India Wilds®

Newsletter

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Inside this issue:

Cover Page Photograph:

Tea plantation by Sabyasachi Patra

It's time to adopt Wildlife friendly farming:

The Planet Earth is gripped by a Climate Crisis. Unprecedented heat waves in Arctic, melting of permafrost, sudden extreme weather events like landslides, storms, rains etc are increasingly occurring at a regular frequency. Since the early part of 2020 when the severity of the Covid 19 pandemic became known, Climate Change has been forgotten by the various Governments. Despite occasional mouthing of some vague commitments about climate affirmative actions, not much has happened on the ground. In fact pristine forests continue to be diverted for industrial projects and dams, despite protests by environment lovers.

More can be less. Less can be more. Big is not always better. Mankind has quickly forgotten these age-old sayings. It became especially true in the late 20th century when we changed our agricultural practices which set in motion a chain of reactions impacting our food, health, environment and wildlife.

Mechanised Farming, Synthetic Fertiliser & Pesticides:

When mechanised farming was introduced in India, people immediately thought that their traditional farm practices were bad because using a tractor one can plough a large area in the time taken by a farmer to plough a small field using bullocks. Productivity became the buzz word. Over a period of time all the traditional farming practices were abandoned, and India shifted to mechanized farming, and started using synthetic fertilisers, pesticides, hybrid seeds etc.

Pesticide spraying in an industrial scale

In the late 1960s, this new way of farming was quickly adopted in Punjab and in several parts of North Indian states like Punjab, Haryana and Uttar Pradesh quickly. overall production of grains shot up and it was branded and celebrated as Green revolution. Today after more than five decades, we have realised that the so called Green Revolution was not so green.

Leads to Cancer:

Excessive use of fertilisers and pesticides have turned the soil dead, ground waters polluted and farms barren. A large population is falling prey to Cancer. Every week people board a train from Bhatinda in Punjab to get down at Bikaner in Rajasthan for cancer treatment at close to free or nominal prices. This Abohar-Bikaner-Jodhpur train is so popular that it has been branded as Cancer Express.

Pesticide runoff from the fields and garbage pollute the fresh water streams

The soil which metaphorically used to produce gold has now become the messenger of death. A study by Greenpeace found high incidence of pesticide residues in tea. (https://www.indiawilds.com/diary/indiawilds-newsletter-vol-6-issue-viii/, IndiaWilds August 2014). Out of 49 samples picked from the market, 34 samples had atleast one pesticide and 29 samples ie. 59% of all samples had more than 10 pesticide residues above EU (European Union) limits. Acephate and Monocrotophos affects the nervous system, highly toxic DDT and endosulfan were also found.

Organic Pesticides:

On the other hand, unlike claims by the pesticide lobby that synthetic pesticides have to be

used to get rid of pests, there have been many indigenous solutions. On condition of anonymity, officials of Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilisers have said that the ministry had carried out tests of neem based pesticides in several tea plantations in Valparai and in surrounding regions of Tamil Nadu and Kerala. The neem based pesticides worked very well. An even more encouraging finding was that it helped in soil regeneration as well ie. it also acted as fertilizer. Nevertheless, not much work has happened on it.

Why Fertiliser Subsidy?

The practice of modern agriculture is still being promoted by MNCs, synthetic fertilizer and pesticide lobbies. The Government of India gives huge fertilizer subsidies. For the FY 22 the kept the fertilizer bill to India Govt. is a massive 88000 crore rupees. One may wonder why?

The Economic Survey FY16 had some interesting insights which can throw light on why the Government continues to make provision for an ever increasing fertilizer subsidy bill. According to the survey report, 41% of the subsidy is diverted for non-agri uses which includes smuggling to neighbouring countries. 24% is spent by farmers with large landholdings. A huge 24% of the subsidy is spent on inefficient producers. This is happening under the existing system of routing subsidy through producers. For gas, pension and other things the Government prefers to credit money directly to the bank accounts of people. However, for fertilizer subsidy why the Government directly gives money to producers instead of transferring it to individuals should be an easy guess.

Diabetes:

There was also great emphasis placed on using hybrid seeds instead of indigenous seeds. In the '60s the focus was on increasing productivity of the crops. So lot of research effort was directed at creating high yielding varieties of crops, especially that of wheat, maize and rice. This resulted in surplus stock and India becoming a net exporter of wheat and rice. This also resulted in a transition of people from consuming complex carbohydrates from traditional crops like millet, barley, sorghum and amaranth to foods with high glycemic index like wheat and rice leading to higher incidence of diabetes. "*Today, the typical diet of an Indian is of high carbohydrate and low protein since the majority of consumers prefer rice and wheat in their diet. This transition in nutrition from complex carbohydrates of indigenous crops to high glycemic index foods such as wheat and rice is correlated with the incidence of diabetes mellitus. The incidence of diabetes in India is growing exponentially and to combat it, a demand for food containing complex carbohydrates with a higher level of dietary fiber is needed.*" (*A Review on Green Revolution, Nutritional Transition, Diabetes and Millet Movement in India*; The Indian Journal of Nutrition and Dietetics; Pandian Arun et al., Oct 2019)

Wheat & Diabetes:

Wheat has complex carbohydrates and 75 percent of it is Amylopectin and 25 percent is a linear chain of Amylose. Both the Amylopectin and Amylose are digested by the enzyme Amylase but the amylose is not efficiently digested. "*Amylopectin is efficiently digested by amylase to glucose… Thus, the complex carbohydrate amylopectin is rapidly converted to glucose and absorbed into the bloodstream and, because it is most efficiently digested, is mainly responsible for wheat's blood-sugar-increasing effect.*" (*Wheat: The Unhealthy Whole Grain*; Life Extension Magazine, Dr. William Davis, Oct 2011).

The effort to create high yielding hybrids of wheat has led to creation of plants which are dwarf or smaller in size with thick stalks that can handle the higher weights. This has lead to increase in the chain of branching glucose units Amylopectin in the wheat and is causing higher incidence of diabetes.

As per International Diabetes Federation (IDA) in the year 2017, approximately 72 million people in India were diabetics and this number will grow to 87 million by 2030. So we the people have to be aware of this.

The Government of India has to realise that this change in agri practices have led to huge impact on our health with increased incidences of diseases like diabetes and cancer and also has led to poisoning of our soil and water. So instead of focusing on these synthetic mechanized farming methods we need to focus on the traditional organic farming which Indians had been practicing for centuries.

Smaller fields & Insectivorous birds:

Scientific studies are now showing the benefits of organic farming. To help in mechanized farming large land parcels were created by merging the smaller farmlands. However, the traditional farms divided into smaller plots had a science behind it. The fields were lined up with flowering and fruiting bushes which used to attract birds and bees and used to serve as perch for insectivorous birds. The insectivorous birds used to easily fly from these perches and catch insects from the crops and then come back to their perch. With large fields it becomes difficult for the drongos, warblers, beeeaters and other such birds to fly large distances. They also expend way more energy flying longer distances for smaller prey and hence can't cover the bigger fields.

Modern farming brought in the notion that every inch of land needs to be cultivated or else was counted as waste. Tractors and other mechanized farming equipment made people feel that they can plough all the area. Hence all bushes and trees were cleared off from the fields to create a large cultivable area.

Wildlife-friendly farming:

A study published in Proceedings of the Royal Society Biological Sciences has found benefits of using wildlife-friendly farming practices which improves crop yields. (Wildlife-friendly farming increases crop yield: evidence for ecological intensification; Pywell, Richard F. et al.; https://doi.org/10.1098/rspb.2015.1740). In a six year experiment, scientists "*replicated two treatments removing 3 or 8% of land at the field edge from production to create wildlife habitat in 50–60 ha patches over a 900 ha commercial arable farm in central England, and compared these to a business as usual control (no land removed). In the control fields, crop yields were reduced by as much as 38% at the field edge. Habitat creation in these lower yielding areas led to increased yield in the cropped areas of the fields, and this positive effect became more pronounced over 6 years. As a consequence, yields at the field scale were maintained—and, indeed, enhanced for some crops—despite the loss of cropland for habitat creation. These results suggested that over a 5-year crop rotation, there would be no adverse impact on overall yield in terms of monetary value or nutritional energy. This study provides a clear demonstration that wildlife-friendly management which supports ecosystem services is compatible with, and can even increase, crop yields.*"

The scientists also found that "in particular, habitat management practices, both in- and off-field, can support taxa that po-

tentially provide services which enhance food production, such as native pollinators and predators of crop pests".

There is some amount of lower crop yield in the field edge due to wild animals. There is always predator-vs-prey equations in nature. When wild animals use the area, it ultimately result is enrichment of the soil through excreta/dung and remains of wildlife carcass decomposing and nutrient recycling. There is a chain of complex ecological relations that come into play when wildlife habitat is created around fields and allowed to remain for several years.

Farmers associations/cooperatives and local NGOs can play a big role in facilitating conversion of existing agricultural fields to create wildlife-friendly habitats for ecological intensification resulting in more yields and better environment. Mapping the local fields to create a plan, of leaving some fields fallow and create wildlife habitat and equitably distributing produce over the rest will help in people agreeing to adopt this idea. It takes time for wildlife to slowly start appearing in a habitat. Hence, any agreements with stakeholders should be done for atleast 5 years so that one can see the benefits more in the later years when the habitat gets modified and becomes suitable for wildlife use.

We have poisoned our earth for too long and in the process poisoned ourselves as well along with our rivers, lakes, ponds and air. We have understood that each of our actions result in not only impacting ourselves but also every other species around us. God has given us the ability to create as well as to destroy. Let us wake up from our folly and start changing ourselves and our practices. Nature will heal on its own.

Conservation News -

Cheetah reintroduction

Reintroduction of exotic African Cheetah will finally be a reality in India this November. Cheetah, the world's fastest land animal has two species – the Asiatic cheetah and the African cheetah. The Asiatic Cheetah was declared extinct from India in 1952 when the last three were shot by a Maharaja who knew no better.

A plan was introduced by a few scientists to reintroduce the African cheetah in India. This was striked down by the Supreme Court. However, after a change in Government and Justices, another bench of Supreme Court agreed with the Government. This is despite many conservationists and biologists of repute petitioning the Supreme Court in the past that the African Cheetah and Indian Cheetah are different and reintroduction of African cheetah which is an alien species doesn't have any conservation value. However, the Wildlife Institute of India (WII) which in the last few years have backed every decision of Government to destroy/divert forest areas for dams, roads etc is expectedly a backer of this alien species reintroduction project. Unfortunately, tourism trumps over conservation. So instead of conserving habitat, the Government is focusing on exotic species reintroduction projects.

The Gujarat Government under the then CM Narendra Modi had disagreed to allow relocation of lions from Gujarat to Kuno wildlife sanctuary in Madhya Pradesh. The Lion relocation project was started after experts called for creation of a second home for lions as one epidemic can swiftly wipe out an entire population in an area. Madhya Pradesh Government had relocated villagers out of Kuno wildlife sanctuary and had prepared the place for reintroduction of lions from Gujarat. However, despite verdict of Supreme Court, the Gujarat Government didn't agree. After election of Narendra Modi as Prime Minister in 2014, the lion reintroduction project went into cold storage.

Now the Government has decided to allow this controversial alien African cheetah's to Kuno wildlife sanctuary in Madhya Pradesh, where Asiatic lions were supposed to be introduced. Perhaps with this move, the Madhya Pradesh Government will not ask for lion reintroduction in Kuno anymore.

It is said that 10 exotic African cheetahs will be brought in from South Africa and kept in an enclosure in Kuno. To help in this process, officials will be sent to South Africa to undergo training. The Cheetahs are planned to be shifted later this year in October and November.

Radio-collared tigress dead

A radio-collared tigress in Panna has been found dead. This tigress code named as P-213 was found dead on 15th of May in Gahrighat range of Panna National Park.

According to the forest officials they had noticed a swelling in the left leg on 12th of May and after tranquilisation the tigress was given treatment. Later the tigress was released back in the wild. Whether the health of the tigress deteriorated due to any lapse in treatment including higher tranquilising dose is not known. The forest department though maintains that this is a natural death.

Conservation News -

This marks the fourth tiger death in Madhya Pradesh this month. On 7th May the carcass of a dead sub adult tiger was found on a canal Balaghat's Waraseoni tehsil. Tigers are great swimmers so one does not expect a tiger to die of drowning.

On 8th May, a tiger death was discovered in Kanha. On 14th May a decomposed carcass was found in the buffer zone of Bandhavgarh. These are premier tiger reserves. It takes couple of days for a body to decompose. The fact that the forest department can't immediately find if a tiger has died points out to the lack of patrolling of our forests. In the time of covid-19 when there is no tourism pressure, forest department officials, guards and watchers should have focused on patrolling. There have been many reports of poachers increasing their activity. However, forest department perhaps has some other priorities than guarding our natural heritage.

A month hasn't passed and 4 tigers have been found dead. There may be some which were not noticed. At this rate more than 10% of the 526 tigers of Madhya Pradesh can die in a year.

Asiatic Lions housed in Hyderabad zoo infected with SARS-COV2 recovering well

On the 24th April 2021 with an abundance of caution, Nehru Zoological Park (NZP), Hyderabad shared samples (as collected from nose, throat and respiratory tract under anaesthesia) with CCMB-LaCONES for eight Asiatic lions housed in the Zoo that had showed signs of respiratory distress. Based on detailed diagnostic tests and report as shared by CCMB-LaCONES on 4th May 2021, it has now been confirmed that eight Asiatic lions housed in Nehru Zoological Park (NZP), Hyderabad have tested positive for SARS-CoV2 virus.

Conservation News -

Further analyses of the samples have revealed that the infection was not caused by any variant of concern. The eight lions have been isolated and due care and necessary treatment has been provided. **All the eight lions have responded well to the treatment and recovering. They are behaving normally and eating well.** Preventive measures are already in place for all zoo staff and the zoo has been closed to visitors to avoid minimal external contact.

Central Zoo Authority has taken several pre-emptive measures including issuance of guidelines and advisories to the zoos towards precautions to be undertaken by zoos in the light of increasing number of cases of SARS CoV-2.

The monitoring and guidelines for prevention, sample collection, detection in suspected cases, and safety protocols for animal keepers etc have been suggested to zoos in consultation with scientific agencies and experts Indian Veterinary Research Institute (IVRI) Uttar Pradesh and Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology – Laboratory for Conservation of Endangered Species (CCMB-LaCONES) Hyderabad. Such advisories are readily available in public domain http://cza.nic.in/news/en .

As part of next steps new guidelines for COVID precautions are being further developed in consultation with experts.

India Biodiversity Awards 2021

Winners of India Biodiversity awards for 2021 were announced in a virtual function on 22nd May to celebrate International Day for Biological Diversity.

The India Biodiversity Awards initiative was started in the year 2012 by Ministry of Environment, Forests & Climate change (MoEF&CC); National Biodiversity Authority (NBA) and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). This is awarded to recognise and honour outstanding models from grassroot level for biodiversity conservation, sustainable use of biological resources and governance.

The United Nations General Assembly in December 2000, had adopted May 22 as International Day for Biological Diversity. Since then every year on 22nd May the International Day for Biological Diversity is celebrated globally. This helps in raising awareness about the issue of a significant reduction in biological diversity due to anthropogenic activities. Hence the awards were given in a virtual ceremony on 22nd May, 2021. The awards carry a cash prize of Rs. Two lakhs and a citation.

The theme of 2021 was “We’re part of the solution”. The slogan was chosen to be a continuation of the momentum generated last year under the over-arching theme, “Our solutions are in nature”, which served as a reminder that biodiversity remains the answer to several sustainable development challenges.

Khonoma Nature Conservation & Tragopan Sanctuary (KNCTS) has won the prestigious India Biodiversity Awards 2021 under the category “Sustainable Use of Biological Resources.” KNCTS was established on 11th December, 1998. Khonoma

Conservation News -

is an area known for endemism in many species of plants and animals. Khonoma is known for its unique and sustainable alder-based jhum cultivation which has been practiced since time immemorial. The village has been successfully conserving its forest and sustainably using its resources for the last two decades.

The Chief Minister of Nagaland expressed his congratulations via twitter. He wrote "Congratulations to Khonoma Nature Conservation & Tragopan Sanctuary (KNCTS) on winning the #IndiaBiodiversityAwards2021 under the category 'Sustainable Use of Biological Resources' by @moefcc. Proud of KNCTS for its community-led initiatives & best wishes for future endeavours," chief minister Rio tweeted." - https://twitter.com/Neiphiu_Rio/status/1396453437189939200

Shaji N. M. has been awarded in the individual category of Conservation of domesticated species. He has been working to conserve around 200 species of tubers like colocasia, arrow root, sweet potato, lesser yam, greater yam, elephant foot yam, etc.

Krishi Avam Paristhitiki Vikas Sansthan (KRAPAVIS) won the award under the category 'Sustainable Use of Biological Resources.' KRAPAVIS won the prestigious award for its support to communities in restoring water harvesting structures, recharge wells & water tables. It also helped to plant a million trees of local varieties in Orans.

We hope these awards will help inspire many people who are silently working in the field to preserve the amazing biodiversity of India.

Equipment Discussions -

Panasonic announces Lumix GH6 camera development

Panasonic has announced the development of a new Lumix GH6 mirrorless camera inn the micro four thirds sensor format. It would be released by the end of 2021.

It's previous version the Panasonic GH5 camera was launched in 2017 and had become very popular.

Panasonic hasn't released a lot of information at this point of time to keep the interest levels up. The Lumix GH6 will have DCI 4K shooting capability at 60p at 4:2:2 color space in 10 bits. It can shoot inn 10 bits in 4K 120p. It also gives shooters option to shoot in 5.7k 60p at 10 bits.

There was a time when the Micro four thirds format was popular. However, with the development of sensor technology, creating full frame sensors have become easier and cheaper. So there has been a trend in the last couple of years to move to 35mm full frame sensors and higher. Many previous participants of the Micro 4/3rd format have moved on to launch their own full frame sensor cameras. Panasonic has S1, S5 and s1H cameras. Many users have transitioned to full frame cameras. So no idea why Panasonic decided to continue with the micro four thirds sensor in the GH6. Perhaps it is to differentiate from its other cameras. Nevertheless, it is to be seen how popular this camera is going to be.

Cinematographers have now become used to the ease of use of the excellent autofocus by Canon and Sony. In an era where a lot of projects have less number of crew due to budget constraints as well as to limit people in the pandemic time, the autofocus often comes in handy. We have no idea what kind of autofocus would be there in the Panasonic GH6 camera.

There is no indication if the GH6 will have any form of Raw recording ability.

We will have to wait and watch what Panasonic has in its offering.

Equipment Discussions -

Panasonic Develops New LUMIX GH6 Micro Four Thirds Mirrorless Camera

- As the flagship of the LUMIX G Series, the new camera enables innovative video expression

Osaka, Japan – Panasonic Corporation today announced the development of the LUMIX GH6 that combines the new Micro Four Thirds sensor and a new image processor. This latest flagship model of the LUMIX G Series of Micro Four Thirds mirrorless cameras will be commercialized and released to the global market by the end of 2021.

After establishing the LUMIX brand in 2001, Panasonic introduced the world's first digital single lens mirrorless camera in 2008*1. Ever since then, it has produced a host of innovative cameras and interchangeable lenses by taking advantage of the outstanding mobility and high video performance which are unique to the mirrorless camera system. These cameras and lenses were originally used for photography but have also been used for film creation. As a result of 20 years of contribution to the imaging culture, LUMIX cameras and lenses have gained a solid reputation from the wide-ranging users including professional photographers and film creators.

In the growing needs of video streaming, creators are more keen on the quality and uniqueness of the video contents they provide. High resolution, wide dynamic range, realistic texture, impressive effects like slow motion, flexible shooting angle made possible with small camera size – all of these are demanded for the ideal camera to meet the creators' expectations.

To accommodate such needs, Panasonic is developing the new LUMIX GH6 that further enhances the flexibility of video creation. It is absolutely the flagship of the LUMIX G Series and the latest model of the GH line, which is renowned for its stunning mobility and innovative video performance. Combining the newly developed Micro Four Thirds image sensor that boasts high-speed signal readout and Venus Engine image processor, the new GH6 realizes advanced video expression.

Providing 4:2:2 10-bit Cinema 4K/60p recording capability*2, the LUMIX GH6 achieves unlimited video recording when the camera is used under the certified operating temperature*3. It is reliable enough to record continuous footage for a desired duration. It also provides a 10-bit 4K 120p High Frame Rate (HFR) and Variable Frame Rate (VFR) for high resolution slow/quick motion video. Moreover, the GH6 records 10-bit 5.7K 60p video by taking full advantage of the newly developed Micro Four Thirds sensor. Integrating a variety of recording modes and shooting assist functions, the GH6 enables photo/video hybrid-use for various purposes including films, music videos, documentaries and short clips for social medias to meet the creators' needs.

While the LUMIX G Series based on the Micro Four Thirds standard boasts high mobility, the LUMIX S Series offers high descriptive performance made possible with the full-frame sensor. Along with these two series, Panasonic is committed to addressing further to provide maximum product value as a tool for photography/videography for the users to unleash their creativity and challenging the ever-changing photo/video culture in today's new digital era.

Equipment Discussions -

Panasonic launches GH5 Mark II camera

Panasonic has launched an updated version of its GH5 camera with wireless streaming.

The GH5 MarkII camera has a 20.3-megapixel Digital Live MOS Sensor with Anti-Reflective (A.R.) coating in micro four thirds format. The sensor size is 17.3 x 13 mm.

ISO sensitivity: 200 to 25600. In extended mode shoot in ISO 100 as well.

The GH5 Mark II will be able to shoot at 4K 60p at 4:2:0 at 10 bits and it has wireless streaming capability. It can simultaneously do external recording at 4:2:2 10 bit over HDMI while internally recording is done at 4:2:0 10 bit 4K 60p.

During the covid induced lockdown more and more people are moving into the wireless streaming space. So Panasonic is aiming to get some foothold in this space.

It doesn't have any recording time limit restrictions. So one can use it for continuous shooting situations like events and documentaries.

The GH5 II uses a contrast detection type autofocus. It uses advanced deep learning technology so that it can identify people as well as fast moving animals and can recognise the face and eyes. Improved tracking performance quickly recognizes the face and eyes of moving subjects and the human body from a background of moving subjects.

It boasts of a Dual I.S. 2 system which combines the camera's sensor-shift image stabilization technology with lens-based image stabilization to compensate for a broad range of movement types and renders sharper, clearer imagery. However, the Dual I.S. 2 system only works with compatible Lumix lenses featuring O.I.S. According to Panasonic, this image stabilisation system helps the GH5 Mark II to compensate for 6.5 stops of camera shake.

Price: $1697.99 US Dollars

Check below link for more details -

https://www.indiawilds.com/forums/showthread.php?19937-Panasonic-releases-GH5-Mark-II-mirrorless-camera-with-wireless-streaming

Equipment Discussions -

Western Digital launches Sandisk Professional Brand

If you are a photographer or filmmaker then chances of using Sandisk brand is high. Western Digital which owns the sandisk brand has launched storage solutions in the name of Sandisk Professional. These are premium storage solutions and price is also expected to be higher. However, it is expected that after paying a premium price one should be able to depend on these Sandisk Professional cards, card readers, hard disks, RAIDs etc. Often we are not sure if and when something is going to fail and with it all our data can go down the drain. Lets hope that this premium brand will have bullet proof reliability. The range is going to be available by June.

Some of the items hav started appearing in B&H as preorder items. The 4 TB G-DRIVE ArmorATD USB 3.2 Gen 1 hard drive is priced at $149.99 US Dollars. It has a durable rubber bumper, an anodized aluminum enclosure which can withstand 1000 pounds of pressure. It can withstand a drop of 3.3 feet on a carpeted concrete floor. It is also IP 54 rated and hence provides protection against rain, said and dust. No external power is required.

Preorder Link: https://www.bhphotovideo.com/c/produ...1116850/SID/EZ

Things can get expensive if you start looking at at G-DRIVE array. The Sandisk Professional 96 TB G_RAID shutter 8 which is an 8-bay RAID array of 12 TB each with thunderbolt 3 and USB 3.2 costs 7300 US Dollars. So if you are a serious user or studio then some of these premium products would surely be of interest.

Western Digital Debuts SanDisk Professional Brand

New line of premium-grade solutions purpose-built for creators and professionals worldwide

At its Flash Perspective event today, Western Digital(NASDAQ: WDC) unveiled the new Sandisk Professional ™ brand of premium storage solutions for content creators and professionals. From producing the latest blockbuster film to capturing the moment at a destination wedding to managing business-critical content, the powerful SanDisk Professional portfolio is designed to deliver scalable, high-performance, reliable solutions across industries globally.

Professional content is in constant motion. Content that's captured or created needs to be saved, transferred, off-loaded, shared and archived. SanDisk Professional offers a range of purpose-built tools to harmonize every step of that process.

"As a professional photographer and filmmaker, my livelihood depends on how I get the job done. There is no room for error. I need the most advanced, reliable and trusted equipment out in the field," said Lucas Gilman, adventure photographer and filmmaker. "For years I've relied on SanDisk and G-Technology solutions because they enable me to focus on the moment with confidence that my creativity won't be interrupted, and without concern about whether or not they can keep up with my technical needs."

Equipment Discussions -

Jim Welsh, senior vice president and general manager of the Consumer Solutions business at Western Digital, said, "Our customers trust their life's work to our products. We design and create solutions for every stage of the creative process, harmonizing our customers' experience so they can save time and focus more on creating. Expanding our brand family with SanDisk Professional allows us to offer advanced solutions to people around the world who rely on the best technology available for their inspiring work."

Born on the foundation of the company's world-renowned SanDisk® consumer brand and its professional-grade G-Technology™ brand, the storage choice of Hollywood professionals for decades, the new SanDisk Professional line features 16 modular workflow solutions with professional-grade performance and enterprise-class reliability that will include:
· PRO-CINEMA CFexpress VPG400 – An all-new professional-grade, rugged CFexpress® card for videographers and cinematographers needing superior, uninterrupted performance with video recording at a minimum of 400MB/s** to keep up with the demands facing today's videography, broadcast and cinema industries. The new card is expected to be available this summer.

· **PRO-READER series – Four new PRO-READER devices that feature a USB-C™** interface that supports SuperSpeed USB 10Gbs. Designed to work with the latest and most common camera media including CFast™, CFexpress, RED Mini-Mag®, CF, microSD™ and SD™ cards. The series of PRO-READERS are expected to be available this summer.

· **PRO-DOCK 4 – A** new revolutionary 4-bay reader docking station that can bridge capture and ingest with a truly scalable offloading solution that saves critical time and money on multi-camera productions. The PRO-DOCK 4, expected to be available later this summer, enables up to four simultaneous card offloads.

· **A new 4TB* G-DRIVE™ ArmorLock™ Encrypted NVMe™ SSD** along with our trusted line up of G-DRIVE™ ultra-rugged portable drives, desktop devices featuring our enterprise-grade Ultrastar® drives, and G-RAID™ and G-RAID SHUTTLE transportable, enterprise-grade RAID solutions (now featuring both Thunderbolt 3 and USB-C support) that offer an exceptional range of reliable, high-performance, high-capacity drives for everything from transfer to 100TB+* back up and archive for all types of mission-critical content. The broad range of new drives are expected to begin rolling out by early June.

Natural History -

COUNTRY NOTEBOOK: Lost in moody introspection: M.Krishnan:- 23-3-1952

The Sunday Statesman (shared by Shri. Saktipada Panigrahi)

"THERE are three wells around my compound, just outside, in the territories of neighbours. The brackish water deep down in them is not potable, but my neighbours use it for their kitchen-gardens. They have dug irrigation channels from the wells to the plots of vegetables, with steep earth banks and miniatures dams to regulate the flow of the precious fluid. Frogs, tad-poles, water-boatmen, mole-crickets, and a variety of worms, grubs and flying insects inhabit this region and recently a White-breasted Kingfisher* has taken up residence in my backyard from where it can command a comprehensive view of the aqueducts.

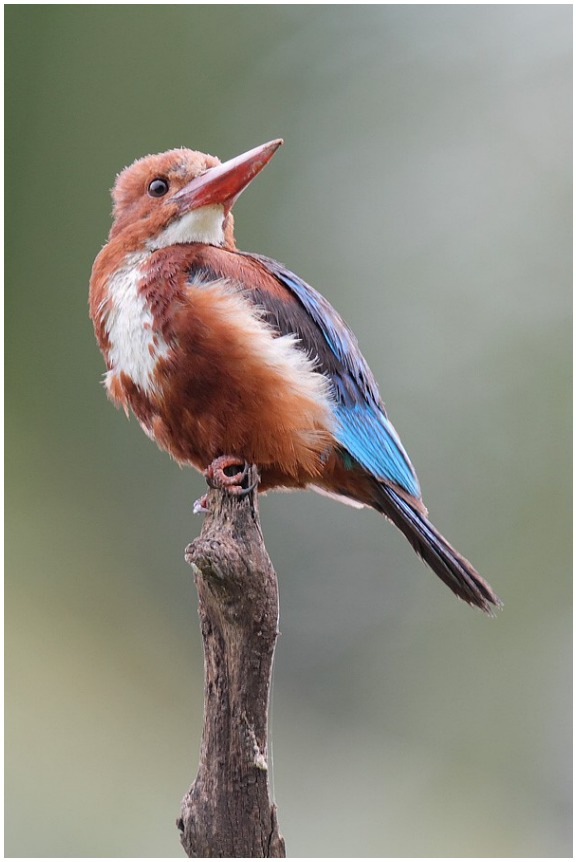

Photo Courtesy - Jitendra Katre

It has many perches here, and shifts from one to another, but its favourite seat is at one end of a clothesline, in the shade of foilage. It sits inert and slumped and seems wholly lost in moody introspection-but in fact it is watching for lesser life in the inundated field of vision. Other birds that sit up for their prey adopt a similar attitude in vigil, rollers, bee-eaters, buzzards. The concealing value of such repose is obvious even to colour-sensitive human eyes. I have to look about me to locate this kingfisher in spite of the dazzling contrasts of maroon and blue and white in its plumage. Vivacity, even a perky stance, un-doubtedly catches the eye; our dusky robins prove the truth of this.

This kingfisher has little fear of men, or else it is so absorbed in its watch for small fry that it does not notice my ponderous approach. If I do not make straight for it but observe a certain circumspection and silence, I can get to within three yards of its perch without alarming it (incidentally, what matters is a slow approach without jerky movement rather than silence-the

bird seems indifferent to my whistling). It is then that I see how brilliantly it is coloured, and it is wide awake for all its slouched stillness.

I venture too near and it is away in a vivid streak, with a hash cackle. The great sword bill, sheathed in immobility and shade when the bird is sitting, flashes redly in flight, followed by the blue and white of the wing and tail. It flies straight to the well, then dips sharply and alights on the well-post, and is once more lost in dejected reverie.

The government, trying to induce the rice-eating peoples of the riceless South to sample other grain, could well this bird for its emblem, for it has renounced the limited diet of its tribe and taken to more varied and cosmopolitan fare. Its build is the build of a kingfisher, and its great bill is the authentic implement of a fish-hunter, but hundreds of generations ago it grew independent of pool and stream and finned prey, and often it lives far from water. It feeds on any small thing that it can seize in its big bill and batter to death-lizards, insects, grubs and worms, tadpoles, and even fish on occasion.

In summer it hunts the vicinity of wells, not for the sake of fish in them, but for the creeping and crawling life that the moist earth attracts. During the monsoons, when the water stagnates in roadside ditches and dips, I have often seen this bird fishing for tadpoles and minnows in the puddles-but the monsoons have not often been with us lately. The five successive years of drought that have afflicted this area must have fixed the tendency to hunt land-living prey even more firmly in the White-breasted Kingfishers here. This is the only Indian kingfisher that has developed this terrestrial bias, but in Australia there are kingfishers that have forsaken the water completely.

There is one peculiarity about this kingfisher that I have noticed, and that I am quite unable to explain. Sometimes it flies into limited settings, into a room or verandah or shed, and then it seems quite helpless and flatters weakly about, suffering itself to be caught where other birds could have escaped with ease. So weak is it on the wing then, so torpid and slow, that it seems acutely ill, or else quite dazed. I have caught White-breasted Kingfishers in this way thrice or four times, and I have known others catch the bird in similar circumstances. It lies unprotesting in the hand, and the amazing lightness of the bird (birds are much lighter than we think) lends further probability to the feeling that it is very ill- but toss it clear into the air, and it flies briskly away, to resume its hunting. This kingfisher nests in long, narrow tunnels in the earth, and one would think that it is used to restricted spaces. Perhaps it is sudden fright, at being cornered by men, that is responsible for its lassitude on such occasions."

- M. Krishnan

Wildlife Photography -

Tiger cub by Sabyasachi Patra

Tiger by Shyamala Kumar

Wildlife Photography -

Changeable Hawk Eagle dark-morph by Mrudul Godbole

Orange-headed Thrush Female by Samrat Sarkar

Wildlife Photography -

Pair of Monitor Lizards by Shyamala Kumar

Mukaria genus(bamboo feeding leafhopper) by Prajwal Ullal

This is the 149th issue of IndiaWilds Newsletter. An image of a tea plantation adorns the cover page of this issue. Too often we fall in love based on the beauty of something. However, we don't realise that at times beauty can be superficial and can hide the toxicity within it.

When people visit a tea estate, looking at the green surroundings they feel happy. The tea bushes planted in neat rows and the leaves trimmed by big hedge cutters impart a tidy feeling. Together with the cool climate, people feel relaxed and think that at those places nature is at its best. However, people fail to notice the toxic pesticides sprayed on the tea bushes which not only kill all insects but also remain as residues in the tea and other foods that we consume. The synthetic fertilisers which are used for plant growth often poison the soil. Rain water wash away those pesticides and fertilisers and poison the ground water, ponds, streams and rivers.

People living in ecologically fragile areas should be taught on a priority basis to shift to organic farming so that our rivers and streams are not polluted at source. The pandemic has made many citydwellers become cautious about health. So it is time to make more people aware that through our actions in the agricultural fields we can save health as well as save our environment and wildlife.

I look forward to your inputs and support in preserving the last tracts of wilderness and wildlife of our beautiful country. For other interesting articles and images check - ***http://www.indiawilds.com/forums/***

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Regards,
Sabyasachi Patra

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Publisher's address: -

Plot No. 1, Akarpuri Colony,
Near Vaithal Temple, Old Town,
Bhbuaneshwar, 751002
Odisha
Mobile - +919910900446
