

Visit report to Aravalli Biodiversity Park on 26-09-2019

The students of B.Sc. (H) Zoology- I Semester (51 students) visited Aravalli Biodiversity Park on 26 September, 2019 as a part of their practical syllabus of “Perspectives of Ecology”. The Teachers taking the subjects- Dr Sandhya Rai and Dr Moses Rinchui as well as lab staff- Sushant accompanied the students. The Aravalli Biodiversity Park is located on the South-Central Ridge and spreads over an area of 692 acres. The area is bounded clockwise by JNU (Nelson Mandela Marg), the Mehrauli - Mahipalpur road, NH-8 and the Palam road and the southern boundary of Vasant Vihar. The landscape is undulating with gentle slopes and dotted with numerous morrum and clay mined pits of different sizes, depths and shapes. It can be approached from Vasant Vihar- Poorvi Marg gate located at about 4 km south west of Moti Bagh.

The Park features two major zones - the visitor zone and the nature reserve zone. The first community that is encountered at the Poorvi Marg gate is young plantation of the moist deciduous forest community represented by treelets of species such as *Diospyros melanoxylon* (Tendu) *Adina cordifolia* (Haldu), *Madhuca longifolia* (Mahua), *Mitragyna parviflora* (Ken) and *Sapindus laurifolius* (Soapnut, Reetha) under a canopy of *Prosopis juliflora* (Vilayati kikar). A variety of butterflies (43 species) and birds including the rare ones like the Black-breasted Redstart, the red whiskered bulbul, and the Ashy Prinia were observed by the students.

The explanation by the Park Coordinator Dr. Balwinder was very informative and thought-provoking. She emphasized the importance of conserving our environment. The documentary movie watched at the auditorium was also very enlightening and interesting. To the south east of the Fernery, is the Conservatory of Orchids, one of the high points of the Park. The rangelands, spread over an area of 150 acres composed of a mosaic of grasslands and woodlands, are rich in avifauna and carnivores sprinkled with termite and ant mounds on its grounds. The trail that runs through the rangelands enters in to the visitor area which is being developed and will showcase Aravalli plant communities, a rock garden, a bulbous garden and conservatories of butterflies and medicinal plants.

Photographs clicked during the Visit

