



KERALA STATE BIODIVERSITY BOARD

EKAA

Environment. Kerala. Awareness. Action
Monthly - Newsletter of the Kerala State Biodiversity Board

March 2022
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World Water Day

Seed festivals

Biodiversity Study

KSBB Activities

BMC Poothakkulam, Kollam

The World water day has been observed on March 22 to raise awareness about the importance of water and educate people to conserve it. Biodiversity Management Committee (BMC) of Poothakkulam Panchayat rejuvenated Punneykulam chira having an area of 1.5 acre. An amount of Rs.2,29,93,804 had been expended by KLDC through Poothakulam Panchayath for this project.

The project aims at beautification and protection of Punneykulam chira by increasing the depth, and building small checkdam (Thadayana).

Vice President V. Prakashan and District Coordinator Sachin.K.V, organized the event,



BMCs Madikkai, Pullur-Periya & Thrikarippur, Kasaragod

At Madikkai, a fresh water sanitation campaign *'Thelineerozhukum Navakeralam'*, was organized to clean all the water bodies within the Panchayath. The event was inaugurated by Kasaragod Development Package Special Officer E.P Rajmohan. Panchayath President S. Preetha,

On the occasion of the Water Day, Pullur- Periya Panchayath conducted Biodiversity Survey from Pullur Bridge to Bellikoth Peralath Road. About 40 species of birds, 15 species of butterflies and 12 species of endemic trees along the Pullur stream were sighted. The focus of survey was on enhancing biodiversity of river bank.

The survey team included Panchayat President CK Aravindakshan, Vice President Karthiyani A, Health Standing Committee Chairman Suma Kunhikrishnan, members MV Narayanan, Preethi P, Sheeba A, Prakashan A, KSBB District Coordinator Sachin, BMC Convener Shyam Kumar and BMC Member Krishnan.

In connection with the Water Day, Thrikarippur Panchayath conducted **Jaivavaividya Grama sabha**. The Gramasabha identified ten important topics related to biodiversity conservation.

BMC Chelannur, Kozhikode

The BMC of Chelannur Grama Panchayath, Kozhikode in collaboration with **Jal Jeevan Mission** conducted a Quiz competition on the theme of World Water Day for Kudumbasree units. A representative from each Kudumbasree unit of the 21 wards participated. The first three positions were won by Jisha Ward 21, Sai Vidhya Ward 19 and Suma Ward 6, respectively.

A seminar on Water conservation was held with Dr. K. V. Sruthi, Scientist, KSCSTE-CWRDM, Kozhikode as the main speaker. It was officially inaugurated by Adv. P. P. Nausheer, President of Chelannur BMC.

Taking a pledge on water conservation, carrying out discussions and prize money along with memento were distributed to the quiz competition winners. All the BMC members, KSBB-Kozhikode District Coordinator, Panchayath Development Standing Committee Chairman and Jal Jeevan Mission coordinator attended the programme.



Memento distribution to quiz competition winner by Chelannur BMC President Adv. P. P. Nausheer

RKI - Agrobiodiversity Conservation - Seed festivals

Malappuram

KSBB in association with Perumpadappu block panchayath BMC conducted the first seed festival under the RKI project on 15.03.2022. The event, presided by Perumpadappu Block President Adv. Sindhu E, was inaugurated by the Principal Scientific Officer Dr. Yamuna.S. Seminars were also conducted to create mass awareness on the topics of **Conservation of Seeds** by Dr. C.K. Peethambaran, **Biodiversity and Climate Change** by Dr.P. Indiradevi, Director of Farmers Development Board, **Endangered traditional seed varieties**



Inauguration of seed festival at Malappuram by PSO, Dr. Yamuna S

by Prof. Musthafa Kunnathodi, Head of Anakkayam RARS and **Traditional Knowledge in Agriculture** by Dr. P.K. Abdul Jabbar, Assistant Professor, Krishi Vigyan Kendra, Malappuram. Stalls of custodian farmers displaying agricultural products like tubers, seeds of traditional rice varieties and planting materials were organised by District coordinator Hydresskutty and Assistant Programme Coordinator Danisha. More than 300 farmers participated in the event.

Pathanamthitta

The Seed festival was inaugurated by Dr. C.George Thomas, Chairman, Kerala State Biodiversity Board and presided over by Bindu Jayakumar, Chairperson, Thiruvalla Municipality on 26.3.22 at Platinum Jubilee Hall Manjadi, Thiruvalla. Dr. K. Sathish Kumar, KSBB

Board Member delivered a keynote address. Seed exchange of tubers and vegetables was inaugurated by Dr. Yamuna S, PSO,KSBB by giving seed kits to farmers. Jaz Pothen, Ward councilor, Subin Kunnamthanam, Member District Planning committee, Anu Soman, Ward councilor made felicitations. Arun C Rajan, Pathanamthitta district co-ordinator proposed vote of



Dr. C. George Thomas, Chairman, KSBB inaugurated seed festival at Pathanamthitta

thanks. Seminars on **Seed Conservation** by Dr. Thomas Mathew (Retd), Professor and Head, Kerala Agricultural University and **Conservation of Agro biodiversity** by Dr. C K Shaju, Subject expert Conservation of Agro-biodiversity Project. Assistant Programme Co-ordinator, Arundhati organised stalls of farm school. Six farm school farmers and one custodian farmer participated in the seed festival with their collection of seeds. Indigenous tuber crops, paddy varieties, vegetable seeds, seedlings and cereals were put for sale and exchange between the farmers and consumers. After the lunch break, farm school farmers and other custodian farmers

gathered and shared traditional knowledge and discussed the problems faced by farmers.

Palakkad

In Palakkad district, the seed festival was conducted on 26.3.22 at Mundur Yuvakshetra Institute of Management in association with Palakkad District Panchayath. The event, presided over by District Panchayath President K.Binumol and was inaugurated by MLA, A.Prabhakaran. Seminars for youngsters and farmers were conducted on **Importance of biodiversity conservation** by Dr. C.K.Peethambaran, **Biodiversity in Agriculture** by Agriculture Assistant (Retd). E.K.Yusuf, **Importance of Seed exchange in biodiversity** by P. Krishnan. Palakkad block president, V. Sethumadhavan, KSBB Assistant Research Officer Dr. Suresh TA and Yuvakshetra Director Fr. Mathew offered felicitations. Stalls by custodian and farm school farmers of traditional rice varieties,

medicinal plants and tuber crops were put up. Assistant Programme Co-ordinator, Krishnakumari and District Coordinator, Babu Bonaventure were the organisers.



MLA, A.Prabhakaran inaugurated seed festival at Palakkad by handing over seedlings to Yuvakshetra Director Fr. Mathew

Alappuzha

Seed festival was held at Alappuzha Town Hall on 31.03.2022. The programme was inaugurated by Ambalappuzha MLA H.Salam. The event was presided over by Dr. K.G.Padmakumar, Director of International Research and Training Centre for Below sea level Farming, Kuttanad. KSBB board members Dr.K.Satishkumar delivered the keynote address. Principal Scientific officer, Dr. Yamuna.S inaugurated the seed exchange programme. Seminars meant for creating mass awareness on



Seed exchange programme to farmers by PSO, Dr. Yamuna.S at Alappuzha

Agrobiodiversity conservation was handled by Dr. C.K.Peethambaran, **Agricultural systems in Alappuzha in context of climate change** by Dr. K.G.Padmakumar, **Traditional knowledge in agriculture, endangered seeds and seedlings** by Agricultural officer (Retd.) Karshakamitra T.S. Viswan. Stalls of custodian farmers consisting of 10 varieties of yams, fruit crops, medicinal plants, tuber and vegetable crops were exhibited. The programme was organised by District Coordinator T.G. Chandraparaksh and Assistant Programme Coordinator Reshma.



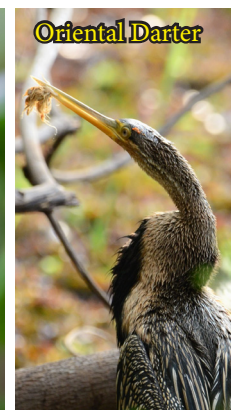
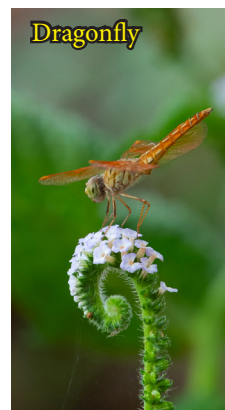
MLA H.Salam visiting the stall exhibiting Yam varieties

Biodiversity Study

Pazhanchira, Thiruvananthapuram

Biodiversity study of historic Pazhanchira pond at Chirayinkeezhu in Thiruvananthapuram district was conducted on 13/02/2022. Kerala State Biodiversity Board (KSBB) and Biodiversity Management Committee (BMC) of Chirayinkeezhu Grama Panchayath joined hands in making it a successful event. Initial level discussions on the matter were also carried out between the BMC and the members of the Technical Support Group, KSBB. A study group was formed before hand by incorporating BMC members, KSBB officials, citizen scientists, school representatives, fishery experts, fishermen and ecologists. An online training was offered for the study participants on 12/02/2022. The Biodiversity Study was held on 13/02/2022 from 6.30 AM to 12 noon. There were 40 participants constituting six study groups; each focussing separately on Birds, Odonata, Butterflies, Fish and other Aquatic fauna and flora and general flora. Each group had an expert leader. Wetland walk and opportunity study were conducted to understand the biodiversity. A total of 54 types of birds were found in the locality, among which

28 were water birds. Migratory birds such as *Hieraaetus pennatus*, *Himantopus himantopus*, *Tringa stagnatilis*, *Tringa nebularia*, *Tringa glareola*, *Calidris minuta*, *Halcyon pileate*, *Merops philippinus*, *Oriolus kundoo*, *Hirundo rustica*, *Plegadis falcinellus* and *Spatula querquedula* also were spotted. Twenty butterfly species and 24 different types of Odonates could be seen. Demanding special attention was the higher number of *Brachythemis* contaminate in Pazhanchira, which is an indicator of a polluted water. *Lissemys punctata* (Indian flapshell turtle), the vulnerable category in the IUCN list was also spotted. The pond had fish types including Orange chromide, Olive barb, Filament barb, Needle fish and Pearl Spot. The water body was seen infested with invasive flora such as *Eichhornia crassipes* and *Salvinia molesta*. There is a need to urgently address the issue of abandoned plastics and unscientific land use practices in the close proximities of the waterbody. The study team could even find an oriental darter with plastic threads tied in its beaks. Integrated and scientific conservation measures are urgent needs to conserve this biodiversity rich waterbody.



KSBB activities

An experimental project for construction of bio-wall for coastal protection

Kerala is a state which face severe coastal erosion. Loss of shoreline leads to loss of coastal biodiversity, fishing practices and habitat. Many attempts were made in the past to build concrete walls along the coast so as to protect the eroding coasts, but many have failed. In this context, the Kerala State Biodiversity Board is implementing a project on an experimental basis for the protection of sea beaches in Kerala.

The Kerala State Biodiversity Board and the Poovar Grama Panchayath Biodiversity Management Committee (BMC) jointly launched the project at Poovar beach. Hon'ble Kovalam Constituency MLA Adv. M. Vincent inaugurated the project on March 8 at 10.30 am by planting Pandanus (Screwpine) saplings on Poovar beach. Dr. C. George Thomas, Chairman, Kerala State Biodiversity Board, delivered the keynote address. Dr. V.S. Vimal Kumar, Principal Scientific Officer, KSBB presented the project outline. Kerala State Biodiversity Board members, K.V Govindan, Dr. K. Sathishkumar and Dr. K.T Chandramohanam offered felicitations. Biju.N, Station House Officer, Poovar Coastal Police Station, assured support from the Coastal Police Station. KSBB Member Secretary (i/c) Mini.V, Poovar Grama Panchayat MNREGS Assistant Engineer, Reshmi P.S, KSBB Research Officer, Dr. Gigi C. Rajan, Research Assistant, Aneesha

Ani Benadict, Poovar Grama Panchayath BMC Convener, Jisthi and KSBB Thiruvananthapuram District Coordinator Dr. Akhila S. Nair were also present. Poovar Grama Panchayath Ward Member Zeenath Jishthi proposed the vote of thanks.



Adv. M. Vincent (Kovalam Constituency MLA) planting Pandanus



KSBB women staff and BMC members planting Pandanus as the program was organized on women's day





Asian Water bird Census - Alappuzha



On 5th February 2022, Asian Water bird Census was conducted in the wetlands of Ambalappuzha North Panchayath, along with the KSBB Technical Support Group (TSG). Bird watchers from Alappuzha Natural History Society (ANHS), BMC members and volunteer students participated in the event. Panchayath President S. Hari inaugurated the Census activities at Ayyankali Junction near Kopparakkadavu bridge. District Coordinator Chandraprakash T.G explained the objective and importance of Asian Water Bird Census and appreciated the BMC for this first of its kind initiative, in Alappuzha district.

Dr. KG Padmakumar, TSG member and the Director of International Training Centre for Below Sea level Farming gave a brief note on the importance of wetlands ecosystems – the habitat of water birds. Deepamol Vice president of Panchayath, BMC convenor Sheffek Ibrahim and Raveendran President of ANHS addressed the gathering. Sandeep Unnikrishnan, TSG Member and Wildlife Photographer led the Census activities.

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3. Principal Secretary , Fisheries Department
4. Principal Secretary, Forest & Wildlife Department
5. Executive Vice President, KSCSTE
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9. Dr. K.T Chandramohan

