

Wildlife census to begin today

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

HOSUR

A wildlife census to enumerate animals inhabiting the North Cauvery Wildlife Sanctuary will commence here on Saturday.

A special orientation for volunteers on the transect walk in the forest and the ways of enumeration of wildlife was held here at the Cattle Farm in Mathigiri on Friday. The enumeration would entail and infer the presence of wildlife and also the biodiversity of the forests that include diversity of flora. According to the forest department, Hosur forest division is made of 121 reserve forests spread over 1,501 sq.mt making up 29% of Krishnagiri district surface area. The wildlife census is being undertaken in 504 sq.mt area.

The forests here host elephants, leopards, bears, Indian Gaur, spotted deer, and peacocks. The forests are rich for its flora that includes Sandal, Teak, Rosewood among other trees.

Earlier, speaking at the orientation programme, Conservator of Forests, Dharmapuri division, Deepak S. Bilgi, said, the exercise would estimate the wildlife population by interpretation and extrapolation. It would map the trends, less by animal sightings and literal counting, which are rare, but through indirect evidences. The volunteers were also to look out for new species, which can end up in reports that map the landscape and its biodiverse flora and fauna.

Stating that the Hosur forest division was one of the prestigious forest divisions in Tamil Nadu, with rich wildlife presence, Mr. Bilgi urged the volunteers "to experience the habitat to understand what kind of habitat animals live in, where do they drink water etc," during the census, which is a "serious exercise." The census is being carried with the support of non-profit organisations such as the Kenneth Anderson Nature Society, Tamil Nadu Butterfly Society, Coimbatore, World Wildlife Fund, and corporate entities such as the Titan Industries. The exercise will conclude on February 17. Wildlife Warden, Hosur division, S. Prabhu was present at the orientation.