

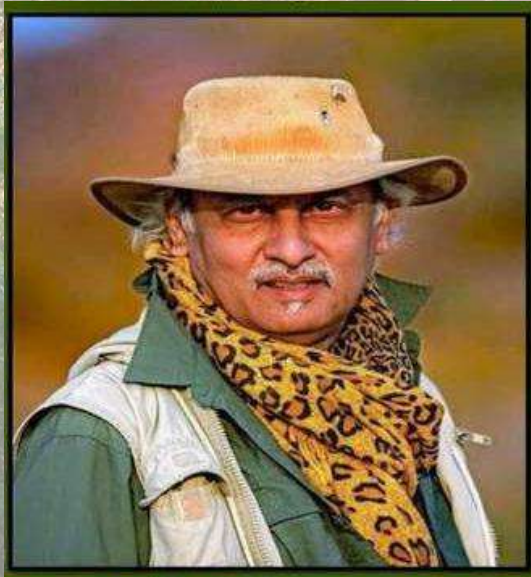


#BIRDINGWILD

Guest Speakers

Day:1 [17.01.2025]

Indrajit Ghorpade



Shri Indrajit has been a committed advocate for wildlife photography since 2014, driven by a strong passion for conservation and the protection of our natural environment. Through his impactful images, he effectively communicates critical messages that raise awareness about wildlife issues. He is fortunate to have learned from esteemed mentors such as T.N.A. Perumal and M.Y. Ghorpade, whose guidance has been instrumental in his journey.

As the Founder of the Deccan Conservation Foundation, Mr. Indrajit exemplifies unwavering dedication to the natural world. With over six decades of extensive experience in wildlife and wilderness conservation, he confidently draws from the wisdom of revered conservationists like Zafar Futehally and M. Krishnan. In his roles as a para-ecologist and conservationist, he plays a crucial role in preserving the Deccan grasslands, with a focused emphasis on the ecology and environment of the eastern plains. His primary mission is to protect the flagship species and apex predator of the region, the Indian Wolf. Mr Indrajit's professional journey stands as a testament to his relentless commitment to safeguarding our invaluable natural heritage.

Dr. Madhura Niphadkar-Bandekar



Dr Madhura Niphadkar-Bandekar has a PhD in Ecology with a background in Geography and professional training in satellite image mapping applied to Forestry and Ecology. She currently works with the Ecosystem Restoration Program at the Wildlife Conservation Trust, a non-profit organisation working in the area of applied wildlife conservation. She has over 25 years of experience in using Remote Sensing for ecology, using her training in Geospatial technology to understand land cover change, mapping invasive species, and facilitating ground-based projects in applied conservation science.

Her academic and professional career has revolved around biodiversity conservation, landscape ecology, invasion of alien species and documentation of biodiversity. She is a Fellow at LEAD- India and serves on the Education Committee of the Goa Chamber of Commerce and Industry. She is one of the founding members of the Goa Bird Conservation Network and currently serves on its Executive Committee.



Guest Speakers

Day:2 [18.01.2025]

Dhananjai Mohan, IFS



Dhananjai Mohan, a member of the 1988 Indian Forest Service batch (Uttarakhand cadre), currently serves as Principal Chief Conservator of Forests & Head of Forest Forces, focusing on administration and conservation in Uttarakhand.

He holds an Electrical Engineering degree from IIT Kanpur and completed a Post-Graduate Diploma in Wildlife Management in 1992. He earned a PhD on habitat selection of birds from the Forest Research Institute University, Dehradun. From 1998 to 2004, he was an Associate Professor at the Indira Gandhi National Forest Academy and later served as a Professor at the Wildlife Institute of India (2006-2013), where he researched Himalayan birds, including a project with the University of Chicago.

He has published extensively, including in top journals like Nature and Journal of Ornithology, and authored a book on avifauna. Dhananjai is a life member of the Bombay Natural History Society and received Dr. Salim Ali's fellowship in 2005.

Nirav Bhatt



Nirav Bhatt was born and raised in Surendranagar, Gujarat. A pharmacist by profession and a naturalist at heart, he earned his degree in Pharmacy from the University of Pune.

With over 25 years of birdwatching experience, he has travelled extensively across India and devoted 20 years to documenting wildlife through photography. For nearly two decades, he has focused on studying raptors in the Indian Subcontinent, publishing numerous research and popular articles on the subject. His significant contributions include studies on the breeding of Red-necked Falcons (*Falco chicquera*) in Surendranagar and the identification of the Red-napped Shaheen (*Falco peregrinus babylonicus*) in Northwestern India. He also reported the first photographic record of the Black Tern (*Chlidonias niger*) in India, confirming its status. His booklet, "Raptors of Gujarat," is a popular identification guide for birdwatchers.

As an administrator for "Ebird India," he reviews raptor sightings nationwide and has helped identify several new raptor species in India. He also supports local forest departments on wildlife conservation and biodiversity management. An accomplished wildlife photographer, his work has been featured in over 100 national and international journals and magazines. He looks forward to continuing his research on raptors, particularly focusing on monitoring their breeding biology and migration in Gujarat.



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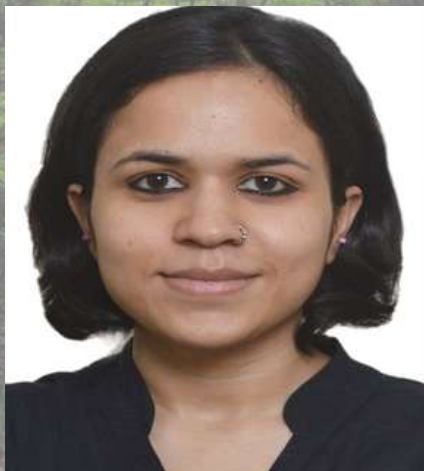
Day:2 [18.01.2025]

Dr. Pronoy Baidya



Dr Pronoy Baidya is a leading scientist and head of research at Arannya Environment Research Organisation (AERO), a prominent non-profit in Goa. With a PhD from the Indian Institute of Science, he has conducted extensive wildlife studies across India, from Lahaul-Spiti to Tamil Nadu, and has over a decade of groundbreaking biodiversity research in Goa. Dr. Baidya is an adjunct faculty member at Govt. College Sanquelim and a research mentor for the M.Tech Environment Engineering Program at BITS Pilani. His expertise is recognized through his role on the Goa State Wildlife Board and as a consultant for the Goa Coastal Zone Management Authority until February 2023. He coordinates the Goa chapter of the Asian Waterbird Census and leads the India Bird Conservation Network with BNHS. As an eBird reviewer for Cornell University and the initiator of the Goa Bird Atlas Initiative involving 30 global institutions, he is a key figure in conservation efforts. Through AERO, Dr Baidya advocates for inclusive nature watching and environmental education, aiming to integrate nature observation into school curricula and foster a society that thoughtfully addresses environmental issues.

Himakshi Panwar



Himakshi Panwar has devoted the past seven years to her journey as a journalist, fuelled by a passion for storytelling that shines a light on local narratives. Her extensive travels allow her to fully immerse herself in the rich cultures and traditions of the communities she encounters. Himakshi seeks out unique stories that reveal the vibrant character of each location, often discovering captivating connections that weave into the broader cultural tapestry. Through her work, she strives to uplift and celebrate local culture, ensuring that the voices of these communities resonate and inspire.

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