

HW

classmate

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Help make this environment a fairer place for all animals.

Flamingos yet to leave Chilika

Hrusikesh Mohanty | TNN

Berhampur: The flamingos and pelicans that had flown to Chilika, the biggest waterfowl habitat in the country during winter, are yet to start their homeward journey. Around 90 percent of the other birds have already left the lagoon after the onset of early summer.

A record number of 12,42,826 birds of 190 different species had visited the lagoon during the winter season of 2020-21. These include 12,04,351 migratory birds of 111 species.

While over 11 lakh birds have already left the lake after the temperature rose to 35 to 38 degree Celsius, the flamingos



Sanjib Das

HAPPY GUESTS: Flamingos at Nalabana bird sanctuary in Chilika

and pelicans are yet to leave Chilika, said assistant conservator of forest, Chilika wildlife division, Sarat Chandra Mishra. Of them, 50,000 birds are still in the Nalabana, the bird sanctuary area inside the lake.

The flamingos and pelicans generally come to Chilika lake later than the others. While pelicans start their journey with the onset of monsoon, some choose to stay in the lake for years.

'It is possible to rescue and care for our hurt wildlife — we can help to heal them'

Kartick Satyanarayan is co-founder and CEO of Wildlife SOS. Writing in *Times Evoke*, he describes the efforts involved in saving and protecting wildlife:

Photos: K Satyanarayan

Since I was a young boy, I've been awestruck by the beauty and vibrance of India's wildlife. However, I've also been dismayed by the rate at which the habitats of our wildlife have been vanishing, leaving these species vulnerable to human beings. My determination to stop this has grown steadily. While working as a field biologist in a national park some years ago, I helped the forest department apprehend a timber smuggler whose activities were damaging the forest's ecosystem. This incident sparked a major change in me. I realised I had to do more to help — I had to become a real change-maker and use every moment to protect nature's amazing beings.



This was truly my own SOS moment — a call



HOW THEY STREAM: Rescued elephants Coconut and Peanut enjoy a cool dip

able to achieve one of the most impactful conservation success stories in the world, where people saw these animals, treated appallingly for centuries, in a new light, gave us

fed a crude bomb concealed in a fruit bait in Kerala in 2020, sparked global feeling. The tragic killing of yet another elephant in a bomb attack in Tamil Nadu in January

rescued several elephants used for begging, in weddings, processions and the entertainment and tourism industries. In 2018, we established India's first elephant hospital, equipped with veterinary and diagnostic facilities to provide high-quality care to elephants in need.

Every rescued elephant brings with it an emotional ordeal we can feel. A story that moved all of us to tears was that of Raju — this kind-natured elephant had been tightly restrained for years, with spiked chains piercing into his legs, violently 'trained' with spears and hooks. When Raju's chains were removed, his legs were oozing with pus. Six years since his rescue, Raju continues his journey to heal, with our team looking after his medical care. We only hope and pray that his inner hurt is healed too.

The ironies of how we treat our fellow beings abound. In India, elephants which are widely

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