



CSPT NEWSLETTER

ISSUE: 19

THE CHENNAI SNAKE PARK TRUST'S NEWSLETTER

JULY 2026

(Monthly -For Internal Circulation)

FROM THE EXECUTIVE CHAIRMAN'S DESK :

The Nocturnal Visitors of the Chennai Snake Park

Dear Readers,

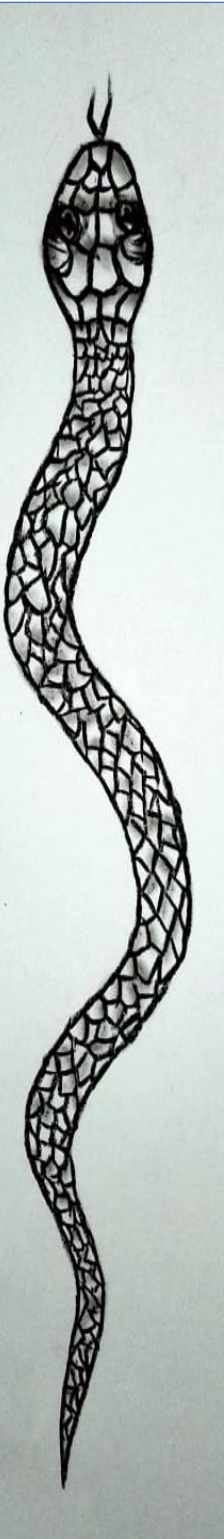
We don't know the nocturnal life of our captive reptiles - but life during night inside snake park would be lively. Till last month we are not aware the night visitors of our park till the Madras Naturalist Society members studied and reported us. The visitor is not belonging to any species of reptiles but the beautiful moths. The MNS asked for a permission to survey the moths during night hours, we also joined with the team in order to know what is interesting happenings during night hours inside our Park. We thought that they would be seeing a few moths inside Park. Surprisingly at the end of their night survey, they were able to identify about 40 species belonging to 18 families of the moths.

Many of us are not aware of moth's role in ecosystem as they are seen during nights. Vocationally, some of the moths are trapped inside our houses while flying during nights. They are attractive like our butterflies. We mostly ignore them! Like any other wildlife, the moths also play a main role in the ecosystem.

Moths are environmental indicators; they help to understand ecosystem health, climate change, and the development of successful biodiversity conservation programmes. The current study states that the collective assessment of moth diversity from several regions of Maharashtra provides a major base for lepidopteran diversity and also highlights the necessity of ongoing systematic and ecological research.

Role of Moths in Pollination: Moths are important agents in pollination, especially for those plants that bloom at night and produce a lot of nectar and have fragrant flowers. Moths contribute to the pollination process of their host plants.

Role of Moths in Food Webs: Adult moths and larvae serve as vital food sources for bats, birds, reptiles, amphibians, and small mammals.



CHENNAI SNAKE PARK TRUST, RAJ BHAVAN POST, CHENNAI-600022.

EDITOR : Dr. C. Arivazhagan, Dy. Director - CSPT

SUB EDITOR : Mirdhula Kamaraj, Biologist-CSPT

Thus, decrease in moth population may affect the food security for insectivorous vertebrates.

What is their role in visiting our Park? Apart from getting honey from the nocturnal flowers for their survival, they also act as prey by providing nutritious food for the wild nocturnal Geckos!

Geckos are nocturnal lizards actively hunt around porch lights and outdoor fixtures where adult moths congregate at night. Without porch lights, geckos shift from waiting in one spot to active stalking. They rely on their incredible night vision—which can see colour in the dark—to spot the subtle wing twitches of moths resting on tree bark or leaves. Their eyes are up to 350 times more sensitive to light than human eyes, allowing them to see colors even under moonlight.

Our sincere thanks to the MNS members who brought out the hidden facts of the less understood moths.



Moth: Pycnarmon virgatalis (Photo by MNS members)

A beautiful moth from the Chennai Snake Park – Beauty has negative value for the Geckos!

Like to bring more such interesting facts in the forthcoming Newsletters.

Kindly,

Dr. S. Paulraj, IFS (Retd.)

Executive Chairman.

BOARD MEETING:

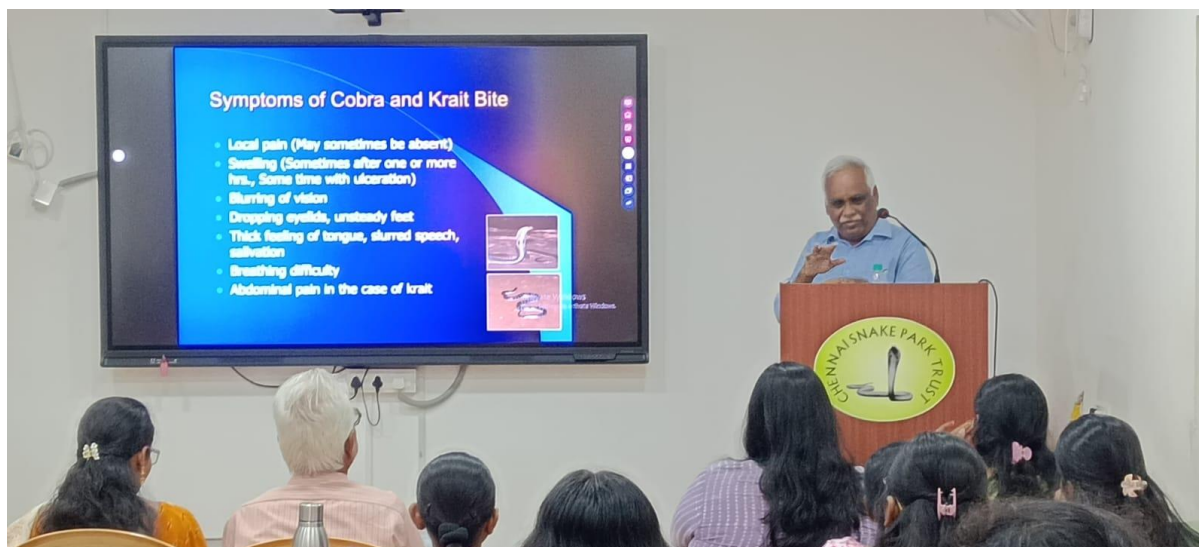
The Board of Trustees of Chennai Snake Park Trust held on 03.07.2026 at 3.30 p.m. Six Trustees were present in the Meeting Dr.S.Paulraj presided over the Board meeting and discussed the regular agendas during the meeting. The list of Trustees present in the meeting are Dr.S.Paulraj IFS.Retd., Dr.K.Ramalingam, Dr.K.Senthilkumar, Dr.T.Sundaramoorthy, Ms.V.Thenmozhi IFS and Dr.Vijay Venkatesh.

WORLD SNAKE DAY 2026



(World Snake Day: Executive Chairman Dr. S. Paulraj, IFS Retd. delivered the Key Note address for the World Snake day program on 16th July 2025.)

Chennai Snake Park Trust celebrated the World Snake Day programme on July 16, 2026 at ACCEPT learning centre, Chennai Snake Park. The Guest Speaker of the programme was Dr. V. Kalaiarasan, Ph.D Herpetologist, Chennai Snake Park Trust. The Programme was inaugurated with a welcome address delivered by Ms. Mirdhula Kamaraj, Biologist of Chennai Snake Park. The Target audience of today's programme was College students. 22 students from Zoology Department of University of Madras participated in the programme and 23 students from Guru Nanak College Enviro Club participated in the programme.



(Dr. V. Kalaiarasan, Ph.D Herpetologist, Chennai Snake Park Trust, delivering a talk to the participants.)

July 16 is not just a date. It's a day of concern to increase the awareness of snakes and its Conservation. It is also important to highlight the roles of snakes in our ecosystem. Snakes are also considered as the silent warriors which are not been recognized much.

Executive Chairman of Chennai Snake Park Dr. S.Paulraj IFS. Retd. delivered the Keynote address to the participants gathered highlighting the importance of Snakes. The Guest Speaker of the programme Dr. V. Kalaiarasan, Ph.D Herpetologist, Chennai Snake Park Trust delivered a talk on Snakes of India highlighting the various aspects pertaining to snakes such as the species of snakes, Identification of snakes, Antivenom preparation, conservation efforts, DO'S and DON'T'S pertaining to snakes.

The Team Coordinators from University of Madras led by Dr. R.Manikandan EIACP coordinator Dept of Zoology along with the officials of Chennai Snake Park trust Executive Chairman Dr. S.Paulraj IFS. Retd, Dr. V.Kalaiarasan, Herpetologist and Trustee Dr. K.Ramalingam, Trustee released the poster themed “Catch the Rain”.

A cartoon film was projected to the participants during the programme themed the “Snakes are Farmers Friend” highlighting the importance of snakes in an ecosystem. A slideshow themed Snakes of India highlighting its general features and awareness video was projected for the general visitors visiting the park.

PROGRAMME PHOTOS:



(Dr.V.Kalaiarasan, the speaker of the programme interacting with the students during the World Snake Day programme.)



(Executive Chairman Dr.S.Paulraj IFS Retd. Interacting with the students.)



(Dr.K.Ramalingam, Research Scientist & Trustee addressing the students on World Snake Day programme.)



(Poster Release themed "Catch the Rain" by Dr. R.Manikandan EIACP coordinator University of Madras and the Officials of Chennai Snake Park)



(The Enviro Club students of Guru Nanak College for the World Snake Day programme.)

DR. K RAMALINGAM, RESEARCH SCIENTIST's NOTE:

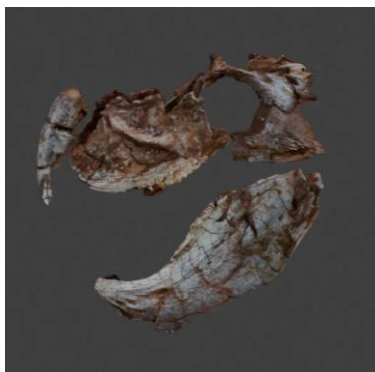
A RARE SIGHT OF AN ALBINO COBRA IN TELANGANA:

It is a very rare incidence or sight to see an Albino Cobra (*Naja naja*) which is completely white throughout its body. Already Albino Python is present and is being kept in Snake park recently in Telangana Nirmal district, Khanapur province in the farmyard one white Albino Cobra was spotted. Uzmania University professor has said this is like the ordinary Cobra and there is no Albino variety so far reported. This is a rare incidence of white Cobra.



The white skin of this Cobra is due to complete absence of melanin or colour pigments characteristic of the *Naja naja*. In human partial albinism and complete albinism has been reported due to genes mutations and their expressions.

The partial albinism is phenotypically expressed in the extremities of the hands and feet. In full albinism, even the eye lashes are turned white and the person exhibits photophobia. Towards this the sighting of an Albino Cobra is an interesting research area where insights maybe derived for species diversity/ variants.



FOSSIL

Brazil University Palaeontology researchers discovered a reptile species which is about twenty three million years old. This species belonged to the group “Rhynchosaurus”. It is a herbivore and grows upto one and half meter length. This species had a pointed beak which was employed to cut plants and to dig/unearth the roots. It gives an impetus to the phylogenetic affinity and evolutionary lineage of birds from reptiles.

CALOTROPIS AGAINST SNAKE VENOM

As of now, the poly venom is the only available drug for snake bite treatment. Recent survey has reported the diminishing level of snake bite deaths. Despite this, Poly venom is observed to exhibit extensive immunological cross reactivity against the venom toxins (Proteins). It is due to the different geographical landscapes of snake species.

Genes for the venom proteins undergo mutations due to environmental, food and sunspot radiations which account for the discrepancies in the efficacy of anti-venom. Ready made soluble natural inhibitors in our body (serum/ blood) can serve as a first line defense against snake venom toxins.

Calotropis plant has venom neutralizing properties. Its roots, leaves, latex, flowers, barks etc can bring neutralization when given orally or as infusions (Hydro- alcoholic extract) can neutralize the venom in a dose-dependent manner. [Animal model trials can establish this.]

DIRECTOR's NOTE:

During the July 2026, the Park had 22,811 Visitors (17,825 Adult and 4,986 Children).

Moth Week 2026

Madras Naturalists' Society and Chennai Snake Park Trust collaboratively conducted Mothing session on Saturday, July 25, 2026 as a part of Moth Week 2026 at Chennai Snake Park. 12 Members of MNS participated and identified the Moths appearing on the Moth Screen.

Feedbacks from Visitors

The visitors of the Chennai Snake Park who visited during July 2026 has given feedback in Google Business. Total 44 visitors reviewed and given comments. Out of 44 visitors, 33 visitors have given 5 star (68.18 %), 13 visitors have given 4star (29.54 %), and one visitor has given 3star (2.27 %), Few feedbacks are pertaining to adjacent Children's Nature Park.

BIOLOGIST's NOTE:

A FASCINATING WORLD AFTER THE DAYLIGHT

A beautiful world of Moths that should never be missed. Mothing session at Chennai Snake Park during the Night hours was a different experience that was collaboratively organized by Madras Naturalist's Society and Chennai Snake Park Trust conducted on Saturday, July 25, 2026 as a part of Moth Week 2026.



(Mothing session: The Team members of Madras Naturalist's Society headed by Mr.G.Vijay Kumar, Hon. Secretary MNS (8th from Left) and also accompanied by the Biologist of Chennai Snake Park Ms.Mirdhula Kamaraj (1st from Right).



(Members during the Mothing session on July 25, 2026.)

Moths are scaly-winged insects generally belonging to the same order Lepidoptera as Butterflies does. Moths get differentiated by major differences such as feathery Antennae-comb like and thread like in appearance, Dull coloured with exceptions, has a stout and hairy body. In India around 15,000 species of moths have been recorded and still recording the existence of unknown species of moths.

Mothing setup: spreading of a White screen with a bulb fixed. Initially the micromoths arrived and other insects got attracted to the light and later macro moths arrived on the screen. Nearly about 18 families and 40 Genus of moths have been identified during the mothing session. Every species has been photographed and recorded by the team.

It was observed that several species coexist with the larger sized species and the journey still continues in the food chain of life. Some of the families of moth observed and recorded in Chennai Snake Park - Geometridae, Crambidae, Erebiidae, Limacodidae, Pyralidae and many more families (about 18 Families). The micro and macro moths exhibit a beautiful pattern of stripes and dots. Moths are considered as an indicator of environmental health as it is one of the important species which gets affected earlier when there is a change in the environment. It also plays other roles such as pollinators, Silk industry and also serve as a prey population to other animals. Few species of Moths observed during mothing session:



Loboschiza koenigiana Tortricidae Loboschiza



Chiasmia eleonora Geometridae Chiasmia



Eupterote orientalis Eupterotidae Eupterote



Micronia aculeata Uraniidae Micronia

Recent Public Review about Chennai Snake Park appeared in the Google Business Profile



Siraj Qureshi *****

You may see live snakes, crocodiles, reptiles, etc on this park. Very good experience to see them live.



The Odisha Nomad *****

It was a great experience and worth the time and money. Best for school childrens and college students to hangout



Moumeeta Das *****

We enjoyed



Amit Gupta *****

Nice Place, You can Touch Iguana and Tortoise 🐢 here



Abooappuzz *****

A great place to learn about snakes and reptiles. The park is clean, affordable, and educational. It can be covered in 1–2 hours. A good family-friendly attraction in Chennai.



Colin F. *****

A great variety of reptiles and snakes. And the place is very peaceful and recommend to get away from the hustle

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