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Volunteers, forest department step up to provide water to wildlife in Salem forests

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THE HINDU BUREAU



The Forest Department filled water in cement tubs at Yercaud Ghat Road, where monkeys drink water in Salem district in Tamil Nadu on Monday, 29 April 2024. | Photo Credit: E. LAKSHMI NARAYANAN

A team of volunteers have stepped up to provide drinking water to monkeys along the Yercaud Ghat Road, while the forest department is extending its efforts to supply water to animals in reserve forests across Salem district amidst soaring temperatures.

With Salem district registering high temperatures for the past 45 days, wildlife like deer, monkeys, and gaur have been entering villages near forest areas in search of water. To deter them from entering human habitation, the forest department has dug up small ponds and tanks in reserve forests.

With the scorching sun presenting challenges to monkeys at Yercaud Ghat Road, a group of volunteers installed 50 cement tubs with water at various points across the stretch for the benefit of the monkeys and have kept replenishing them at regular intervals. The volunteers have also urged the tourists not to offer food or fruits to the monkeys, instead to refill the cement tubs with water.

Water facilities have been arranged for in 20 reserve forests across the district, said Assistant Conservator of Forests (ACF) R. Selvakumar, The capacity of these ponds or tanks varies from 100 to 500 litres, and are refilled once a week. Mr. Selvakumar also urged the public to refrain from feeding animals, especially monkeys, since it is against rules.