

Project Update: May 2014

Of the 22 administrative ranges of Similipal Biosphere Reserve, we have completed our survey in 10 ranges. We have surveyed all the caves, tree holes and other possible roosting sites of bats within these areas. At all administrative range offices, we distributed the book entitled "Let's know about Bats" published in the regional language followed by a discussion on the importance of bats in our ecosystem and their conservation. The field staff were involved in the field survey to get a practical exposure on bat monitoring. During evening hours the staffs were acquainted with the bat detector, which was one of the most interesting sessions for the staff as for the first time they got an opportunity to listen the calls of different bat species flying around them every day. As a result of rapport with local youths, they are accompanying us during the survey. In addition to that the local villagers are consulted to find out bat roosting sites in their locality as an involvement for bat conservation. We have started educational programmes in different schools, and it will be postponed for 2 months i.e. May and June 2014 due to summer vacations.

The roost survey, mist net capturing and acoustic monitoring are going on along with photographing different bat species. In addition to the species reported earlier, we have recorded lesser short-nosed fruit bat, Indian leaf-nosed bat, rufous horseshoe bat, white bellied tube nosed bat and least pipistrelle. The lesser short-nosed fruit bat and white bellied tube nosed bat were not earlier recorded from this region. We are in touch with the bat experts from Indian and abroad for the survey and planned to join a bat research group for making the acoustics monitoring more fruitful.



Left: A manual entitled "Let's know about bats" in regional language distributed among field staffs and officials, Photo: Manish Ku. Bakshi. Right: First record of lesser short-nosed fruit bat from Similipal, Odisha, Photo: Subrat Debata.



Left: First record of White bellied tube nosed bat from Similipal, Odisha, Photo: Subrat Debata. Right: Indian Leaf nosed bat in a cave of Similipal, Photo: Subrat Debata