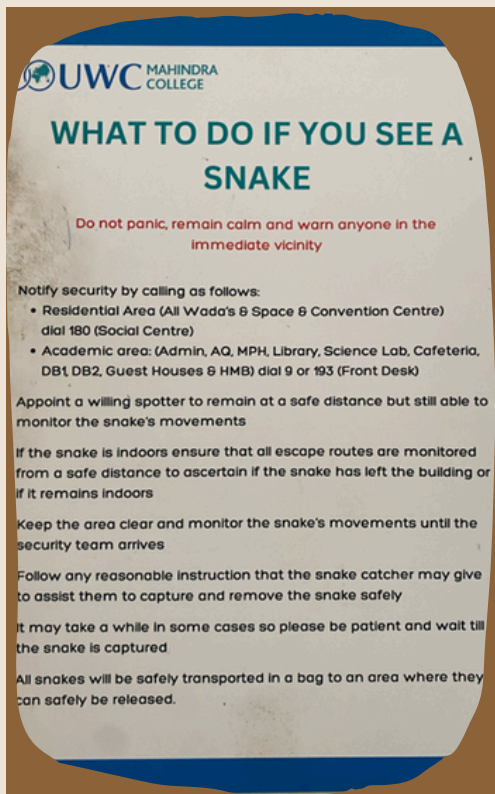
Lastly please remember, we share this land—not just with other students, but with an entire ecosystem. During the breeding season, let's lean into patience, caution, and respect. Monkeys aren't out to cause harm—they're just responding to instinct, hormones, and the challenges of their environment.

By being just a bit more mindful, we help maintain the peaceful balance we've all worked hard to build on campus.



SNAKES AND WHAT TO DO IF YOU APPROACH THEM!

Written by: Devika



Whether you're passing by the bioreserve, relaxing in Pagoda, or simply taking a late-night walk during this busy exam season, it's important to stay alert, because this is the time of year when snakes are most active!

Emerging from their winter hibernation, snakes are active from Spring (March–April) through the Monsoon season (end of September). It's also their breeding season, so you might notice increased snake activity, especially during the cooler parts of the day– at dawn, dusk, and at night.

Coming face-to-face with a snake can certainly be startling. However, it's important to remember: we live in a biodiversity reserve, and respecting wildlife, especially snakes, which play a vital role in maintaining the health of our ecosystem– is crucial.

Please take some time to read the step-by-step guide which has been posted almost all throughout the campus!

Mating or fighting? How to tell the difference?

Surprisingly, it is somewhat confusing to make out if 2 snakes are fighting for dominance or mating! Here are some points to keep in mind:

1) Mating:

- Less movement
- Coiled together
- Slow, deliberate actions

2) Fighting:

- Intense, fast-paced activity
- Pushing, wrestling, and attempts to force each other's head down to establish dominance

[Snakes fighting or mating?.mp4](#)

Here's the link to a video that Robin spotted near wada 5.

Let us know if you think they're fighting or mating :)

BIRDS CAPTURED BY BIODIVERSITY
MONITORING TRIVENI DURING BIRD
WATCHING ON SATURDAY 05.04.2025



Oriental Magpie Robin



Indian Blackbird



Roufas treepie



Red-vented Bulbul



White Bellied Drongo



White-rumped shama

BIRDS CAPTURED BY BIODIVERSITY
MONITORING TRIVENI DURING BIRD
WATCHING ON SATURDAY 05.04.2025



Jungle Babbler



Red- Whiskered Bulbul

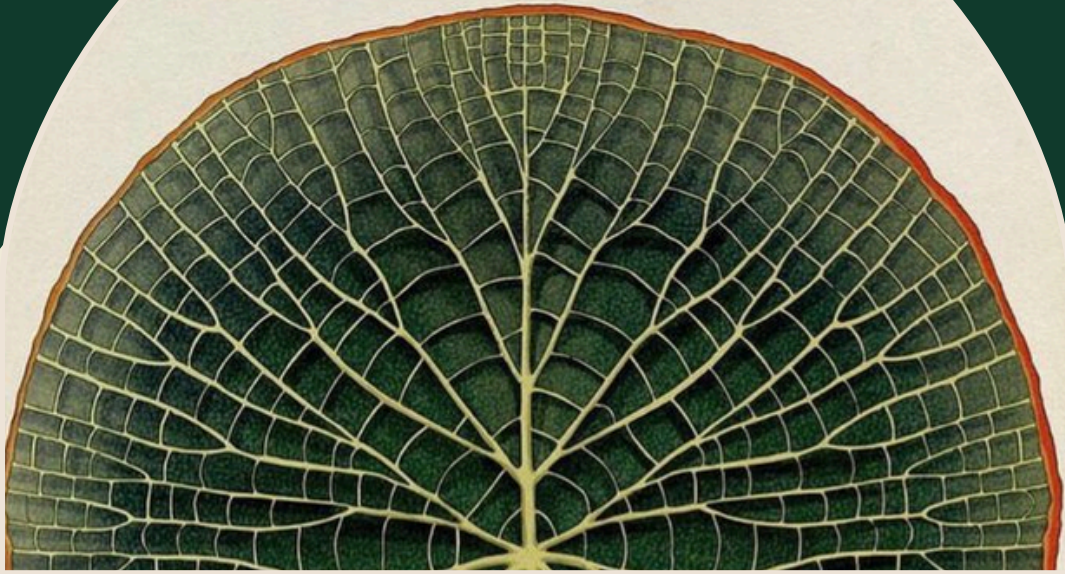


White- Throated Kingfisher



Indian Scimitar Babbler





Thank you for reading

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