

National Wildlife Week 2023 marked for Dark sitana (*Sitana fusca*) conservation in Nepal

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Each year, Nepal celebrates the first week of the Nepalese new year (between second and third week of April) as National Wildlife Week to commemorate the conservation efforts and outcomes. The week remained in limelight with various activities conducted throughout the country under the theme in Nepalese language “वन्यजन्तु संरक्षणमा समन्वय, सहकार्य र सह-अस्तित्व” (“Coordination, Cooperation, and Coexistence: Wildlife Conservation, our Collective Liability”).

Our team members were invited to conduct sessions on “Herpetofauna Conservation and Research Techniques” by the Agriculture and Forestry University, Katari College. We taught the university students about the status of Nepalese amphibians and reptiles, identification keys, field research techniques, and photographic techniques. We stressed on key conservation issues for critically endangered species such as the Dark Sitana (*Sitana fusca*) and how the students can get involved in the ongoing research and conservation project for the same. This work is funded by The Rufford Foundation UK, Katie Adamson Conservation Fund, USA and Auckland Zoo, New Zealand.

Nepal Conservation and Research Center, Mithila Wildlife Trust, and Biodiversity Research and Conservation Society are regularly conducting



outreach sessions in schools, universities, and in the communities to raise awareness on ecological and conservation importance of Dark Sitana and other herpetofauna of Nepal. We found that students were very keen to learn about herpetofauna diversity, research, and photographic techniques. Wildlife Week was marked with the overall goal of renewing the citizens' commitment for herpetofauna research and conservation. Through the activities undertaken this year, the university students will surely have a decisive role to play in connecting with nature and responding accordingly for this worthy cause.



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