

VOLUME II



WILDLIFE & ECOLOGY

Nature Needs
Us

ISSUE 4

Nature Beats

ASSAM NEEDS YOU



FROM RESPONSE TO RESILIENCE

— EDITORIAL TEAM
WNE INDIA

As we move forward into another month of our journey, our commitment remains unchanged: to stand beside communities, protect nature, create sustainable livelihoods, and use technology to address emerging environmental challenges. In times of crisis, our first responsibility is to reach those who are directly affected. We are therefore trying our level best to support beneficiaries at the grassroots level. Our major relief and community-support intervention is currently focused in Jorhat district, Assam, where we are working towards supporting around 100 families. Our immediate priority is preventive healthcare—particularly ensuring that communities do not face outbreaks of water-borne diseases and vector-borne diseases following difficult conditions.

Our community-development work under the same thematic area continues across different parts of the country. In Hooghly, West Bengal, we have constructed a classroom and undertaken repair work in the school corridor and students' mid-day meal area. In Howrah, renovation of a student toilet is currently ongoing. In Bargarh, Odisha, we are scheduled to install solar street lights as part of our effort to reduce human-wildlife conflict, particularly the risk of leopard encounters in vulnerable areas.

As conservation remains at the heart of our organization, we celebrated Global Snake Day in Rajasthan in collaboration with the Pali District Administration, strengthening our efforts towards snake awareness and coexistence between communities and wildlife. In Kerala, our work is focused on understanding the threat landscape for otters on Vypin Island, while we are also contributing to conservation-breeding efforts for the Cantor's Giant Softshell Turtle in Chandragiri River, an important species requiring focused conservation attention.

In West Bengal, we participated in a Coastal Ecosystems, Regenerative Blue Economy and Climate Resilience: Communities, Science, Solutions and Finance Talk organised by Rise Blue Forum, furthering our understanding and collaboration around one of the most important coastal ecosystems in the region. We also participated in Global Tiger Day celebrations organised by Nature Mates and other organisations with the support of the West Bengal Forest Department. These engagements remind us that conservation is not limited to protecting individual species—it is about protecting ecosystems, strengthening communities and building a future where people and wildlife can coexist.

Our livelihood and sustainable-development activities have now been shifted to our registered office, where we have established a dedicated godown to strengthen our operations. We are currently working with more than 20 different products, creating opportunities for producers while building stronger connections with markets and companies. During the first quarter, we facilitated the sale of approximately 1,000 kg of dry flowers, primarily by creating bridges between farmers and companies. This initiative is currently ongoing across Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha and West Bengal. For us, livelihood development is not simply about selling a product. It is about ensuring that producers receive better market access, reducing unnecessary intermediaries and creating a sustainable economic connection between rural producers and responsible businesses.

Technology continues to become an increasingly important part of our conservation strategy. As part of our WNE Start Up Grant, we have selected a project focused on forest-fire prediction. The objective is to explore how technology and data can help anticipate potential forest-fire risks and support timely intervention. We believe that conservation in the coming years will require a combination of field knowledge, community participation and technological innovation.

One of the most significant developments this month has been our partnership with Bharat Serums and Vaccines Limited, part of Mankind Pharma. We have signed an MoU to work together on spreading awareness about snakebite among communities in remote and snakebite-prone areas. Under this initiative, Bharat Serums and Vaccines Limited will provide financial support for the programme. This partnership is particularly meaningful to us because snakebite is not only a wildlife-related issue—it is also a serious public-health and community-awareness challenge. By taking scientifically appropriate awareness messages to remote communities, we hope to contribute to safer behaviour, quicker responses and better awareness about snakebite prevention and treatment.

Across every thematic area, one principle guides our work: impact must reach the ground. Whether it is supporting a flood-affected family in Assam, improving facilities for schoolchildren in West Bengal, reducing human-wildlife conflict in Odisha, conserving threatened species in Kerala, supporting farmers through better markets, developing technology for forest-fire prediction, or creating awareness about snakebite—we are working to ensure that our interventions translate into tangible benefits. Our journey is far from complete. There is much more to do, and the challenges are constantly evolving. But with our field teams, partners, communities, supporters and well-wishers standing together, we remain committed to building a future where people, wildlife and the environment can thrive together.



TABLE OF CONTENTS

ASSAM FLOOD RELIEF	04
WHEN OTTERS MEET AQUACULTURE	05
TRANSFORMING LEARNING SPACES	06
SAVING A RIVER GIANT	07
LANTANA CAMARA	08
WORLD SNAKE DAY 2026	09
CELEBRATING GLOBAL TIGER DAY 2026	10
LIGHTING THE PATH TO COEXISTENCE	11
FAREWELL TO JOYMALA	12
ENCAPSULATED FUTURES	13
EVERY MINUTE MATTERS	15
FROM HUNTER TO CONSERVATION ICON	16
WNE INDIA AT WORLD MANGROVE DAY 2026	17

ASSAM FLOOD RELIEF: STANDING WITH COMMUNITIES IN THEIR TIME OF NEED



Natural disasters demand more than immediate relief—they require swift action, coordinated response, and unwavering commitment to affected communities. Under its Emergency Disaster Management (EDM) Initiative, **WNE India** mobilized its disaster response team to support families impacted by the devastating floods that swept across Assam.

The unprecedented floods became one of the state's most severe humanitarian crises in recent years, claiming **78 lives**, displacing more than **300,000 people**, and damaging nearly **45,000 hectares** of agricultural land, with over **21,500 hectares** completely submerged. The districts of **Jorhat, Sivasagar, Nagaon, Charaideo, and Golaghat** witnessed extensive destruction, leaving thousands of families in urgent need of food, shelter, clean water, and healthcare.

Responding to the emergency, WNE India's local volunteers and disaster response team reached affected communities with essential humanitarian assistance. Relief materials distributed under the EDM Initiative included **dry ration kits, safe drinking water, clothing, tarpaulins, women's hygiene kits, essential medicines, first-aid supplies, and sanitation materials**, helping families meet their immediate needs during the crisis.

Disasters may destroy homes, but compassion rebuilds lives.

As our relief teams continue reaching flood-affected communities across Assam, your support can help provide food, clean drinking water, medicines, shelter materials, and other essential supplies to families struggling to recover. Together, we can ensure that help reaches those who need it most—when they need it most.

Join WNE India's Emergency Disaster Management Initiative. Every donation brings hope.

[**Donate Now**](#)

Bank Name: ICICI Bank

Account Name: **Sarisha Wildlife And Ecology Society** OR

Account Number: **197301001027**

IFSC Code: **ICIC0001973**

Scan
to send Money



WHEN OTTERS MEET AQUACULTURE: UNDERSTANDING A GROWING CONFLICT IN VYPIN



For the aquaculture farmers of Vypin Island, Kerala, the backwaters are a source of livelihood. Their ponds support families and sustain a way of life closely connected to the water.

But recently, some farmers began facing an unsettling problem—fish were being found dead in their aquaculture ponds. As concerns grew, the farmers suspected that otters might be present in the area and could be contributing to the problem.

Rather than drawing conclusions, WNE India decided to listen and investigate.

Our team initiated a preliminary field survey to understand the situation on the ground. During the survey, we found otter footprints and other field evidence indicating the presence of otters around the waterways and aquaculture areas.

To understand their movements more closely and obtain stronger evidence, we installed camera traps at selected locations.

For the next five days, the cameras quietly monitored the area.

What they recorded confirmed what the field signs had suggested: otters were indeed moving through the landscape.

Beyond the Camera Trap

The camera footage gave us evidence of otter presence, but there were still many questions to answer.

What is bringing the otters into these areas? How frequently are they visiting the aquaculture ponds? What is their actual impact on local aquaculture? And most importantly, how can the concerns of farmers be addressed without creating a new threat to wildlife?

To understand the situation beyond the field data, our team returned to the community and spoke with local residents and aquaculture farmers.

During these discussions, several villagers shared an interesting observation. According to their recollections, otters were not commonly seen in the area in the past. They reported that sightings became more noticeable following the 2018 Kerala floods.

These community observations provide an important lead, but they also highlight the need for further investigation. At this stage, the presence of otters has been confirmed, while the extent of their impact on aquaculture and the reasons behind their increasing presence require further study.

Finding a Way Forward Together

For the farmers of Vypin, this is about protecting their livelihood. For the otters, these waterways are part of the habitat they depend on.

This is precisely why the solution cannot come from looking at the issue from only one side.

WNE India is now engaging with the Edavanakad Grama Panchayat and local stakeholders to discuss the findings and explore the way forward. Further monitoring, community consultation, and scientific assessment will be important in developing practical measures to reduce potential conflict while safeguarding both livelihoods and wildlife.

What began as a concern raised by local aquaculture farmers has now become an opportunity to better understand the changing relationship between people, aquaculture, waterways, and wildlife in Vypin.

The next step is not to choose between farmers and otters.

It is to understand the problem well enough to find a solution where both can coexist.

Transforming Learning Spaces: Renovation Completed at Tarakeswar Girls' High School



As part of the Education Development Mission (EDM), Wildlife & Ecology (WNE India) has successfully completed the construction of a new classroom at Tarakeswar Girls' High School (H.S.), an institution that supports the education and aspirations of more than 1,500 students.

Following an on-site assessment that identified the need for additional classroom space, the EDM team initiated the construction of a new classroom to help address the school's growing requirements. The newly constructed classroom provides much-needed additional space, enabling the school to accommodate and organize students more effectively and create a more conducive learning environment.

The addition of a dedicated classroom will help reduce pressure on existing spaces and support better classroom management, allowing students to learn in a more comfortable and organized setting. It also provides the school with greater flexibility in arranging students according to class and academic requirements.

Education extends beyond textbooks—it also depends on having adequate spaces where students can learn, participate, and grow with confidence. By strengthening essential school infrastructure, this initiative contributes to improved educational experiences while supporting the dignity, comfort, and well-being of students and teachers.

The successful completion of this project reflects WNE India's commitment to community development through education. By investing in schools and creating essential learning spaces, we are contributing to a stronger educational foundation and a more equitable future for the next generation.

Through the Education Development Mission, WNE India continues to identify and support institutions where infrastructure development can create meaningful and lasting impact, ensuring that students have access to safe, functional, and adequate spaces that encourage learning, growth, and opportunity.

Saving a River Giant: How Local Communities Are Securing the Future of Cantor's Giant Softshell Turtle



Conservation is often measured not only by the species we protect but by the partnerships we build. Along the tranquil waters of the Chandragiri River in Kerala, a dedicated effort is proving that community participation, scientific monitoring, and institutional collaboration can come together to safeguard one of India's rarest freshwater turtles—the Critically Endangered Cantor's Giant Softshell Turtle (*Pelochelys cantorii*).

Supported by WNE India through its conservation grant programme, the project led by Nandan Vijayakumar focuses on protecting the species' breeding grounds while strengthening local stewardship for one of India's most threatened freshwater reptiles. The Chandragiri River harbours one of the country's few known viable populations of the species, yet increasing human-induced pressures—including regulator dams that inundate nesting sandbanks and barriers that disrupt river connectivity—continue to threaten its survival.

During June, the project reached an important milestone with the completion of a nesting season assessment. Four protected nests were monitored through incubation, resulting in the successful emergence of 18 hatchlings, all of which instinctively made their way into the river immediately after hatching. While the overall hatching success was lower than expected, the findings have highlighted the urgent need for further research into the environmental and biological factors affecting reproductive success.

Equally encouraging has been the collaborative approach adopted throughout the project. Nest protection activities were carried out in close coordination with the Kerala Forests and Wildlife Department and local communities, demonstrating how conservation outcomes become stronger when people living alongside wildlife become active partners in protecting it. Beyond safeguarding nests, the initiative has also laid the foundation for future breeding-season planning and long-term habitat conservation.

Every successful hatchling represents more than an individual turtle returning to the river—it represents hope for a species that has silently declined across much of its historical range. Even when challenges such as low hatching rates arise, careful documentation and adaptive management generate valuable knowledge that strengthens future conservation action.

At WNE India, we believe that meaningful conservation begins with passionate individuals who are willing to address local conservation challenges through science, perseverance, and community engagement. This project is a testament to what can be achieved with modest support, committed leadership, and strong local partnerships.

If you are a student, researcher, early-career conservationist, or community practitioner working to protect threatened species or fragile ecosystems, we encourage you to transform your ideas into action. Every river restored, every nest protected, and every community engaged contributes to a larger movement for biodiversity conservation.

Lantana camara: A Valuable Nectar Source for butterflies, but Does It Indicate a Healthy Ecosystem?

Sandeepa Chowdhury, M.Sc. in Zoology, Calcutta University



Lantana camara (family Verbanaceae) is an aromatic flowering shrub, native in America. Flowers are tubular shaped and arranged in clusters - pink, yellow, orange, red, and white. Fruits is berry turns purple from green on maturity. It is one of the most important nectar-producing plants for butterflies and others pollinators (like bees) in many parts of India.

On one hand, Lantana plays a significant role in sustaining butterflies and other pollinators by providing a source of nectar, especially during seasons when native flowers are scarce. Moreover, Lantana extracts are used as a herbal medicine (Sastri, 1962; Kirtikar & Basu, 2000; Ghisalberti, 2000) for many treatments like chicken pox, measles, asthma, skin itches, antiseptic for wounds. On the other hand, its invasion threatens native plant diversity (Mooney & Drake, 1986) and become one of the country's most invasive weeds in World considered by IUCN. It's spreading reducing biodiversity, and altering native vegetation, natural habitats (Mack et al., 2000). Allelopathic chemicals released by this invasive plant discouraging growth of native plants (Heirro & Callaway, 2003). The leaves of Lantana are toxic to most animals such as cattle, buffalo, sheep and goats. Now, this creates an ECOLOGICAL PARADOX, does It Indicate a Healthy Ecosystem? This is not important whether butterflies and other pollinators visit Lantana– they certainly do–but whether the ecosystem can sustain its native floral diversity alongside this invasive plant. Conservation efforts should focus on restoring native flowering plants while recognizing the temporary ecological role that Lantana camara currently plays as a nectar source.



WORLD SNAKE DAY 2026: PROMOTING AWARENESS FOR PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE



To commemorate World Snake Day 2026, WNE India (Sarisha Wildlife and Ecology Society) organized a Snake Awareness Programme at Belwanda, Panchayat Jawai Band, Sumerpur, Pali District, Rajasthan, under its flagship Sarpa Sathi Initiative. The programme was led by Sarpa Sathis Uttam Chauhan and Omveer Dhawal, engaging local residents in meaningful discussions on snake conservation, safety, and coexistence.

Snakes are among the most misunderstood wildlife species, often facing persecution due to fear, myths, and misinformation. Through the Sarpa Sathi Initiative, WNE India works to bridge this knowledge gap by combining scientific research, community outreach, rescue support, and evidence-based conservation practices.

The awareness session focused on educating participants about the ecological importance of snakes, their role in maintaining healthy ecosystems, and practical measures to reduce human-snake conflict. Special emphasis was placed on the correct first-aid practices following snakebite, the importance of seeking immediate medical treatment, and discouraging harmful traditional remedies that can delay life-saving care.

The programme also encouraged communities to adopt safe behaviour during snake encounters, fostering a culture of respect and coexistence rather than fear. By empowering people with accurate information and practical knowledge, the initiative aims to protect both human lives and snake populations.

The event received encouraging participation from the local community and was covered by Rajasthan Patrika, helping extend the message of snake conservation and public safety to a wider audience.

Through initiatives like Sarpa Sathi, WNE India continues to demonstrate that conservation begins with awareness. By replacing myths with science and fear with understanding, we move one step closer to a future where people and wildlife can coexist in harmony.

To commemorate World Snake Day 2026, WNE India (Sarisha Wildlife and Ecology Society) organized a Snake Awareness Programme at Belwanda, Panchayat Jawai Band, Sumerpur, Pali District, Rajasthan, under its flagship Sarpa Sathi Initiative. The programme was led by Sarpa Sathis Uttam Chauhan and Omveer Dhawal, engaging local residents in meaningful discussions on snake conservation, safety, and coexistence.

Snakes are among the most misunderstood wildlife species, often facing persecution due to fear, myths, and misinformation. Through the Sarpa Sathi Initiative, WNE India works to bridge this knowledge gap by combining scientific research, community outreach, rescue support, and evidence-based conservation practices.

The awareness session focused on educating participants about the ecological importance of snakes, their role in maintaining healthy ecosystems, and practical measures to reduce human-snake conflict. Special emphasis was placed on the correct first-aid practices following snakebite, the importance of seeking immediate medical treatment, and discouraging harmful traditional remedies that can delay life-saving care.

The programme also encouraged communities to adopt safe behaviour during snake encounters, fostering a culture of respect and coexistence rather than fear. By empowering people with accurate information and practical knowledge, the initiative aims to protect both human lives and snake populations.

The event received encouraging participation from the local community and was covered by Rajasthan Patrika, helping extend the message of snake conservation and public safety to a wider audience.

Through initiatives like Sarpa Sathi, WNE India continues to demonstrate that conservation begins with awareness. By replacing myths with science and fear with understanding, we move one step closer to a future where people and wildlife can coexist in harmony.

CELEBRATING GLOBAL TIGER DAY 2026: STRENGTHENING PARTNERSHIPS FOR TIGER CONSERVATION



On the occasion of Global Tiger Day 2026, WNE India had the privilege of participating in a multi-stakeholder workshop held at Paribesh Bhawan Auditorium, Kolkata. The event was jointly organized by **Nature Mates, Nature Environment and Wildlife Society (NEWS), Society for Heritage & Ecological Research (SHER), Wildlife Trust of India (WTI), and WWF-India**, in collaboration with the **West Bengal Forest Department**.

Representing **WNE India** were **Dr. Meghna Maiti**, Head of External Relationship, and **Anupriya Dutta**, Corporate Relations & Fundraising Executive, who engaged with conservation leaders, researchers, and practitioners from across the state.

The workshop brought together over **40 organizations** working in the field of wildlife conservation, providing a valuable platform to exchange ideas, discuss emerging conservation challenges, and share ongoing initiatives from different regions of India. **WNE India** highlighted its work in biodiversity conservation, community engagement, and human-wildlife coexistence, while also exploring opportunities for future collaboration with fellow conservation organizations.

The event reaffirmed the importance of collective action in safeguarding India's wildlife. As conservation challenges continue to evolve, partnerships between government agencies, non-governmental organizations, researchers, and local communities remain essential for ensuring a sustainable future for tigers and their habitats.

WNE India extends its sincere gratitude to the organizers and the **West Bengal Forest Department** for creating this platform for dialogue, collaboration, and knowledge sharing. Together, such initiatives strengthen the conservation network and inspire collective efforts toward protecting India's natural heritage.



LIGHTING THE PATH TO COEXISTENCE: WNE INDIA'S SOLAR STREET LIGHT INITIATIVE IN BARGARH, ODISHA



**

Living alongside forests brings both ecological richness and daily challenges. In several forest-adjacent villages of Bargarh district, Odisha, increasing leopard movement has become a growing concern for local communities. Residents frequently travel along roads bordering forest areas to reach farms, schools, markets, and other essential services, often during dawn or after dusk when visibility is poor.

One of the key factors contributing to the risk is the absence of adequate street lighting. Poorly illuminated roads increase the likelihood of sudden encounters with leopards, creating fear among villagers and heightening the potential for human-wildlife conflict.

To address this challenge, WNE India is in the final stages of developing a conservation-driven community safety project focused on the installation of solar-powered street lights in vulnerable locations. The initiative aims to improve visibility along critical pathways, enabling safer movement for residents while reducing the chances of accidental encounters with wildlife.

The project represents a practical and sustainable approach to coexistence. By harnessing renewable energy, the proposed intervention not only enhances public safety but also supports environmentally responsible rural infrastructure. Improved lighting can help reduce panic, strengthen community confidence, and contribute to minimizing conflict without disrupting the natural habitat of leopards.

Currently in its final planning and consultation phase, the project will be implemented in collaboration with local communities, relevant authorities, and partner organizations. Through this initiative, WNE India reaffirms its commitment to creating innovative, community-centered solutions that protect both people and wildlife.

Farewell to Joymala: A Life Dedicated to Protecting Kaziranga



The conservation community bid an emotional farewell to Joymala, one of the most celebrated patrol elephants of Kaziranga National Park, whose remarkable service spanned more than three decades. On 5 July 2026, Joymala was honoured with a ceremonial Guard of Honour, a tribute reserved for those whose dedication has left an enduring legacy in wildlife conservation.

Born in 1960, Joymala joined the Assam Forest Department in 1992 and became an indispensable member of Kaziranga's frontline conservation efforts. Throughout her 34 years of service, she supported anti-poaching patrols, wildlife rescue operations, flood response missions, and regular forest monitoring, playing a vital role in protecting one of India's most important biodiversity hotspots.

Joymala was widely admired for her courage and unwavering commitment. One of the most memorable moments of her career came in 2004, when she bravely shielded her mahout after being attacked by a tigress during a patrol. Her extraordinary composure and loyalty became a powerful symbol of the silent sacrifices made by both humans and animals in the service of conservation.

Her passing marks the end of an extraordinary chapter in Kaziranga's conservation history, but her legacy will continue to inspire generations of forest staff, conservationists, and wildlife enthusiasts. Joymala's life reminds us that protecting nature is a collective effort, built on the dedication of countless unsung heroes who work tirelessly to safeguard our natural heritage.

Wildlife & Ecology (WNE India) pays tribute to Joymala for her lifelong service to conservation. Her footprints may have faded from the forests of Kaziranga, but her legacy will forever remain etched in the hearts of those committed to protecting India's wildlife.



Encapsulated Futures: The Science and Symbolism of Seeds

Shakti Swarup Dash

Introduction: The Silent Origins of Life

A seed is the universe in miniature—a vessel where time folds, futures sleep, and life dreams beneath a husk of silence. It is nature's most elegant paradox—dormant yet alive, fragile yet resilient. It holds within it the architecture of forests, the promise of nourishment, and the continuity of life. In every seed, the world rehearses its renewal, reminding us that the vastest transformations often begin in silence, beneath the surface, in the smallest of forms.

Seeds range from microscopic orchids to 20 kg coco de mer—the world's largest. Some remain viable for centuries; the oldest germinated seed, a 2,000-year-old date palm, sprouted in Israel. They may fly, float or explode on animals. These diverse methods accompany the hope for survival and prosperity.

The Shift to Encapsulated Life

The evolution of the seed habit marks a profound milestone in plant history, emerging as a solution to life on land. The earliest plants, such as green algae, reproduced via motile gametes requiring water for fertilization. As plants adapted to terrestrial environments, this reliance became a limitation. Bryophytes and early vascular plants (like ferns) still used spores and required moist conditions for reproduction.

The true seed habit began with the progymnosperms, extinct ancestors of seed plants, which developed vascular tissues and produced spores but hinted at seed evolution. A crucial evolutionary leap occurred with the gymnosperms, where the megaspore was retained within the parent tissue, and fertilization occurred internally, leading to the formation of a dormant, protected embryo within a seed.

This seed habit offered key advantages: protection from desiccation, nourishment for the embryo, and delayed germination until favorable conditions arose. The seed became a durable unit of dispersal and survival.

With the rise of angiosperms, seeds evolved further—now enclosed within fruits and often aided by co-evolved dispersal mechanisms like animals or wind. This innovation contributed to angiosperms becoming the most diverse and ecologically dominant plant group on Earth today.

Heirs of the Green Lineage: Between Shelter and Struggle

Seeds are formed through sexual reproduction, carrying the genetic inheritance of both parent plants. Enclosed within a protective coat, each seed houses a developing embryo, much like an unborn organism, complete with the necessary resources to initiate independent life. As offspring, seeds represent the plant's effort to extend its lineage beyond its own lifespan, transferring not only genetic material but also adaptive traits shaped by environmental pressures. Through seeds, plants ensure generational continuity, dispersing their young into varied habitats with the hope that some will take root, survive, and mature into reproductive adults.

While seeds are universally the offspring of plants, their fate diverges dramatically depending on their environment.

In a garden, seeds enjoy a world of curated ease. The soil is often rich, weeded, and aerated. Water is regularly supplied, and pests are controlled. Human intervention ensures light, space, and optimal conditions for germination. The seed here grows with the odds stacked in its favor.

In contrast, seeds in forests face immense adversity. They fall among leaf litter, compete with dense undergrowth, and rely on chance for light, moisture, and nutrient access. Many are eaten, trampled, or lie dormant for years until a gap in the canopy allows them to awaken. Only the most resilient or well-timed seeds survive, a true test of natural selection.

The garden offers comfort and control; the forest demands endurance and adaptation. Both paths shape life, but one refines it through challenge, the other through care.

Inheritance and Human Responsibility

Seeds are the carriers of memory, adaptation, and promise. Within each seed lies an embryo encoded with genetic instructions shaped by millennia of survival. Seeds pass on not just life, but wisdom: traits that helped the parent endure drought, resist disease, or bloom at the right time. Alongside this genetic inheritance, seeds often contain stored nutrients, enabling the young plant to take its first steps independently. In essence, seeds ensure that the hard-earned resilience of one generation becomes the foundation for the next.

In the natural world, this transmission is sacred, silent, precise, and enduring. Yet in contrast, we humans, though aware of our responsibility, often fail to pass on the same care to our descendants. We inherit forests, rivers, and skies shaped by millions of years of balance, yet hand back pollution, extinction, and degradation. While seeds ensure survival through thoughtful transfer of resilience, we risk breaking the chain of environmental continuity through neglect.

Unlike plants, we possess foresight. But we often lack the will to act with it. We do not plant enough, protect enough, or pause enough. The radical joy that seeds spread freely—we stifle with short-sightedness. If we do not act now, we may offer our children a world where even the most resilient seed struggles to grow. The soil we shape today is the future we give tomorrow.

Genetic Diversity: Nature's Strategy for Survival

Every seed is a singular story—an unrepeatable script of genetic possibility. Though seeds may look alike to the eye, each carries a unique combination of genes, the result of countless shufflings through pollination, mutation, and evolutionary time. Like fingerprints in the botanical world, no two seeds from a single plant are exactly the same, especially in sexually reproducing species. Seed diversity fuels biodiversity at every level. It sustains ecosystems, supports food webs, and allows species to co-evolve.

In a field of wildflowers, some seeds will grow taller, some faster, some more fragrant, or more resilient. It is through this quiet variety that nature tests its designs. Those best suited to their environment survive and pass on their strengths, while others quietly fall away. This is evolution at work—delicate, continuous, and hidden in plain sight.

In maize, for example, thousands of landraces exist, each adapted to specific regions and climates. Wild relatives of rice and wheat contain genes for disease resistance that modern crops often lack. This genetic variation underpins global biodiversity, it ensures ecosystems remain dynamic, adaptable, and rich in interdependent life forms. To lose seed diversity is to erase nature's vocabulary for resilience.

Seeds as Pioneers and Ecological Architects

Seeds serve as biological pioneers, initiating the formation of new plant communities in both natural and disturbed environments. Their ability to disperse across distances via wind, water, animals, or mechanical means allows them to colonize bare or altered habitats such as after landslides, volcanic eruptions, or human disturbances. Once established, these seeds germinate, grow, and modify their surroundings, contributing organic matter, stabilizing soil, and altering microclimates, thereby facilitating the arrival and establishment of other species.

As nature's first responders, they play a foundational role in shaping and sustaining ecological futures. For example, pioneer species like *Lupinus* (lupine) often colonize nutrient-poor volcanic soils, fixing nitrogen and enriching the habitat for later successional species. Similarly, *Pinus* species establish after fires, their serotinous cones opening only in response to heat.

Resilient Reimagining: Seeds and Adaptation

In every seed lies a form of resilient reimagining which is not loud or sudden, but steady and deliberate. Faced with shifting seasons and uncertain ground, seeds do not resist but they recalculate. They alter timing, adjust growth, and find new ways to emerge. It is quiet innovation rooted in survival, reminding us that change can be met with calm reinvention.

As climates warm and soils change, seeds embody nature's quiet wisdom: to adapt is not to abandon one's identity, but to express it differently. In their stillness, they prepare. In their awakening, they respond—not with fear, but with form. They reshape life, one sprout at a time.

To me, seeds have always seemed like silent decision makers—waiting, sensing, and choosing their moment to rise. They do not merely wait; they listen, respond, and adapt. Wrapped in stillness, they carry memories of drought, frost, and fire, yet dream of rain and sun. As quiet architects of adaptation, seeds root themselves in uncertainty and sculpt possibility from it. They teach us that survival is not resistance to change, but harmony with it.

Conclusion: The Future Rooted in Silence

In their smallest form, seeds carry the largest truths. They are not only vessels of survival, but symbols of continuity, intelligence, and quiet resilience. Each seed holds the memory of what was and the possibility of what could be—a living link between past and future, rooted in stillness, yet destined for motion. Modest in appearance, yet magnificent in purpose, each seed holds the essence of survival and the spark of infinite possibility. They do not demand attention, yet they shape landscapes, feed worlds, and cradle entire ecosystems.

As we race ahead in a rapidly changing world, the seed remains a humble teacher—whispering lessons in patience, persistence, and adaptation. To overlook a seed is to overlook the genius of life itself. Perhaps it is time we paused, knelt to the earth, and listened more closely to what grows in silence. The future often begins unseen, deep in the soil.

Every Minute Matters: A Partnership to Save Thousands of Lives



Every year, nearly **58,000 people** in India die from snakebite—more than anywhere else in the world. Yet the tragedy is not merely the number of deaths; it is the fact that most of these lives could have been saved.

The greatest threat is often not the snake itself, but the precious time lost after the bite.

Across many rural and forest-fringe communities, snakebite victims are still rushed to snake charmers, faith healers, or practitioners of traditional rituals instead of hospitals. Families, driven by fear and misinformation, spend valuable minutes—or even hours—seeking remedies that have no scientific basis. By the time many patients reach a healthcare facility, it is often too late.

The reality is simple: Snakebite is a medical emergency. Timely treatment with Anti-Snake Venom (ASV), when indicated, saves lives.

Recognizing this urgent need, **WNE India (Sarisha Wildlife and Ecology Society)** and **Bharat Serums and Vaccines Limited (BSV)** have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to launch a large-scale Snakebite Awareness and Response Initiative aimed at transforming how communities respond to snakebite emergencies.

Rather than focusing only on treatment, the initiative seeks to change behaviour before lives are lost.

Through awareness programmes in villages, schools, and forest-dependent communities, people will learn exactly what to do—and what not to do—after a snakebite. The message is clear and uncompromising:

Do not visit snake charmers. Do not depend on rituals or unscientific remedies. Do not waste valuable time. Reach the nearest hospital immediately.

The programme will also strengthen the entire response system. Doctors and healthcare workers will receive awareness and capacity-building support to ensure the timely management of snakebite cases and appropriate administration of **Anti-Snake Venom**. Police personnel and frontline responders will be sensitized to facilitate the rapid transportation of victims to healthcare facilities while guiding families toward evidence-based treatment. Working alongside local administrations, the initiative will also address the spread of misinformation that continues to endanger lives in many parts of the country.

Snakebite is more than a healthcare challenge—it is a challenge of awareness, accessibility, and public trust. Saving lives requires communities to replace fear with knowledge and myths with science.

Through this partnership, **WNE India and Bharat Serums and Vaccines Limited** envision a future where no family loses a loved one simply because they did not know where to go after a snakebite.

Because after a snakebite, the first journey should never be to a snake charmer—it should always be to the nearest hospital.

Remember

Every minute counts. Every delay increases the risk. Every timely hospital visit can save a life.

From Hunter to Conservation Icon: Reflecting on Jim Corbett's Legacy



To commemorate the **151st** Birth Anniversary of **Jim Corbett**, **WNE India** hosted a thought-provoking webinar titled "*From Conflict to Coexistence: The Evolution of a Hunter into a Human.*" The session brought together 25+ participants, including students, researchers, conservation enthusiasts, and wildlife lovers, to reflect on the enduring legacy of one of India's most influential conservation pioneers.

The webinar featured **Akash Padhan**, Research Fellow at the Eastern Ghats Elephant Project, **Centre for Wildlife Studies (CWS)**, Bengaluru, who explored Jim Corbett's remarkable transformation—from a celebrated hunter to a passionate conservationist whose vision continues to inspire wildlife protection across India.

The discussion highlighted the evolution of conservation ethics, the growing challenges of human–wildlife conflict, and the urgent need to foster coexistence between people and wildlife in an increasingly shared landscape. Through engaging examples and insightful discussions, participants gained a deeper understanding of how conservation has evolved over the decades and why community participation remains central to protecting India's biodiversity.

What made the session particularly enriching was the active participation of attendees, whose thoughtful questions and discussions transformed the webinar into an engaging exchange of ideas rather than a one-way lecture. The interaction reflected a shared commitment to understanding the complex relationship between humans and wildlife and the collective responsibility of safeguarding our natural heritage.

At WNE India, we believe that conservation begins with awareness and grows through dialogue. Educational platforms such as these not only honour the legacy of pioneers like Jim Corbett but also inspire the next generation of conservationists to think critically, act responsibly, and champion coexistence as the foundation of wildlife conservation.

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to Akash Padhan for sharing his valuable insights and to every participant whose enthusiasm made the webinar a meaningful celebration of Jim Corbett's enduring contribution to conservation.

As Jim Corbett once transformed his understanding of wildlife, may we too continue our journey—from conflict to coexistence, and from awareness to action.

BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS FOR A RESILIENT FUTURE: WNE INDIA AT WORLD MANGROVE DAY 2026

Conservation extends beyond protecting species—it is about fostering collaborations that strengthen ecosystems, empower communities, and inspire sustainable action. On the occasion of **World Mangrove Day 2026**, WNE India participated in the **RISE BLUE Forum**, organized by Sustainability Intelligence, bringing together leading voices in conservation, climate resilience, and sustainable development.

Representing **WNE India (Sarisha Wildlife and Ecology Society)** were **Sucheta Ganguly**, Secretary, and **Dr. Meghna Maiti**, Head of External Relationship, who joined experts, policymakers, researchers, NGOs, and industry leaders in exploring innovative approaches to coastal ecosystem conservation, the regenerative Blue Economy, and community-led climate resilience.

The forum served as an important platform for exchanging ideas on mangrove conservation, marine biodiversity, nature-based solutions, sustainable finance, climate adaptation, and water resource management. These discussions highlighted the growing need for integrated conservation strategies that combine scientific research, policy support, community participation, and cross-sector collaboration to address today's environmental challenges.

One of the highlights of the event was **WNE India's** interaction with **Samrat Basak**, Director of the Foundation for **Resilience Actions**, where discussions focused on opportunities for collaborative conservation and resilience-building initiatives. The team also engaged with **Akanksha Upadhyay**, Head – Carbon & Climate Market at **netZERO Services Pvt. Ltd.**, and **Dr. Jayati Chourey**, PhD, Director of **SaciWATERs**, exchanging perspectives on climate action, sustainable water governance, and innovative environmental solutions.

Such engagements reaffirm WNE India's belief that meaningful conservation is built through partnerships and shared knowledge. By connecting with diverse stakeholders working across ecology, climate, policy, and sustainable development, we continue to strengthen our collective capacity to protect biodiversity while creating resilient landscapes and communities.

As environmental challenges become increasingly interconnected, platforms like the **RISE BLUE Forum** remind us that collaboration is not merely an opportunity—it is a necessity. **WNE India** remains committed to working alongside institutions, researchers, communities, and conservation practitioners to develop practical, science-based solutions for a more sustainable future.

