



IndiaWilds Newsletter

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Inside this issue:

Climate Change & Sceptics	1
Conservation News	6
Book Review - Dreaming in Calcutta and Channel Islands - By Subhobroto Ghosh	10
Equipment Discussions	13
Natural History	23
Image of the Month	26
Wildlife Photography	27

Climate Change & Sceptics

Stop talking about scientifically done Environment Impact Assessment studies everytime we talk of an infrastructure project. Mining in a few forests won't finish off all tigers or bring in climate change. Tiger numbers have gone up by some thirty percent even though scientists were saying how vulnerable tigers are. By the way Conservation is not rocket science. Declare an area 'No Go'. Protect it. Wildlife will breed and thrive. After all, more than half of India's human population are below the poverty line and that hasn't stopped them from producing more kids" reasoned my Industry friend when we were discussing over lunch the Government's push to implement the TSR Committee report. "The 1.2 billion population didn't happen in a day", he added to emphasise his point. This gentleman is an industry leader who was championing exploitation of India's coal mines for power and thoroughly supports the "TSR Subramanian High Level Committee report".

The general masses are not the only ones to doubt the scientific community, as even the current Prime Minister of the country had tried to poo-hoo climate change in his September 5th 2014 speech. To trivialise climate change he had said that "actually the chill is not more. Due to their age, their tolerance has become less. That is why they feel more cold".

Prime Minister Mr. Modi is not the only climate change sceptic in India. There were couple of scientists too who don't believe that climate change can be also due to man. One such scientist, Dhruv Sen Singh of Centre of Advanced Study in Geology, University of Lucknow joined the climate change doubters by voicing his doubts in a session of Indian Science Congress in January this year. "While I agree that glaciers are melting because of global warming, if this is because of man, then what was the reason for the melting of the glaciers in the Gondwana period long before man arrived on the planet?" he asked. He further added "Climate change is a natural phenomenon while pollution is caused by man. We are definitely accelerating process of climate change, but we cannot predict the rate or extent of climate change that can be attributed to man. He termed climate change as mere propaganda. While this may be music to Mr. Modi's ears, as his Central Government is pushing hard to demolish all environmental barriers to setting up and running industries, one needs a deeper dive into science to understand the reasons for natural climate change in the past.



Climate Change Feedback Loops:

Climate change is not just a simple cause and effect but a complicated and elaborate process where the effect slowly amplifies.

We all understand that when the sun shines the water absorbs the heat as its reflectivity is less, gets heated up and then it evaporates from the various water bodies. This water vapour



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Ice capped peaks

in our atmosphere has a capacity to trap heat. The heat trapped causes it to vibrate and some of it again goes down to the earth in the process amplifying the warmth of the earth. This slight increase in warming further causes some more evaporation of water adding to the water vapour in our atmosphere. This new water vapour again absorbs heat energy, vibrates and again re-emits some of that heat. So the warming effect is amplified.

Some of our earth's surface, both land and water is covered with ice. Anyone of you who has seen natural ice can vouch for the fact that they reflect a lot of sunlight. That is one of the reasons apart from harmful UV radiation why mountaineers need to wear special goggles while high up in the snow-clad mountains. When the temperature increases, more of ice melts and converts into water whose reflectivity is less than ice, which then absorbs more heat and contributes to the overall warming effect.

However on our earth ice and water are not the only two elements that impact our climate. The atmospheric gasses, primarily CO₂ trap the heat and increase the temperature. The temperature increase over the years could have just continued and the earth should have been so hot that life on earth would have been impossible. It is not so, because of again a complex chain of reactions between various elements, which some erroneously describe as self-regulating mechanism, as it can't always self-regulate.

Sun burning brighter:

Initially the amount of CO₂ gases in our atmosphere was very high. However, at that time, it is estimated that the Sun was giving off energy at about a quarter to 30% less than today some four and half billion years ago. Yes the Sun, like all stars burn brighter and brighter till one day it burns off its hydrogen. It is estimated that the Sun will be 10% brighter than it is today after about 1.1 billion years and 40% brighter after 3.5 billion years.

Carbon: From Atmosphere to Ocean:

A major part of the carbon dioxide from the young earth's atmosphere reacted with the rain water to form carbonic acid which dissolves silicate rocks and got gobbled up by marine organisms as they need to form hard shells. When these organisms die, their shells get deposited in the ocean, lake and river beds to form sedimentary rocks with the passage of time. These reactions accelerated with the increase in temperature. So through this process a lot of carbon dioxide from our atmosphere got transferred to the Ocean. Else, how much more the temperature of Earth would have been with the Sun becoming brighter is anybody's guess. I am sure Scientists may have an answer through complex modelling exercises.

Ice Age & Himalaya:

This process, as simple it may sound, has many more variables associated with it. The last ice age coincided with the formation of our own Himalaya.



Sunrise in Neelkantha peak in the Himalayan Mountain range shows the rock faces

Computer simulations by Dr. John E. Kutzbach and Dr. William R. Ruddiman suggested that the sudden rise of the Himalaya resulted in increased precipitation. Maurine Raymo's Uplift-Weathering hypothesis says that as the Himalaya started forming into a massive mountain range with the tallest at more than 8 kilometers high and the entire range stretching over 2.5 million square kilometres, massive amounts of rocks faces were exposed and the increased precipitation led to chemical weathering action, which trapped CO₂ from the atmosphere. This sudden removal of so much of carbon dioxide from the earth's atmosphere resulted in cooling of the earth. Raymo believes the presence of higher amount of Strontium 87 isotope in the sea floor sediments vis-à-vis Strontium 86 isotope suggests that more of erosion has happened in the Himalaya as

Himalaya has rocks rich with Strontium 87. However, some of his critics don't believe it to be sufficient proof.

When ice forms, it reflects more ie. less heat is absorbed and as more and more water is converted into ice, there is further less trapping of heat and ice starts occupying more and more areas. When the ice cover on earth reaches about 30 deg latitude, the tipping point is reached and the entire earth is then covered with ice like a giant snow ball.

Warming of Earth after Ice Age:

Once the entire earth is covered with ice during the various ice ages why did it warm again? The surface temperatures had gone down so further trapping of carbon dioxide stopped. However, the inner core of earth remains hot and the volcanic activities would have continued to spew carbon dioxide and other gases into the air. Over a period of time the green house gasses would have built up and amount of heat trapped by these gases would have heated the earth again leading to slow melting of ice initially from certain parts of the equator and then the process would have got amplified as more and more water is available which absorbs heat, gets converted into water vapour which in turn traps heat. So in short the process of heating again starts getting amplified resulting in the ice cover retreating to arctic and nearby regions.

These climate change processes were natural, when Man as a species was either not there for most of the time and when it arrived on earth, it became capable of irreversibly destroying the climate only in the last few hundred years.

With our modern high carbon emitting lifestyle, there is a net atmospheric increase of CO₂ by about 4.5 petagrams per year. With each passing day, the demand for a high carbon lifestyle is increasingly heard in the developing countries. Places which used to act like a carbon sink due to the presence of massive numbers of trees sucking carbon due to photosynthesis, are now being converted into human habitations devoid of trees. Add to it burning of fossil fuels, industrial pollution etc which emits more CO₂. If this profligate high carbon lifestyle continues unabated, one day the earth may become so hot that a lot of water turns into vapour and it completely fills the atmosphere with water vapour. The massive levels of water completely traps all the heat and the Earth's ability to balance the energy is lost. So Earth will resemble a pressure cooker and all life will be lost. With the aggressive helping hand of man, Earth may reach such a situation sooner rather than later.

IndiaWilds App for Android Mobile

In India most of the internet penetration is happening through mobile phones. And the existing users who have access to desktops and laptops are becoming much more mobile then they used to be a few years ago. So to raise awareness and reach out to more people we need to adapt ourselves and make IndiaWilds easily accessed through a mobile phone using android OS.

Today, I am pleased to announce that we have created a mobile phone app so that people can access IndiaWilds anytime, anywhere without being tied to a computer. No need to type. One can access at the click of a button.

We have developed this app through Business Compass LLC a company based in Randolph, New Jersey, United States so that we create a good app.

Awareness is the first step before a person can become a champion of wildlife. I hope this will help us in reaching out to more people to raise awareness and make a real impact on the conservation landscape. If you have an android device then please download the app from this link:

<https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.businesscompassllc.indiawilds>

Conservation News

Indians lose 3.2 years of their life to pollution

Date– Feb 2015

There was a time when it used to be said that you can't avoid Death and Taxes. With the HSBC's of the world colluding with businessmen to siphon away unpaid taxes from the country, now there are many who can avoid taxes in this country, albeit illegally. If we have to update this popular phrase keeping in mind the changed realities of the India we live in today, the more appropriate phrase would be "You can't avoid pollution and death".

The air pollution in India has reached such a stage that all of us are impacted by it. A study by Greenstone et al published in the Economics and Political Weekly has made a startling revelation. Indian's are losing on an average 3.2 years of their life due to fine particulate air pollution. According to this study -

"660 million people, over half of India's population, live in areas that exceed the Indian National Ambient Air Quality Standard for fine particulate pollution. Reducing pollution in these areas to achieve the standard would, we estimate, increase life expectancy for these Indians by 3.2 years on average for a total of 2.1 billion life years".

However the researchers feel that this is still an underestimate of the enormous magnitude of the problem facing India Today. *"The loss of more than two billion life years is a substantial price to pay for air pollution. And yet this may still be an underestimate of the costs of air pollution, because we do not account for the impact of other air pollutants, the impacts of particulates on morbidity or labour productivity, as well as preventive health or avoidance costs borne by Indian households."* The complete study can be found here:

[http://www.epw.in/system/files/SA_L_8_210215_Michael_Greenstone%20\(1\).pdf](http://www.epw.in/system/files/SA_L_8_210215_Michael_Greenstone%20(1).pdf)

The researchers have three policy prescriptions to address this problem one of which is to set up advanced continuous instrumentation systems for monitoring pollution from high-emitting industries as well as that of ambient air. They feel that increased monitoring can play a role in health advisory as well as to make the polluter pay. Unfortunately, the present Government of India wants to bring in a laissez-faire system wherein Industries will move into a kind of self-certifying mode. This is recommended by the TSR Subramanian High Level Committee appointed by the MoEF to review the various environment and forest laws. So even if a polluter in your locality is polluting, you don't have the right to question it. Even jurisdiction is taken away from the courts.

Pollution is leading to a greater divide in this country. People who have more money are now starting to set up indoor air purifiers as the indoor air is also polluted due to the overall higher levels of air pollution. The people who are less affluent and travel by public transport or walk are more exposed to pollution. If no action is taken, soon people wearing masks and walking in the roads would become a common sight.

When every man and woman is facing this problem, our politicians are supposed to take it up. Unfortunately, they perhaps feel that pollution is another way of life. Even Mr. Arvind Kejriwal, the leader of AAP and now Chief Minister of Delhi had been afflicted with bronchitis last year when he slept on the road for one night during an agitation. However, instead of recognising the need for clean air, his party decided to promise Free WiFi to the people of Delhi. The visions of people using WiFi for greater and faster service delivery is good. However, it is unfortunate that no one is talking about a basic necessity.



Clean Air is not only a basic necessity but it should also be our Fundamental Right.

Nandur Madhyamaheshwar Wetland: Crying for Attention

Nandur Madhyameshwar is a large lake and wetland near Nashik, Maharashtra. This large water reservoir was formed by dam(ning) of Godavari and Kodwa rivers. This large wetland attracts tens of thousands of migratory birds during the winter season. Nandur Madhyameshwar is also an Important Birding Area of Maharashtra, and of course India.



Nandur Madhyamaheshwar Wetland

Photo Courtesy - Paramvir Singh

Conservation News -

Unfortunately, this large wetland is bearing the brunt of human greed. Population explosion has resulted in people encroaching upon this wetland by filling the lake bed with mud and debris. These encroached upon lands are being used as farmland and later on would see concretization.

“I saw people openly filling the lake to create farmland. I saw people entering the lake after sunset for fishing, thereby disturbing the roosting birds” said IndiaWilds member Paramvir Singh.



Nandur Madhyamaheshwar Wetland

Photo Courtesy - Paramvir Singh

Most of the time construction debris are deposited to reclaim wetlands. And in places like this, where construction debris are not available, they illegally mine the nearby hills and fill up the lake beds. Most of the times the encroachers, get one person to set up a hut and then slowly they start building up more huts which are then converted to concrete structures. All these people are paid to stay there on behalf of land grabbers.

Nandur Madhyameshwar is also an Important Birding Area of Maharashtra and filling up the lake bed is going to destroy the food source of birds as well as create disturbance.

Members may write to the authorities and raise their voice against such blatant land grabbing:

Shri. Kuldip N. Khawarey

Additional Principal Chief Conservator of Forest

Off. 0253-2599632

Fax.0253-2599632

Email - apccfwnashik@gmail.com

Conservation News -

Dry Weather in Little Rann of Kutch: Flamingoes abandon eggs

Jan 2015

Flamingo eggs have been found abandoned in one of the six breeding colonies in the Little Rann of Kutch (LRK). Every year lakhs of flamingos arrive in search of food and for breeding at Little Rann of Kutch.

The water in this particular breeding site located between Wasraj bade and Dhrangadhra dried up earlier and caused scarcity of food and water and forcing the flamingoes to abandon their eggs.

An estimation by wildlife enthusiasts pegged the number of abandoned eggs to be between 15,000 and 18,000. However forest officials claimed that only around 1,300 to 1,500 eggs were deserted.

"We have visited the area. There are about 1,200 to 1,300 nests with unhatched eggs. The birds are erratic breeders and breed in thousands. They have successfully bred in five other colonies in LRK. The wasted eggs are preyed upon by raptors frequenting the region," said Surendranagar's deputy conservator of forests, Pradeep Singh.

Mumbai to Lose its Lungs:

The Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) has created a draft development plan for 2014-2034 and it has raised the concerns of environmentalists and nature lovers. The BMC has their eyes set on the green areas of Aarey Milk Colony.

The BMC has planned to gobble up the last tracts of green areas of the metropolis as they have plans to convert the green areas of Aarey Milk colony to concrete jungle. The BMC believes that the green areas offer plenty of potential for economic exploitation. The BMC, even before the unveiling of the draft development plan, has gone ahead with a Metro III car parking project in the Aarey Milk Colony.

This project will decimate an area covering grasslands, wetlands and about 2298 trees will need to be cut or transplanted. Most of the mature trees die during the transplantation process. So about 400 nature lovers recently protested against this project which will rob the city of its green areas. It should be noted that in the Aarey Milk Colony there are resident leopards and any move to reclaim the green areas for projects will result in loss of cover and food supply for them. Hence the conflict between man and leopards is likely to intensify.

Mumbai is fortunate to have the green areas which serve as lungs of the city as the trees help in absorbing carbon dioxide through photosynthesis. Trees also release moisture and help in rainfalls. When there is rainfall, the green areas help in trapping the water and the underground water table gets recharged. So it is a sad move in the part of BMC to concretise the green areas.

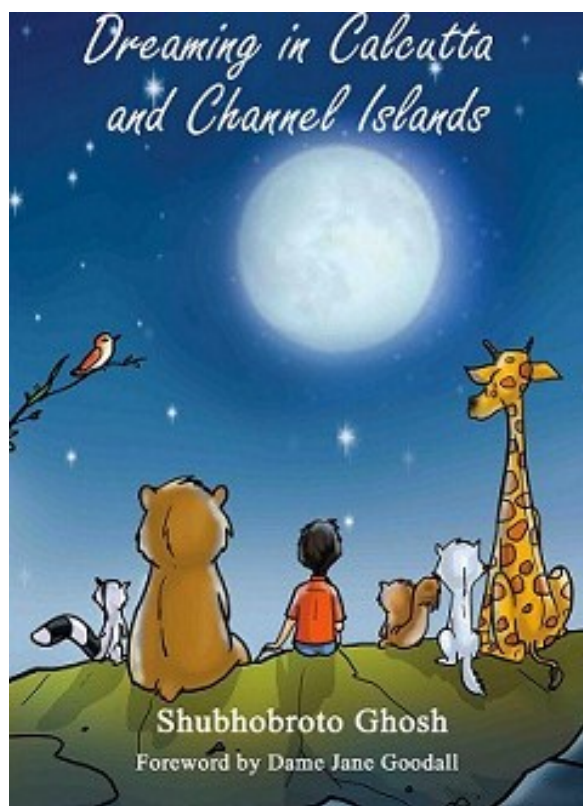
Book Review

Dreaming in Calcutta and Channel Islands

By Subhobroto Ghosh

Sometime back, Subhobroto had told me that he is writing a book about a boy influenced by Gerald Durrell and visiting Jersey Zoo etc. I am for freedom, for humans as well as for every species and hence detest zoos. So I quickly forgot about this book that Subhobroto was writing. A year or so passed and a few days ago, Subhobroto reminded me that his first book has been published and Jane Goodall has written the foreword. Also I got to know that a part of his own life's journey has been weaved into this fictional tale, so I thought of checking it and read an electronic copy of the book.

In the first few pages of the book, before the foreword one finds two excellent quotes about dreams. Perhaps the author wanted us to remind not only the reason to dream but also the power of dreams. The first is by Langston Hughes exhorting one to hold onto the dreams.



“Hold fast to dreams

For if dreams die

Life is a broken-winged bird

That cannot fly.

Hold fast to dreams

For when dreams go

Life is a barren field

Frozen with snow”.

The other quote, is among one of my favourites and is by T. E. Lawrence

“All men dream: but not equally. Those who dream by night

in the dusty recesses of their minds wake

up in the day to find it was vanity, but the

dreamers of the day are dangerous men, for they

may act their dreams with open eyes, to make it possible”.

With these two powerful quotes on dreams, you are likely to take the story of the young boy far more seriously. If not so, then comes the foreword by Jane Goodall will, as she has written that this book "reminded me of my own childhood, and my seemingly impossible dream – of going to live with animals in Africa". With my taste buds suitably tickled, I started reading the book and immediately the story of Shamu reminded me one of my favourite authors Ruskin Bond and his stories of "The adventures of Rusty". Those stories by Ruskin Bond had filled me with unalloyed joy and I was perhaps hoping too much from Shubhobroto's book, despite this being his first. However, I couldn't help imagining, as the story of a boy loving animals gives us a vicarious pleasure, after all haven't we been in such a situation in our childhood days? So when we know that the story is that of a boy's love for animals and dreams of a Durrell like zoo or perhaps much bigger like a massive Noah's Arc, the reader is initially ready for a Ruskin Bond like story.

However, several times I thought that I have perhaps inadvertently scrolled back few pages - as I was reading an e-version of the book - to realise that the same or similar events of Shamu's childhood comes back again and again. Though the author has himself mentioned that Shamu's notes of zoo visits become repetitive, it slows down the narrative at times. It may be pertinent to mention that, our harshest critics are our known friends and family who can at one instant get filled with joy or sunk into despair by the slightest pretext or provocation.

Initially I was under the impression that the author has tried to write a book to appeal to youngsters. However, given the wide variety of thoughts Shubhobroto has interspersed into his story telling, this book will leave the adult reader with thoughts to ponder for a long time.

For example, he talks about Karna, one of the Hero's from the Epic Mahabharata and quotes Herman Melville.

"Much later in life, he would find Karna's life story resonating in the words of Herman Melville", "Milton's Satan is morally very superior to his God, for whoever perseveres despite adversity and torture, is morally superior to whoever in cold vengeance, takes the most horrible revenge upon his enemies."

The book is also peppered with nice quotes. It shows that the author is widely read and more importantly perhaps keeps notes. He quotes Mahatma Gandhi

"The moral progress of a nation can be gauged by the way it treats its animals" and then seamlessly moves to Gita to tell us that "the Gita does preach compassion for animals and says that an enlightened person attaches equal importance to the life of an animal as he does to a human and the oneness of all Creation includes all forms of life".

Shubhobroto also gives us some food for thought when he reminds us "As Edward Wilson says in his autobiography 'NATURALIST' we need brilliant enemies in our creative lives".

Through his protagonist, the author makes a powerful statement about animal rights and freedom when he writes "might it not be that animals cherished freedom as much as he cherished his own?" ... "Today, human beings are no longer exhibited in zoos or bought and sold in the market as slaves but animals are. Maybe, a time will come in history when animals will be given the same rights as humans and people will look upon the present treatment of animals with as much revulsion as they look on slavery today. But does the world really change? Is slavery really extinct or does it survive in sugar coated forms churned out as benign and useful by public relations firms and executives?

At times the author also writes in a matter of fact tone to infuse some humour as well as to make a pointed comment as can be seen when he mentions that as per The American Heritage Dictionary the word zoo also means confusion or disorder.

The author also hasn't stopped at making commentary on the state of affairs with our education system where students try to get marks at any cost and learning becomes secondary. He speaks about the students who get disheartened and take the

extreme step of committing suicide. He asks *"How many deaths will it take till we know that too many innocent kids have died?"*

He has also covered interesting topics through innocuous conversations, for eg wastage of food. If people reading the book can inculcate the habit of not wasting food, then it would be a big help to conservation as roughly 30% of food is wasted worldwide. Without such wastage a lot of our fields can remain uncultivated, providing shelter to wildlife.

After reading this book, I was filled with a tinge of sadness because the protagonist in this book, Shamu, despite being young has much superior intellect than perhaps a majority of our decision makers in India today. May be it is time we shower kids with books such as this to enlarge their minds and pique their intellectual curiosity, so that this country can be a better place to live in.

"Dreaming in Calcutta and Channel Islands" By Subhobroto Ghosh is priced at 320/- and the Kindle edition of this book is also available at Rs. 249/- for download. I am sure this book will be liked by a majority of the readers.

Equipment Discussions -

Canon launches EF 11-24 f4 L USM lens

Canon U.S.A. Announces New EF 11-24mm f/4L USM Ultra Wide-Angle Zoom Lens

New Optical Array Delivers Images with Tremendous Depth and Linear Perspective

Canon has announced the new EF 11-24mm f4 L USM lens to its lens line up. This lens was eagerly awaited due to it being wide as well as providing a good zoom range.

At 11mm, it has the widest angle of view (126°05' diagonal) on a wide angle lens with rectilinear full frame coverage. Since this is rectilinear, the verticals won't get distorted.



The minimum focusing distance is only 11 inches or 24mm.

16 elements in 11 groups with 4 aspherical elements, one Super UD and one UD lens element. The 4 aspherical elements (I have to recollect which other lens have got such large number of aspherical elements) will ensure straight lines and the UD elements will reduce chromatic aberrations.

Weight: 1180 gms

Price: This lens is priced at a steep \$2900 US Dollars. India pricing is yet to be announced.

Availability: This lens would be available towards end of February 2015.

Given such steep pricing who should buy?

If you are looking for shooting wide vistas during your treks, covering tall and wide buildings, large groups, sports etc where the quality is paramount, then this lens is for you.

The Canon Press Release is shared below:

MELVILLE, N.Y., February 5, 2015 - Canon U.S.A., a leader in digital imaging solutions, is proud to introduce the superb new Canon EF 11-24mm f/4L USM ultra wide-angle zoom lens designed to deliver high quality, minimally distorted images throughout the entire zoom range. Featuring the widest angle of view (126°05' diagonal) ever achieved for a rectilinear full-frame Digital SLR lens*, and a minimum focusing distance of 11 inches (at 24mm), this new lens is ideal for professionals who want the ultimate in creative image expression with sharp, crisp detail whether shooting entire buildings from a close position, entire stadium shots from a high-vantage point, large group photos at a scenic wedding or even astrophotography. Cinematographers will be equally as impressed with the lens' ability to retain straight lines.

Fully compatible with all EOS cameras, but particularly effective with full-frame cameras such as the new Canon EOS 5DS and EOS 5DS R Digital SLR cameras also announced today, this new L-series lens features newly developed optics comprised of 16 elements in 11 groups with a three group zoom system and rear focus. The new optical design utilizes four aspherical lens elements to help minimize distortion from the center of the image to the periphery, across the entire zoom range. This new optical array provides straight lines with minimal curve throughout the zoom range, ideal for architectural, event, and forensic photography. The lens also features one Super UD element and one UD lens element to help significantly reduce chromatic aberration and deliver sharp images with high resolution. Canon's advanced lens coating technologies are also liberally employed to help minimize ghosting and flare, while simultaneously enhancing accurate color balance and maximum light transmission efficiency.

"Canon is very proud of its optical heritage. The creation of this new lens continues our tradition of providing photographers with unique image-making solutions that are not only thoughtfully designed but precisely engineered and manufactured," said Yuichi Ishizuka, president and COO of Canon U.S.A., Inc. "The new Canon EF 11-24mm f/4L USM ultra wide-angle zoom lens features newly developed optics and an unprecedented combination of Canon optical technologies. We are very eager to see the beautiful images that photographers will create using this new lens with Canon EOS DSLR and Cinema EOS cameras."

The new Canon EF 11-24mm f/4L USM lens' impressive 11mm starting focal length and 9-blade circular aperture help deliver beautiful, high-quality, detailed images. The new lens accurately reproduces straight lines in the subject with minimal distortion, ideal for architectural and landscape photographers looking to create images with tremendous depth and strong perspective.

Wide-angle lenses are especially prone to flare and ghosting. To help reduce these effects, the new Canon EF 11-24mm f/4L USM lens features Canon's proprietary Sub-Wavelength Structure Coating (SWC) and Air Sphere Coating (ASC). SWC is applied to the rear surface of the first and second aspheric lens elements, while ASC is used on the front of the fourth element. The SWC coatings are particularly effective for combatting flare and ghosting caused by light rays entering the lens at a large angle of incidence, while the ASC coating helps mitigate the same problems for light rays entering the center of the lens. The new lens also employs Canon's Super Spectra Coating (SSC) to enhance light transmission while at the same time optimizing color reproduction accuracy.

The Canon EF 11-24mm f/4L USM lens features a meticulously designed inner focusing system and zoom ring, as well as a built-in petal type lens hood with light-shielding grooves. Along with a high-speed CPU and optimized AF algorithms, this lens enables fast and accurate autofocus, while its full-time manual focus feature allows manual focus adjustment even in AF mode. As with all L-series lenses, this durable new lens is highly resistant to dust and water – ideal for outdoor photography even when conditions are harsh. In addition, a fluorine coating on the front and rear surfaces of the lens helps reduce smears and fingerprints and makes the lens easier to clean.

Pricing and Availability

The Canon EF 11-24mm f/4L USM ultra wide-angle zoom lens joins the robust line up of Canon f/4L USM zoom lenses

including 16-35mm, 17-40mm, 24-70mm, 24-105mm, 70-200mm, and 200-400mm + 1.4X Extender models. It is scheduled to be available in late February 2015 for an estimated retail price of \$2,999.00.

Equipment Discussions -

Canon Announces EOS 760D and EOS 750D DSLRs

Canon has announced two entry level DSLR cameras EOS 760Ds and EOS 750D.

Resolution: Both the EOS 760D and the EOS 750D has got 24.2 MP resolution

Sensor: APS-C CMOS (1.6 crop factor)

AF system: 19 point all cross type AF points, phase detection hybrid AF III autofocus systems. In EOS 760D has additional servo AF tracking.

WiFi with near field communication (NFC)

Frame rate: Burst still shooting speed of 5 frames per second.



ISO range: 100-12800 (expandable to 25600)

LCD: 3 inch Vari-Angle Touch Screen Clear View LCD with approximately 1,040,000 dots

Video: Full HD 1080p upto 30fps in MP4 format.

Manual exposure control, digital zoom and an external stereo microphone jack, top LCD panel, Quick Control Dial, Horizontal Level and built-in HDR movie capabilities and servo AF are provided in the EOS 760D.

Availability: These two cameras will be available at the end of April 2015.

Price: \$849 and \$1199 for EOS 750D and EOS 760D respectively

In US, the EOS 760D is marketed as Rebel T6s and the EOS 750D is marketed as T6i

MELVILLE, N.Y., February 5, 2015 – Canon U.S.A., Inc., a leader in digital imaging solutions, today announced the addition of two new DSLR cameras to its popular EOS Rebel lineup: the EOS Rebel T6s Digital SLR camera, and the EOS

Rebel T6i Digital SLR camera. Featuring a newly developed 24.2 megapixel Canon CMOS imaging sensor, both cameras deliver the highest resolution available amongst EOS models with an APS-C format sensor. Additionally, the cameras feature built-in Wi-Fi® and NFC™ capabilities – a first for the Canon EOS Rebel system – making snapping and sharing high-quality, treasured images seamless.

“The Canon EOS Rebel series is one of the most popular lines of DSLR cameras on the market, and we are proud to continue to innovate and upgrade this line with features such as wireless connectivity and improved image capture capabilities,” said Yuichi Ishizuka, president and COO, Canon U.S.A., Inc. *“As the popularity of this line grows with consumers, we’re excited to launch the EOS Rebel T6s as our new flagship camera in the Rebel line, as well as have another budget-conscious offering in the line with the Rebel T6i.”*

With multiple features most commonly found in advanced amateur cameras, the EOS Rebel T6s is designed for photography enthusiasts, or those who are already experienced with entry-level cameras who want to take high-quality photos and videos, and look for more advanced features and functions. For more casual photography needs, or for users looking to purchase their first DSLR camera, the EOS Rebel T6i camera prioritizes affordability, without sacrificing basic SLR performance attributes like quick shutter response, and compatibility with Canon’s impressive line of interchangeable lenses and accessories.

Outstanding Image Capture Features

The new EOS Rebel cameras have an extensive ISO range of 100-12800 (expandable to 25600) to accommodate shooting situations ranging from bright sunny days at the beach to dimly lit indoor dance recitals. The high-performance DIGIC 6 image processor helps provide outstanding image quality and speed, so pictures are clear and sharp.

Building on the image capture functionality of their predecessors, the EOS Rebel T6s and EOS Rebel T6i cameras feature Canon’s new Hybrid CMOS AF III image sensor-embedded autofocus system, which allows for high levels of speed and accuracy when capturing Full HD video or high-resolution photos in Live View. This is particularly useful when capturing children playing sports, or animals in the wild, when it’s imperative to get the shot at the exact moment action is happening. Helping photographers capture those special moments, the cameras have high-speed continuous shooting up to five frames-per-second (fps). For photographers who prefer to compose their images through a viewfinder, the new EOS Rebel T6s and EOS Rebel T6i cameras have a 19-point all cross-type AF system that allows for superb autofocus, as well as focus area selection modes.

Brand-new to the EOS Rebel line, the cameras feature built-in wireless capabilities, which allow users to wirelessly transfer images and videos with ease to compatible smartphones and tablets through Canon’s newly updated and free Camera Connect app.² Images and videos can also be shared wirelessly to a wide range of popular social networking sites through Canon iMAGE GATEWAY.³ The camera’s built-in NFC (Near Field Communication)⁴ allows quick and simple pairing to a compatible Android device, or devices that support NFC like the new Canon Connect Station CS100 photo and video storage and sharing device. The built-in Wi-Fi functionality also allows users to wirelessly print their images to any compatible printer, like the PIXMA MG7520 or PIXMA iP8720.

With an intuitive design that allows for an optimal photographic experience, the new EOS Rebel cameras have a three-inch Vari-Angle Touch Screen Clear View LCD monitor with approximately 1,040,000 dots. This design enables flexible positioning for high or low framed shots, as well as clear viewing even when outdoors in the sunlight. Additionally, the cameras feature the latest version of Canon’s EOS scene analysis system, which helps photographers capture beautiful images in a wider range of situations by detecting near-infrared light and flickering light sources. Also new to the entire EOS system, both models feature color tone detection, which helps ensure individuals in photographs are properly focused and/or exposed by adjusting both autofocus and exposure metering.

Full HD Video Capture

The EOS Rebel T6s and EOS Rebel T6i cameras feature EOS Movie mode which captures Full HD 1080p resolution video up to 30 fps in MP4 format for high quality shooting and easy movie sharing on select social networking sites. Manual exposure control, digital zoom and an external stereo microphone jack are provided for advanced users using the EOS Rebel

T6s.

Expanded Creative Functionality

Allowing for full creative control, the new EOS Rebel cameras offer creative filters available as presets for photos and movies. These filters can be displayed in real time during Live View shooting, providing an easy way for users to enhance their creative work. Users can further expand their artistic abilities right from the camera with Creative Filters such as Fisheye Effect, Toy Camera Effect and Monochrome mode. Fisheye Effect gives images a panoramic look and feel, Toy Camera Effect adds a grainy look to soften photos, illustrating a vintage appearance and with Monochrome mode, photos can either have black-and-white, blue or sepia tones, to display a more classic appearance.

Advanced Features & Capabilities

For photographers who desire more advanced features, the EOS Rebel T6s is the first EOS Rebel class DSLR camera to feature a top LCD panel, Quick Control Dial, Horizontal Level and built-in HDR movie capabilities. The new camera is also the first model in the EOS Rebel series to feature Servo AF in Live View, allowing continuous tracking of moving subjects during burst mode shooting sequences.

Availability

The EOS Rebel T6s Digital SLR camera and EOS Rebel T6i Digital SLR camera are scheduled to be available at the end of April 2015. The estimated retail price of the EOS Rebel T6s is \$849.99 for the body only, and \$1,199.00 bundled with an EF-S 18-135 STM lens. The EOS Rebel T6i has an estimated retail price of \$749.99 for the body only, \$899.99 bundled with an EF-S 18-55 STM lens, and \$1,099.00 bundled with an EF-S 18-135 STM lens.

Equipment Discussions -

Canon Announces world's highest resolutions 50MP DSLRs : EOS 5DS & EOS 5DS R

Salient Features:

Resolution: 50.6 Megapixel

Sensor: Full frame, CMOS sensor

Processor: Dual DIGIC 6 Image Processors

Burst speed: 5 frames per second at 50.6 MP

Autofocus: 61-Point High Density Reticular AF array including up to 41 cross-type AF points and EOS iTR AF for high precision autofocus

Metering: EOS Scene Detection system with a 150,000-pixel RGB+IR 252-zone metering sensor for enhanced precision and performance.



Two Crop shooting modes: 30.5 megapixels for the 1.3x mode and 19.6 megapixels for the 1.6x mode

Flicker reduction: Advanced AE system detects and compensates for flickering light sources such as sodium vapor lamps

Video: 1080p Full HD up to 30p or 720p HD video up to 60p

Time Lapse mode: takes continuous still photos and combines in camera for full HD movie. Interval settings can be from one second to 99 hours, 59mins & 59seconds.

Recording media: Dual card slots for CF and SD card (including Ultra High Speed (UHS-1) SD cards).

Shutter rating: 150,000 cycles.

Availability: June 2015

Price: EOS 5DS is priced at \$3,699.00 and EOS 5DS R at \$3,899.00 for the body only.

Featuring Canon's Newly Designed 50.6 Megapixel Full-frame CMOS Sensor and Dual DIGIC 6 Image Processors, New DSLRs Deliver Ultra-high Resolution Images and Enhanced Features

Canon U.S.A., Inc., a leader in digital imaging solutions, is proud to introduce the Canon EOS 5DSⁱ and Canon EOS 5DS Rⁱ Digital SLR cameras featuring the world's highest resolution* among 35mm format DSLRs. Providing photographers

with uncompromising image quality, these new EOS models incorporate a newly designed Canon 50.6 megapixel full-frame CMOS image sensor and Dual DIGIC 6 Image Processors for superb image quality and processing speed. Perfect for commercial, studio, portrait, landscape and architectural photography, or anyone looking for an affordable alternative to medium format, the ultra-high resolution of these new models allow for large-format printing and extensive cropping capability while maintaining fantastic image quality.

Maximizing the potential of the new 50.6 megapixel sensor – for the first time in an EOS camera the low-pass filter effect in the EOS 5DS R model is cancelled. The cancellation of the low-pass filter helps deliver sharp images, squeezing the most out of every pixel. Both models provide attractive options for medium format shooters especially when coupled with a wide array of over 70 creative Canon EF lenses to choose from.

“Canon is always looking to deliver the absolute best in image quality and push our technology to the limits. These cameras deliver on that pledge, providing photographers with two new incredible tools that will enable them to make the most out of every shoot,” said Yuichi Ishizuka, president and COO, Canon U.S.A., Inc. “As photography becomes more specialized and more images are captured than ever before, the burden is on the photography equipment to keep up with the demands of today’s artistic talents. These new camera models will provide many photographers with new options to deliver their vision to clients, fans, and the world.”

Built to Maximize Sharpness

In addition to the 50.6 megapixel full-frame image sensor and Dual DIGIC 6 Image Processors, both cameras include a 61-Point High Density Reticular AF array including up to 41 cross-type AF points and EOS iTR AF for high precision autofocus. They also include the EOS Scene Detection system featuring a 150,000-pixel RGB+IR 252-zone metering sensor that provides enhanced precision and performance.

In support of such a high-resolution imaging sensor, the EOS 5DS and EOS 5DS R cameras were designed to minimize camera shake and significantly improve stability via a reinforced chassis, baseplate and tripod lug to improve rigidity. Canon also re-designed the mirror vibration control system to help reduce mirror bounce and camera shake. To help maximize stability and minimize vibrations, Canon added a new Arbitrary Release Time Lag Setting in Mirror Lock mode in both models. In addition to the standard setting (press the shutter button once to lock the mirror, then again to release the shutter), the EOS 5DS and EOS 5DS R cameras offer new setting intervals of 1/8, 1/4, 1/2, one and two seconds, releasing the shutter after the selected preset delay, allowing potential camera vibration to dissipate before shutter release.

A new Picture Style called “Fine Detail” has been added to enhance the sharpness of JPEGs and EOS Movies with three new settings: Strength, Fineness and Threshold. With such abundant resolution on each sensor, both models also provide two cropped shooting modes, while still delivering high-resolution images 30.5 megapixels for the 1.3x mode and 19.6 megapixels for the 1.6x mode. The available crop options are visible as a mask or an outline in the viewfinder; so shooters can know exactly where to frame their subject.

Capturing the Action

Like the EOS 7D Mark II, the EOS 5DS and EOS 5DS R cameras feature an advanced AE system that can detect and compensate for flickering light sources such as sodium vapor lamps that are often used in gymnasiums and natatoriums. When enabled, this anti-flicker system automatically adjusts shutter release timing to help reduce disparities in exposure and color especially during continuous shooting. And new Auto White Balance settings include Ambience Priority and White Priority (for use when shooting under tungsten lighting).

Photographers and cinematographers will appreciate improved custom controls including a built-in intervalometer and bulb timer to enable the capture of time-lapse images and long-exposure images. These features are ideal for recording fireworks, star trails, sunrises and more.

Both models feature Intelligent Viewfinder II providing approximately 100 percent field of view, while adding the ability

to display cropped shooting frames and superimpose a customizable selection of camera settings and data such as dual-mode electronic level display and grid, as well as exposure, white balance, metering, drive, image quality and AF modes. A new Customizable Quick Control Screen, another first for EOS cameras, allows photographers to quickly change frequently used camera settings and functions.

The EOS 5DS and EOS 5DS R cameras continue the EOS Movie tradition with the ability to shoot in 1080p Full HD up to 30p or 720p HD video up to 60p. A creative Time Lapse Movie function, a first for EOS cameras, takes a continuous series of still photographs and automatically combines them in camera into a Full HD movie file. Interval adjustments can be set from one second to 99 hours, 59 minutes and 59 seconds. The number of shots possible range from 2 to 3,600 with a maximum of two minutes and 30 seconds of playback time. In addition, high-speed continuous shooting up to five-frames-per-second (fps) at full 50 megapixel resolution allows users to capture fast action.

The EOS 5DS and EOS 5DS R cameras feature dual card slots for CF and SD memory cards, including Ultra High Speed (UHS-1) SD cards. Built to last, the cameras also feature a shutter durability rating up to 150,000 cycles, the same as the EOS 5D Mark III.

Availability

The EOS 5DS and EOS 5DS R Digital SLR cameras are scheduled to be available through authorized Canon dealers in June 2015 for estimated retail prices of \$3,699.00 and \$3,899.00 for the body only, respectively.

Equipment Discussions -

New Sigma Art 24mm f1.4 DG HSM Lens

Sigma has released the 24mm f1.4 DG HSM lens as a member of its “Art” line of lenses. The previous Sigma Art lenses have been well received by the photography and filming community because of their good optical qualities at an affordable cost.

The Sigma Art 24mm f1.4 DG HSM lens has 15 elements in 11 groups. According to Sigma, there are three FLD elements and four Special Low Dispersion Elements to control chromatic aberrations. There are two aspherical elements as well for reduced distortions. Sigma claims that this lens will have good peripheral illumination and sharpness even at f1.4. A Super



Multi coating will reduce the flare and ghosting and improve colour fidelity.

This HSM of this lens indicates Hyper Sonic motor which provides fast, smooth and near-silent autofocus performance. There is a full manual focus override function built in for finer manual focus control.

The 24mm f1.4 DG HSM Art lens has nine diaphragm blades to pleasing well rounded bokeh. One can use an optional Sigma USB dock to upgrade firmware in future.

The lens is constructed using a Thermally Stable Composite (TSC) material, along with traditional metals, for greater precision and use in wide temperature variations. So even when you are shooting in sub zero temperatures, this lens shouldn't have issues due to contraction. The bayonet mount is constructed from brass for ensured accuracy and durability.

The outside of the lens barrel is also engraved with the year of production. This lens is available in Canon, Nikon and Sigma mounts and the mounts can be later changed by Sigma.

The minimum focusing distance is 9.84 inches or 25cm. This lens takes 77mm filters and weighs 665 gms. The price of \$849 USD is attractive. The scheduled availability of this lens is March. One can preorder this lens at B&H by clicking here: <http://www.bhphotovideo.com/c/buy/o/...990/KBID/13252>

Natural History -

COUNTRY NOTEBOOK: M.Krishnan: 'Some claims for our Wildlife'

The Sunday Statesman: 04-January-2015 (shared by Shri. Saktipada Panigrahi)

" ACTUALLY this is only a part of the claims that can be advanced, fairly, on behalf of India's fauna, for this is limited to mammals and takes no note of the country's rich reptilian and avian life. And even within this limit, there is no attempt here to be exhaustive (and exhausting) in the claiming. Some of our animals (almost all our Monkeys, for example) are peculiar to the country, but to list these would serve no purpose - that kind of distinction is enjoyed by the fauna of other countries as well, with Australia an easy first. Only those Indian animals that have a unique or substantial distinction among the wild beasts of the world will be mentioned here. Their claims should be well and widely known, but, unfortunately, are not, even within India.

Did you know, for instance, that the largest wild ox in the world is the Indian Gaur ? You did ? Well, then I'm afraid I must disagree with you, right at the start! The Gaur is no doubt the tallest of extant wild oxen and impressively dark and massive, and though not wholly Indian (being found in Burma and Malaya as well) it is widest distributed here. But I doubt if it is the largest wild ox. Magnificent as it is, for sheer bulk and power the palm must go to the Wild Indian Buffalo, the progenitor of our familiar domestic strains.

Lacking the Gaur's great dorsal ridge, the Wild Buffalo is not so tall at the shoulder, but it is more massively built and is somewhat the heavier animal - it is definitely the most formidable member of the bovine tribe. Of course you may argue that a buffalo is a buffalo, and not strictly speaking , an ox - the better way would be to double the claim and say that both the grandest wild oxen in the world belong to India.



© Mrudul Godbole/ www.indiawilds.com

Wild Buffalo Kaziranga

The largest animal on earth is the larger of the two African Elephants, which is very different from ours. However, our Elephant is also pretty big, and the art of capturing and taming wild elephants to serve humanity has been longest known in India, and has been closely sustained through centuries. It is said that Hannibal's elephants were African. May be, but there

are older records of war elephants in India, and it is our Elephant that is known the world over for its sagacity and willingness in the circus ring, and as the great good natured provider of joy rides to children in zoos.

Recently I read, in more than one book that the second-largest land animal is the African "white" or "square-lipped" rhinoceros. The one-horned Great Indian Rhinoceros at least shares this honour with its African cousin.

India is richest in Deer species. The biggest of all deer (the moose) is North American, and the deer with the most magnificent antlers (the wapiti) also belongs to North America, and it is there and thereabouts that one can see the most spectacular assemblies of deer.



Hog Deer Kaziranga

But our country has more kinds of DEER than any other, no less than eight, in fact - excluding the Thamin or Brow-Antlered Deer even, we have the Kashmir Stag, the Gond or Swamp Deer (which is purely Indian and of which there are two distinct races) the Sambar (which attains its best development here, though it is also found in Burma, Malaya and Ceylon), the Hog Deer of North India (curiously enough, it is to be found in Ceylon, though it does not occur elsewhere in India), the typically Indian Chital or Spotted Deer, thought by many to be the loveliest of all Deer, the Muntjac or Barking Deer, the Musk Deer, and last and not least, the dinky little Mouse Deer.

It is Africa that is the paradise of Antelopes - there, they have more than trebled the antelope species that any other country can boast of. We have not even half-a-dozen animals of the Antelope tribe, but among them are two that can claim World-wide uniqueness. The Blackbuck, which is found nowhere else, is considered the most beautiful Antelope alive, even by some who have seen the African Impala and in spite of its comparatively small size, it is the fastest thing on four legs over any real distance - its sustained and effortless speed is marvelous, to say the least.

The exclusively Indian Four-horned Antelope or Chousingha, a compact little beast partial to grassy plateaus and almost deerlike in its habits, is the only wild animal on earth with four horns. The Buck has two spike horns, and in front of these, two lesser horns which may be nothing more than mere knobs - the does are hornless. It is heartening to know that this charming little creature will be protected wherever it occurs, hereafter.

Nothing very remarkable can be claimed for our carnivores. The Lion of Gir and the ubiquitous Indian Leopard are much

Natural History -

the same as lions and leopards elsewhere. The Tiger has a more luxurious coat and reaches a greater length in its more northern ranges in Asia, though it is here that it is commonest and best known. Our Wolf is a smallish beast, compared to wolves elsewhere. In fact, the only Indian carnivore with any major physical claim seems to be the Striped-necked Mon-goose, which is the biggest of Asiatic Mongooses.

The Sloth Bear, which is the common bear of the country, is certainly a very peculiar beast. Our Himalayan Bears have larger representatives in other countries, some much larger. But the Sloth Bear is confined to India and Ceylon (the Ceylo-nese race is slightly different) and is sufficiently individualistic to be assigned to a class of its own. It is very much on the decline and has disappeared from many places where it was common only two generations ago. Unless it is accorded effi-cient protection, there is a risk of this important denizen of our jungles dying altogether.

What has been said so far has been from the viewpoint of size and looks and anatomical peculiarities and that is surely no way to look at the fauna of any country. An animal plucked from its natural setting and placed on a dissection table so that its body may be scrutinised is invariably at its worst. To know it, it must be seen at its native haunts, and its habits and be-haviour studied - it is then that it ceases to be a specimen and becomes fascinatingly alive. Even today, with our fauna and flora much depleted, our Wildlife is no less varied or interesting than that of any other country and perhaps we can hope, tomorrow, to recapture some of its past wonderful richness."

-M. Krishnan

This was first published on 17 August 1958 in The Sunday Statesman

Image of the Month -

The honour for the Image of the Month November 2014 goes to the "Blackbuck" image of **Rajbir Oberoi**.

This image of the leaping blackbuck, the fastest animal, shows its grace. Frozen midair, it feels as if it is crouching midair, not from a feline adversary but perhaps from man - the biggest of all destroyers on earth. The eye contact further enhances the image. Congratulations Rajbir!

The following is the original text by Rajbir:

The original text from Rajbir reproduced below:

"Sprint as fast as you can, Jump as high as you can."

Canon 5D Mark III + Canon 100-400 @ 350mm

ISO 1000, F/5.6, 1/1600s

Evaluative Metering, Handheld

Dec 2014

Blackbuck National Park, Velavadar, Gujarat"



Wildlife Photography -

Sunderbans Water Monitor by Saktipada Panigrahi



Portrait by Prajwal Ullal



Wildlife Photography -

The Ugly Ducking by Shyamala Kumar



White browed fantail by Kaustav Chatterjee



Wildlife Photography -

Jungle Cat in Sundarbans by Mrudul Godbole



Red-crested Pochard by Samrat Sarkar



Wildlife Photography -

Ganga at Kanpur by Chitrita Chatterjee



From Darkness to Light by Sabyasachi Patra





I look forward to your inputs and support in preserving the last tracts of wilderness and wildlife left in our beautiful country. For other interesting articles and images check - <http://www.indiawilds.com/forums/>
To post in the IndiaWilds forums, you can register free of cost using your Full Name as user id at <http://www.indiawilds.com/forums/register.php>

If you are already a member of IndiaWilds and have forgotten your user id and/or password you can mail to administrator@indiawilds.com

Regards,

Sabyasachi Patra

Profile: <http://www.indiawilds.com/about.htm>

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