

Project Update: December 2010

Project work was formally started from 15th September 2010.

The local forest department was approached and necessary official permission for survey and awareness campaign was obtained in form of permission letters. A meeting with forest officials was conducted and importance of this project was explained. They were quite impressed with this new concept of bat awareness and conservation and promised full cooperation and support for this programme.

As proposed in the work plan, an extensive survey of bat roosts has been initiated in the study area. GPS data, identification, photography, etc are also being taken and data are being recorded. Lots of photographs of bat roosts and habitats were also taken.

A rapport with locals was developed for smoother functioning of the project. A few locals have been identified as volunteers for RSGF project. More student volunteers have joined this programme and have agreed to participate in conservation and awareness programmes during their free time slots.

The first awareness camp was done (in form of a power point presentation) for 8th and 9th grade students of Gujarat Public School, Vadodara on 6th October 2010 (as a part of wildlife week celebrations) highlighting bat myths and facts. Importance of insectivorous bats in our environment and agroecosystem was highlighted. Some of the photographs of the study area and few of the identified species were also shown.

A couple of banners for awareness campaign have been prepared. The entire campaign was named as "Initiative for Conservation and Awareness of Bats" and abbreviated as ICAB. A logo for the same was also designed. A power point presentation for conducting awareness campaign has been prepared. Literature, publicity material, etc is under preparation and will be used for awareness camps for pre-college and university students.

Free bat conservation related publicity and campaigning material has been obtained from ZOO Outreach Organization, Coimbatore, India and we are in the process of designing our material on similar lines.

Baroda Museum, Vadodara had displayed our banner in the photo exhibition gallery during wildlife week celebration (2nd to 10th October 2010). Other institutes are being contacted for support to make the programme a bigger success.



Principal Investigator in Sipa Mine, Near Jambughoda wildlife Sanctuary, a prime microchiropteran bat habitat.



Sipa Mine, Near Jambughoda wildlife Sanctuary showing dominant congregation of *Rhinopoma microphyllum* and *R. hardwickii*.



Poster on microchiropteran bats and its conservation displayed at Baroda Museum, Vadodra, during wildlife week celebrations, 2nd to 10th October, 2010.