

# Sunderban Regional Centre

Zoological Survey of India, Canning, West Bengal



The Sunderban is considered to be the largest single mangrove belt of the world comprising a total area of 9827 sq km, which lies in both India and Bangladesh, while the Indian part alone constitutes 4264 sq km. The marshy deltaic bulge of the river Ganga is referred to as Sunderbans. It lies between 21°0'- 21°21'N Lat. and 88°0' - 89°0' E Long. The Sunderbans extends from the river Raimangal in the East to Hoogly in the West, North 24 Parganas in the North and Bay of Bengal in the South. Part of the Sunderban was declared as a Reserve Forest in 1978 and subsequently declared as Tiger Reserve. The total area of the Reserve Forest is 2585 sq km which includes 1600 sq km of land and the remaining 985 sq km as water body. Within the land area, 1330.12 sq km is designated as core area and the same was declared as a National Park in 1984. A primitive zone of 124.4 sq km is preserved within the core area, which acts as a gene pool. Hence Sundarban as a whole was declared as a World Heritage Site in 1985.

The Sunderban Regional Centre was established in the year 1979 at Kakdwip, West Bengal under the Fifth Five Year Plan of the Government of India, which is one among the sixteen Regional Centres of Zoological Survey of India. Subsequently it was shifted to Canning, West Bengal, in 1984. The jurisdictional limit of the Centre encompasses the entire Indian part of Sunderban. The major mandate of the Centre is to explore the rich faunal diversity in different ecosystems of Sunderban.



## Major Programmes undertaken

- Fauna of Sundarban Mangrove Ecosystem
- Crabs and crab fisheries of Sundarban
- Studies on Spider and Insect Fauna of Sundarbans
- Studies on the faunal composition caught in different types of nets used by prawn seed collectors in Sunderbans
- Trichotaxonomic studies of Indian mammals: Order Carnivora: Ailupodidae, Mustelidae, Viveridae and Ursidae
- Studies on some spiders of Indian coastal region
- Status and distribution of Irrawady Dolphin in the rivers of Sunderbans
- Handbook on Mangrove associated molluscs of Sundarbans

- Faunal diversity of Sunderban mangroves, Arachnids, Mollusca, Mammalia
- Fish faunal resources of Sundarban estuarine system with special reference to the biology of some commercially important species
- Ethnozoological studies in Sunderbans
- Studies on the economic and medically important molluscs of Sunderbans
- Studies on some insects and arachnids of medical importance from Sundarbans
- Ecology, faunal diversity and habitat management strategies of amphibian and reptilian fauna of Sundarbans
- Mangrove associated Gobis fishes of Sunderbans
- Status of Reptiles in Sunderbans
- Taxonomy and Ecology of Brachyuran Crabs in Sunderbans
- Preliminary studies on the faunal diversity in the fish landing centers of Sunderbans
- Vertebrate fauna of Bakkhali, Sagar and Halliday Islands of Sunderbans.

## Areas Surveyed

Some of the localities surveyed are, Canning, Basanti, Gosoba, Saznekhali, Jharkhali, Sonakhali, Dobanki, Netidhopani, Haldibadi, Chamta, Khatuajhuri, Burirdhabri, Jhilla, Sudhanyakhali, Bakkhali, Sagar and Halliday Island.



## Major Scientific Contribution

Four species of Hymenoptera and one species of spider were described as new to science by the Centre. In addition 34 species of Hymenoptera were found to be new records from Sunderban.

## Available Taxonomic Expertise

Taxonomic expertise on Mammals, Birds, Reptiles, Fishes, Molluscs, Crustacea, Insecta and related arthropods are currently available.



## National Zoological Collection (NZC)

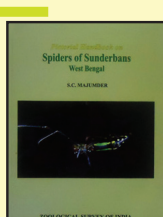
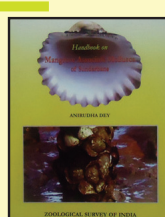
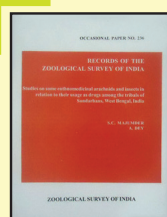
The NZCs maintained at the Centre contain 7620 identified specimens including both vertebrates and invertebrates.



## Publication

Ten Books and 250 research papers were published in various national and international journals by the Scientists of the Centre.

- ❖ Fauna of Sunderban Mangroove Ecosystem, West Bengal, India.
- ❖ Bibliography of the Indian Sunderbans with special reference to Fauna
- ❖ Fauna of Tiger Reserve
- ❖ Crabs and crab fisheries of Sundarban
- ❖ Studies on Spider and Insect Fauna of Sundarbans
- ❖ Handbook on Mangrove associated molluscs of Sundarbans
- ❖ Ethnozoological studies in Sunderbans
- ❖ Studies on the economic and medically important molluscs of Sunderbans
- ❖ Studies on some insects and arachnids of medical importance from Sundarbans.



## Library

The library holds 350 books and 47 journals/ periodicals.

## Museum

Representative fauna of Sunderbans, pictorials and habitat cases/ models are displayed in the museum of the Centre for imparting public awareness towards biodiversity conservation.



## Other Extension Activities

Identification and Advisory services are offered to students, researchers, and scientists of other institutions. The Centre takes part in National Conferences, Workshops and in exhibitions and as well takes part in the Tiger census.



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