REEF | RAMDEOBABA UNIVERSITY

Educational Trip to Gothangaon Gate, Umred-Paoni Karhandla Wildlife Sanctuary Report

ORGANIZED BY FOREST DEPARTMENT, MAHARASHTRA

RBU
RAMDEOBABA UNIVERSITY, NAGPUR
Formerly Shri Ramdeobaba College of Engineering & Management (RCOEM) Est. 1984
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EDUCATIONAL TRIP TO GOTHANGAON GATE



Embracing the spirit of **Wildlife Week (2nd–8th October)**, observed under the theme "**Connecting Habitats and Thriving Wildlife**," **REEF – Shri Ramdeobaba Engineers for Environment Forum** embarked on an educational trip to the **UPK Wildlife Sanctuary through the Gothangaon Gate on 5th October 2026 (Monday)**. The visit was organized in collaboration with the **Forest Department, Nagpur District,** with this valuable opportunity graciously extended to the REEF team by **Shri Avinash Londhe Sir**, **Honorary Wildlife Warden, Forest Department, Nagpur District, Maharashtra.** The visit provided the participants with an insightful experience of the region's biodiversity, ecology, wildlife, and conservation practices.

The REEF was accompanied and guided by **Dr. Swaroop Laxmi Mudliar** ***(Faculty In-charge)***, **Dr. Avinash Bharati**, and **Dr. Sanjogta Meshram,** whose constant support and guidance enriched the learning experience throughout the visit.

An informative seminar was conducted by senior administrative and **local range officials**, including the **Range Forest Officer (RFO)**, who shared valuable insights into the wildlife and conservation efforts of the sanctuary.

OBJECTIVES

The educational visit to the Umred Paoni Karhandla (UPK) Wildlife Sanctuary was organised with the objective of providing students with first-hand exposure to the natural environment and its conservation practices.

It aimed to enable students to observe and **study the flora and fauna** native to the UPK region in their natural habitat, and to understand the **ecological relationships** that exist among different species.

Through practical field exposure, students were expected to learn about **biodiversity conservation**, **sustainable forestry**, and **environmental awareness**, and to appreciate the importance of coexistence between humans and wildlife.

The visit further sought to strengthen students' understanding of ecosystem interdependence, demonstrating how every organism, from the smallest butterfly to the largest predator, contributes to the **balance of the ecosystem.**

By bridging classroom knowledge with **real-world observation**, the visit endeavoured to cultivate a sense of responsibility towards the **protection of natural habitats** and the wildlife that depends on them.

ACTIVITIES CONDUCTED

The day commenced with a **felicitation ceremony for the esteemed faculty members**, who were honoured by the respected Forest Department officials in recognition of their presence and support for the educational visit. Following the felicitation, **an informative seminar was conducted by the forest officials**, introducing the students to the rich biodiversity and ecological significance of the region.

Particular emphasis was placed on **venomous snakes**, including the three species of cobra, such as the **Indian Spectacled Cobra and the King Cobra**, whose neurotoxic venom affects the nervous system. The session also **addressed prevalent superstitions** surrounding snakes and clarified the scientific facts behind them. Students were informed that snakes are not deaf and are capable of detecting their surroundings, particularly through **vibrations and sensory cues.**

The seminar successfully **fostered scientific awareness and encouraged a more compassionate, informed, and responsible attitude towards wildlife conservation among the students.**





Following the seminar, the group undertook a guided safari through the sanctuary, offering a valuable opportunity to observe wildlife in its natural habitat.

Key sightings included:

- ***Tigress,*** the apex predator of the ecosystem
- ***Bison, sambar deer, and monkeys***
- ***Birds, butterflies***, and ***spiders***

reflecting the diversity of smaller organisms.

These sightings gave students first-hand insight into forest dynamics, food chains, and the **interdependence of species**, reinforcing the concepts introduced during the seminar. The experience also highlighted the importance of preserving natural habitats and **promoting harmonious coexistence between humans and wildlife**.

FLORA AND FAUNA

Flora: The Gothangaon Gate area of the Umred-Pauni-Karhandla Wildlife Sanctuary is part of a **Southern Tropical Dry Deciduous Forest ecosystem**, spread across an area of **189 sq. km**. The sanctuary exhibited a diverse range of plant life, encompassing tree species, undergrowth, and grassland cover.

The forest canopy comprised tree species such as **Dhaoda, Ain, Achar, Mohuwa, Lendia, Bhirra, Tendu, Semal, Rohan, and Tiwas,** with teak plantations observed alongside natural forest tracts, contributing to the region's biodiversity. Among these, the Ghost Tree stood out as particularly memorable, known for its pale, whitish trunk that glows under moonlight.

The undergrowth consisted of herbs and shrubs including **Tarota, Tarwar, Gokru, Vanbhendi, Vetatri, and Waghori,** while grasses such **as Kusal, Kunda, Kadmod, Guhar, Harial, Mota, and Mushan** were recorded across the forest floor and open patches. Climbers and weeds, both invasive and native, including **Lantana camara and Karvi (*Carvia callosa*)**, were also documented within the sanctuary.



Fauna: The sanctuary lies along the Wainganga River, near the **Gosikhurd (Indira Gandhi) Backwaters**, and is currently home to:

- **11 tigers and 15 leopards**
- **The "X Mark" tigress**, sighted by the group during the safari.

Other species recorded were **Carnivores: Sloth Bears, Wild Dogs, Ratels, Jackals. Herbivores: Gaurs, Blue Bulls, Sambar Deer, Barking Deer, Spotted Deer, Wild Boars, and other animals like Peacocks, Peahens, and mongooses.**

The sanctuary further supports **180 recorded bird species**, including **Blue-cheeked Bee-eaters, Black Drongo *(Dicrurus macrocercus)***, **Indian Grey Hornbills, Osprey, Scops Owls,** and **Spotted Owls**, along with exotic migratory birds such as the **RedStart, Northern Shoveler,** and **Northern Pintail**, and 24 recorded butterfly species.





PARTICIPATION IN WILDLIFE WEEK COMPETITIONS

As part of Wildlife Week, **REEFIANS** actively participated in various **intercollegiate competitions organized by the Nagpur Forest Division in collaboration with the Institute of Science and Dada Ramchand Bakhru Sindhu Mahavidyalaya**, centred around the theme "Connecting Habitats, Thriving Wildlife."

- **Intercollegiate Essay Competition**: **Jhanavi Shukla (CSE) secured the 1st** Prize among 80 participants, bringing recognition to REEF through her exceptional contribution.

- **Quiz Competition**: **Anidya Karunakaran (CSE) secured the 4th Position**, among 22 teams, while Tisha Sureka and Gurleen Kaur also participated in the competition.

These achievements reflect **REEF's commitment to promoting environmental awareness** and highlight the enthusiasm, knowledge, and active participation of REEFIANS in engaging with **wildlife conservation and environmental initiatives at an inter-institutional level.**





LEARNINGS AND INSIGHTS

The educational tour to the **Umred-Paoni-Karhandla Wildlife Sanctuary**, along with the various Wildlife Week activities, successfully bridged classroom learning with real-world observation. The seminar and guided safari provided first-hand **insights into forest ecosystems, their diverse flora and fauna, and the interdependence of species within them.**

The experience highlighted two important lessons:

- **Invasive species** can pose a serious threat to native vegetation and biodiversity if left unchecked.
- **Scientific awareness**, particularly in dispelling common superstitions about snakes, plays an important role in promoting responsible coexistence between humans and wildlife.

Participation in the **quiz and essay competitions** further enhanced students' understanding of **biodiversity, conservation laws, and contemporary challenges** facing wildlife, while encouraging **critical thinking about environmental issues.**

Overall, the activities:

- Strengthened awareness of **ecosystem interdependence.**
- **Instilled a greater sense of responsibility** towards protecting natural habitats.
- Reinforced the Wildlife Week theme, "Connecting Habitats and Thriving Wildlife."

LIST OF ATTENDEES

S. No.	Full Name	Branch	Year
1	Akshat Jain	ENCS	4th Year
2	Paras Sharma	CSE (CYBER)	4th Year
3	Tapesh Baghele	ELECTRICAL	4th Year
4	Aditi Jogad	CSE (AIDS)	3rd Year
5	Adwaiti Kankale	ECS	3rd Year
6	Amey Shendre	CSE (AIML)	3rd Year
7	Ansh Dogra	ECS	3rd Year
8	Anushka Gurve	CSE (DSA)	3rd Year
9	Avanti Joshi	CSE (AIML)	3rd Year
10	Devyani Gadde	CSE	3rd Year
11	Gargi Kulkarni	CSE	3rd Year
12	Hardik Agrawal	CSE (DSA)	3rd Year
13	Harsh Jora	CSE	3rd Year
14	Harshit Tiwari	CSE	3rd Year
15	Krishna Shonka	CSE (CYBER)	3rd Year
16	Krish Singh	CSE	3rd Year
17	Mandar Vivek Amte	CSE	3rd Year
18	Pratham Thakur	ECS	3rd Year
19	Priyansh Agrawal	CSE (AIDS)	3rd Year
20	Rishabh	CSE (AIML)	3rd Year
21	Seva Mundra	CSE (AIDS)	3rd Year
22	Shushobhita Mallick	CSE (AIML)	3rd Year

23	Vaidehi Gupta	ECS	3rd Year
24	Vedant Kashikar	CSE	3rd Year
25	Vivek Samarth	ECE	3rd Year
26	Yogesh Kinekar	CSE (DSA)	3rd Year
27	Aaryan	ECE	2nd Year
28	Agam	CSE	2nd Year
29	Anandi	CSE	2nd Year
30	Anidya	CSE	2nd Year
31	Chirag	CSE	2nd Year
32	Dhanshri	CSE	2nd Year
33	Girish	CSE	2nd Year
34	Gurleen	CSE	2nd Year
35	Jhanavi	CSE	2nd Year
36	Mahak	CSE	2nd Year
37	Piyush Thakur	ECS	2nd Year
38	Priyanshu	ECE	2nd Year
39	Radhika	CSE	2nd Year
40	Sadhana	CSE	2nd Year
41	Samraddhi Agrawal	CSE (SAP)	2nd Year
42	Sanjoli	ECS	2nd Year
43	Tisha	CSE	2nd Year
44	Vedang Naik	ECS	2nd Year

CONCLUSION

The educational visit to the **Umred-Pauni-Karhandla Wildlife Sanctuary** was a valuable and enriching experience that deepened students' appreciation of **wildlife conservation, biodiversity, and ecological balance.** Through informative sessions, field observations, and interactions with forest officials and naturalists, students gained a better understanding of the interconnectedness of **flora, fauna, and their habitats.**

The visit emphasized that **coexistence with wildlife is a necessity, not a choice,** and that every individual has a role in protecting our natural ecosystems. More than just an educational excursion, the experience encouraged participants to adopt **responsible and sustainable practices and develop a stronger sense of responsibility towards nature**.

The visit beautifully reflected the spirit of Wildlife Week and its theme, **"Connecting Habitats, Thriving Wildlife,"** leaving participants with a renewed respect for wildlife and a deeper commitment to its conservation.

