

REPORT

Nepal Owl Festival 2017



Friends of Nature (FON), Nepal

Photographs: Kiran Gurung, Kaushal Yadav, Raj Prasai

Yadav Ghimirey, Bishal Gautam, Raju Acharya,

Hemanta Dhakal, Amrit Bhatta, Chiranjeevi Khanal

Acknowledgements

The success of "Nepal Owl Festival" has always depended on our reliable supporters and well-wishers. "Nepal Owl Festival 2017" was no different. We are grateful to Accordeos Foundation, Switzerland for their regular financial support since 2013. Similarly, we are grateful to our co-organizer, Nepal Owl Festival Management Committee, Niglihawa VDC, Kapilvastu, for their support and co-operation during the entire period of this festival.

The support of Abdul Rashid Khan at local level and mobilization of local community have been invaluable to us. We thank Hotel Crown Himalaya family for continuing their 'Hotel Crown Himalayas Owl Research Grant' this year as well. For their dedication and contribution in making this festival colorful, we thank Roshan Bhandari for face painting, Hunny Manandhar and Aastha Joshi for nail art. We thank Natural History Museum for providing their specimen of owl and its prey. Students of Institute of Forestry, Pokhara, added extra charm to the festival with their wildlife and owl-themed dance for which they deserve special mention. We are grateful to LITS College, Apple International Pharmaceutical Pvt. Ltd and National Path Lab for conducting free health camps during the festival.

We are grateful to Prashant Ghimire, Hemanta Dhakal, Krishnamani Baral, Chiranjeevi Khanal, Yadav Ghimirey, Raj Prasai, Kaushal Yadav and Jeevan Rai for presenting their posters during the festival. Similarly, we thank Himalayan Nature, Bird Conservation Nepal, Global Primate Network and Small Mammals Conservation and Research Foundation for putting up their stalls and making the festival more informative.

Our family of volunteers put their all in to make this year's Nepal Owl Festival a success. Yadav Ghimirey, Raj Prasai, Shyam Subedi, Roshan Bhandari, Kaushal Yadav, Prabal Birjung Rana, Som Sharma, Deu Bahadur Rana, Sujan B.K., Bikash Ghimire, Prarthana Neupane, Keshab Dahal, Aastha Joshi, Hunny Manandhar, Milan Sanjel, Kiran Gurung, Madan Gyawali, Raunak Karki,

Chetnarayan Gyawali, Yagyalal Gyawali, Susan Pyakurel, Asmita Bhusal, Chiranjeevi Khanal, Bishal Gautam, Dinesh Giri and Jeevan Rai. This festival would not have been possible without the herculean effort of these volunteers. Last but not the least, we are grateful to Mr. Raju Acharya, country Representative of World Owl Trust for his leadership, coordination, implementation and fund-raising for the festival.

Nepal Owl Festival 2017-In short

Nepal Owl Festival 2017 was organized in Jagadishpur, Niglihawa Village Development Committee (VDC) of Kapilvastu district jointly by Friends of Nature (FON) Nepal and Nepal Owl Festival Management Committee, Niglihawa VDC. The site for this year's Nepal Owl Festival is also a Ramsar Site and attracts huge flocks of winter birds migrating to lowlands. Team of organizers and volunteers moved from Kathmandu in 30 January. Preparation of temporary owl museum took a total of three days. The festival was held on February 3-4, 2017 with participation of approximate 10,000 visitors, national and international. Apart from temporary owl museum, exhibition of local culture and game, wildlife dance of students from Institute of Forestry (IOF), face painting, nail arts were other attractions of the festival. Health camp and posters of individuals on conservation was added feature in this festival. The festival was covered by local, national and international media. Indirectly, the message of owl conservation reached to six million people via various media including BBC Nepali service, NTV and Gorkhapatra National Daily.



NEPAL OWL FESTIVAL 2017 IN NUMBERS

Approximate 10,000 participants

4 Nature conservation award winners

Local conservation awards 3 winners

Celebration of 22 owls found in Nepal

For 2 days

More than 30 hardworking volunteers

2 Organizers

Supported by 10 supporter organizations

With 11 partners

Site Description-

Jagadishpur Reservoir was selected as the venue for sixth Nepal Owl Festival after preliminary visits to two sites in Dang district and one in Lamjung district. Many other sites were suggested on our Facebook page as well. Before final approval, three visits were made to Jagadishpur.

Jagadishpur Reservoir is the largest manmade reservoir of Nepal and lies in terai region of central Nepal. The reservoir is fed by Banganga River and has an area of 157 ha. Combined with the surrounding wetlands, it has an area of approximately 225 ha with an elevation of 197 m. It was

constructed in early 1970s for irrigation and completed in 1980s.

The reservoir was declared as Ramsar Site in 2003 due to its incredible value for migratory water birds and threatened mammals.



How to get there?

Jagadishpur is 308 km away from Kathmandu. You can take a van generally referred to as winger in Nepal to reach Jagadishpur. It will drop you to



Taulihawa. You can take local transport from Taulihawa to Jahadi and walk the rest of 2 km to Jagadishpur. Alternately, you can take day bus from Kathmandu to Taulihawa via Butwal, Jitpur No. 4 and Jahadi and get off at Jahadi. If you want to travel at night, night buses with similar routes are available from New Bus Park Kathmandu.



To reach Jagadishpur from any other places of Nepal, simply take any bus to west Nepal and stop at Jitpur No. 4 which is about 33 km from Butwal. Then, you can take a local bus to Jahadi. It will take you around 45 minutes and cost NPR 30/-. Likewise, you can hop on a bus to Butwal and from there get a jeep to

Jagadishpur. These jeep services are available at 2 pm, 3 pm, 4 pm and 5 pm and costs NPR 120/- per person. While returning, you can access the same services from Jagadishpur at 6 am, 7 am, 8 am and 9 am.

You can avoid the lengthy bus travel and fly directly to Bhairahawa. Bus service to Taulihawa is available in Bhairahawa. You can follow the same route to get back to Kathmandu.

If you are in Pokhara, there are two buses that will take you to Taulihawa via Narayanghat-Butwal-Jitpur No. 4-Jahadi route. You can get off at Jahadi and walk to Jagadishpur. The other bus service will go via Palpa-Butwal-Jitpur No. 4- Jahadi route to reach Taulihawa. These bus services are available at Mahendra pul and Prithivichowk in Pokhara.

Organizers and Partners

This year's Nepal Owl Festival was held jointly by Friends of Nature (FON) and Jagadishpur Reservoir Management Multistakeholder Forum. The event was supported by District Forest Office, Kapilvastu; Niglihawa VDC, Kapilvastu; District Development Committee, Kapilvastu; Kapilvastu Collaborative Forest Management Committee, Kapilvastu; Gautam Buddha Collaborative Forest Management Committee, Kapilvastu; Mayadevi Collaborative Forest Management Committee, Kapilvastu; Tilaurakot Collaborative Forest Management Committee, Kapilvastu; Apple International Pharmaceuticals Pvt. Ltd.; LITS College, Butwal and National Path Lab, Butwal. Our partners were Accordeos, Revo Science, World Owl Trust, Global Owl Project, Department of National Parks and Wildlife Conservation, Nepal Forester's Association, Bird Conservation Nepal, Nepal Forum for Science Journalists, International Owl Center and Government of Nepal.

Events Prior to the Main Festival

Preparation of the Festival

A 56-member *Nepal Owl Festival 2017 Organizing Committee* was formed in Jagadishpur under the chairmanship of Mr. Abdul Rashid Khan. Under this committee, five other sub-committees were formed: culture, school, game, guest and volunteer mobilization. Kanakmuni Higher Secondary School was finalized as the festival venue. The school had a large playing field ideal for main events, cultural events and traditional games. Community hall inside the school premise was selected for putting temporary owl museum for exhibition.

Preparation at Kathmandu



The preparation of Nepal Owl Festival 2017 started around a month before the actual event. Team of volunteers gathered at main office of FON to discuss the division of workload. A checklist of all activities and items needed for the festival

was prepared to make the preparation go smoothly. Major activities during the preparation were checking, rechecking and packing of owl curio items from previous festivals, buying of new curio items, posters and banners printing, assembling owl research equipment, preparation of Nature Conservation Awardees' profile, certificate design and printing, preparation of welcome song and confirmation of volunteer teams and artists.

Promotional video for Nepal Owl Festival 2017 was prepared by Cinema Satrang, a local media agency, and shared on YouTube in January 22, 2017 (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U6ZaLY2EGc>). Notice on the venue and date of festival, invitation to the festival, poster presentation, organizational stalls, request for owl-themed items

were shared on FON Nepal's official Facebook page (<http://www.facebook.com/fonnepal2005>) which has over 5,000 likes. Nepal Owl Festival 2017 event was created in the same page. Through our official page, we also shared information on accommodation and transportation of the venue. This information was also shared on our Facebook public group that has over 14,000 members.

NEPAL OWL FESTIVAL

3-4 Feb, 2017 Jagdishpur, Kapilvastu

FUSION OF ENTERTAINMENT,
LOCAL CULTURE AND OWL
CONSERVATION

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

ORGANIZERS
Friends of Nature (FON) Nepal
Jagdishpur Reservoir
Management Multi-stakeholders
Forum, Kapilvastu

FOR MORE DETAIL
9841308266

Design : Cinema Satrang

Photo : Manoj Paudel

The poster features a large central image of an owl's face. Surrounding it are several circular inset photos: a woman in a colorful sari, a man with face paint, a crowd of people, a large group of owls on the ground, and a group of people in blue clothing. The background shows a landscape with a lake and mountains under a blue sky with clouds.

Preparation at Jagadishpur



Team of volunteers moved to Jagadishpur from Kathmandu in January 30. The team reached the venue late at night. However, the preparation started right away. For next three days, volunteers worked day and night to put up temporary owl museum.



Our local partners were actively spreading words about the festival in their community. A jeep was hired for a day with speakers informing local people about the schedule and description of Nepal Owl Festival in the area with the help of mike and loudspeakers. Banners were designed and placed on public places for everyone to see. Local FM played advertisements of the festival as well as our owl-themed song “*latokosero huchil lai namarau*” (let us not kill owls). Schedule of the festival were put at each and every homestay in Jagadishpur.

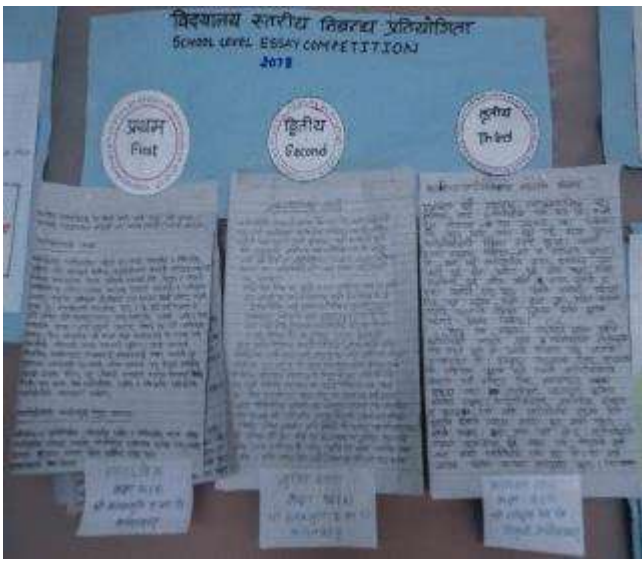
Press Conference

A press conference was hosted in Jagadishpur on 29 January about Nepal Owl Festival 2017. The conference was aimed towards getting the words about the festival in different media for promotion of the festival out in the public. Power point presentations about the history of festivals, events planned for the festival were presented by Raju Acharya. At the conference, 20 media personnels were present from different local and national media including FM, newspaper and online news portal.

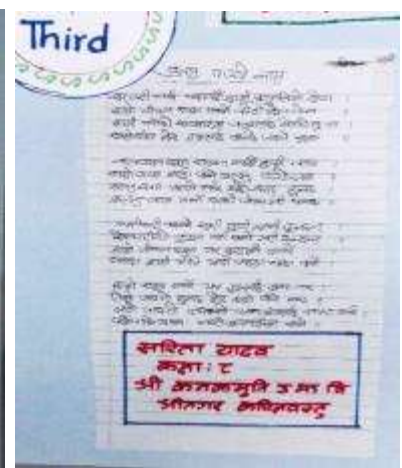
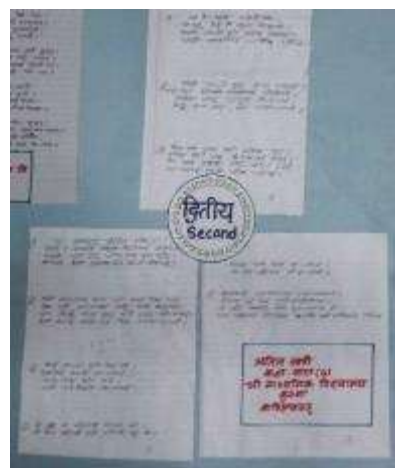
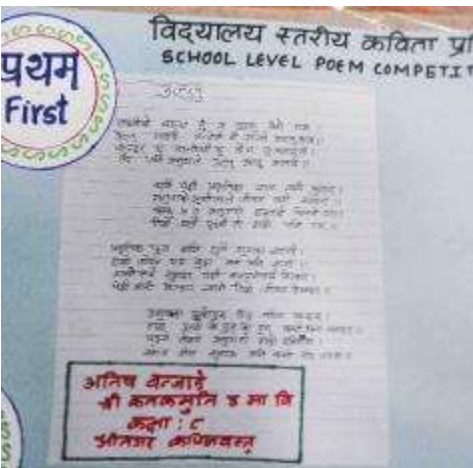


Press conference at Jagadishpur

Owl-themed School Level Competitions



Essay writing competition, drawing competition and poem competition were held for secondary level students (9-10), primary level students (up to 5) and lower secondary level students (6, 7 and 8) respectively between five schools of three VDCs. Schools were notified by 20 December and sent their three best contributions in each category by 30 December.



Owl Conservation Camp at School

To raise awareness among students, one owl conservation camp was organized in Kanakmuni Higher Secondary School on January 31. Importance of owls, threats to owls and interesting facts of owls were presented to 500 students during the camp. The camp was held during the morning assembly session.



Owl conservation camp in Kanakmuni Higher Secondary School

Events during the Main Event of Nepal Owl Festival 2017

Many events including free health camps, cultural shows and temporary owl museum creation was done during the main event of Nepal Owl Festival 2017. Nepal Owl Festival 2017 was held on February 3 and 4.

Schedule of Nepal Owl Festival 2017

Date		Time	Place	Program
February 3		7:30 AM to 10 AM	Jagadishpur Reservoir	Bird Watching and Nature Photo Walk
February 3		10:30 AM to 5 PM	Kanakmuni H.S. School, Shree Nagar, Jagadishpur	GAME: Chikka, Tug of War, Stick Show, Women's Musical Chair DANCE: Jhumra, Dhobi, Jharra, Bhajan, Mother Group Dance SONG: Kawali OWL RELATED: Owl Museum, Owl Robot, Owl Call Device, Wheat Straw Art, Documentary, Owl Art and Drawing
February 3		9 AM to 2 PM	Kanakmuni H.S. School, Shree Nagar, Jagadishpur	Free Health Camp (Gyno, Eye and General Physician)
February 4		7:30 AM to 10 AM	Jagadishpur Reservoir	Bird Watching and Nature Photo Walk
February 4	10:30 AM to 5 PM	School Compound	FINAL COMPETITION 'TUG OF WAR', DANCE: Stick, Sorathi, Biraha, Kauda (Magar community), Gadasi, Wildlife Dance of Forestry Campus SONG AND MUSIC: Moharam and Sayari OWL RELATED: Owl Face Painting and Nail Painting, Conservation Speech, Nature Conservation Award and Local Award Distribution, Owl Museum	

Inauguration of the Festival

The festival was officially inaugurated by Honorable State Minister of Irrigation, Surendraraj Acharya by lighting 'panas' (an oil lamp used for auspicious occasions).

Honorable State Minister of Irrigation, Surendraraj Acharya inaugurating the festival



Temporary Owl Museum

Temporary owl museum has been an integral part of Nepal Owl Festival since its humble beginnings. Display items have continuously grown in numbers as well as its educational value with years. The museum was free for all and opened on both days of Nepal Owl Festival 2017.



Temporary owl museum at Jagadishpur

FON in News

Articles and news published in different major, local and online media on Friends of Nature were displayed. These articles and news consisted mostly of rediscovery of wild yak in Nepal, new bird species recorded, wildlife training for graduates and previous Nepal Owl Festivals.



'Owls in news' display

Owls in

News



'FON in news' display

News and articles published in different major, local and online media on owls were displayed inside temporary owl museum. Conservation status of owls, threats to owls as well as Nepal Owl Festivals were included in these publications. Bird enthusiasts and conservationists spent quite a time reading these news and articles.

Owl Call Device

Owl call device built by Madan Gyawali and Mohan Gurung can play call of eight species of owl found in Nepal. The call device has eight buttons to push with numbers that correspond to the number of owl illustration and general information in both English and Nepali. It was a major attraction for anybody visiting the museum. Locals played the calls repeatedly and some could even point to the owls that are in their locality.



Owl call device was a major attraction at the temporary owl festival

Straw Art

Owl arts made from wheat straws were displayed as well. A self-taught artist, Sitaram Gosai, from Bhaktapur had made these arts.



Owl Straw arts by Sitaram Gosai

Owl Nest

Four owl nests were displayed during the festival inside temporary museum hall. These nest boxes were displayed to give general public ideas about how they could contribute in making their locality more owl-friendly.

Owl Curios

Number of owl curios displayed in temporary museum has been growing with years. Cups, plates, woollen hats, bags, watches and other items with owl-themes were put up for display. These curios have been collected over the years by FON as well as gifted by our generous well-wishers. A significant part of these



Owl-themed curio items at temporary owl museum

curios come from personal collection of Raju Acharya. Bright colorful led lights added more charm to these displays.



Owl curios from the personal collection of Raju Acharya



Owl curios displayed inside the museum with life size fibre cast owls at the top left and right



Raju Acharya explaining the displays inside temporary owl museums to the guests

Fibre Cast Sculpture of Owl

Two life-size owl sculptures of Barn Owl and Eurasian Eagle Owl made from fibre cast by Hariram Adhikari, student of BFA, Srijana College of Fine arts, were put on display inside the museum.

Display mounts

Mounted photographs of owls, owl-themed arts, previous nature conservation award winners, activities of FON and other such related items were displayed as well in the museum.



Awardees profile

Profile of this year's Nature Conservation Award winners contained biographical sketches of winners. It contained their contribution in the field of conservation, their inspiration as well as their opinions on the way ahead.



Profile of Nature Conservation Award winners

Previous Owl Festival

We displayed photographs of each previous five Nepal Owl Festivals in separate chart papers. Photographs of Nepal Owl Festivals were selected to represent different themes such as cultural programs, face painting, temporary owl museums, etc.



Previous owl festivals held in Nepal

Research Equipments

To make the temporary owl museum more educational and informative, equipment required for owl research were displayed with labels. Students and teachers were mostly interested in knowing more about the equipment. Volunteers explained these items in details whenever anyone wanted to know more. The equipment displayed were drones, tents, sleeping bags, binoculars, spotting scopes, recorder, mobile phone, field guides, sampling vials, densiometer, GPS, tripod, monopod, clinometer,



Research equipment at display

DBH tape, survey forms, first aid kits.



Volunteer explaining about research equipment to the students

FON Publications

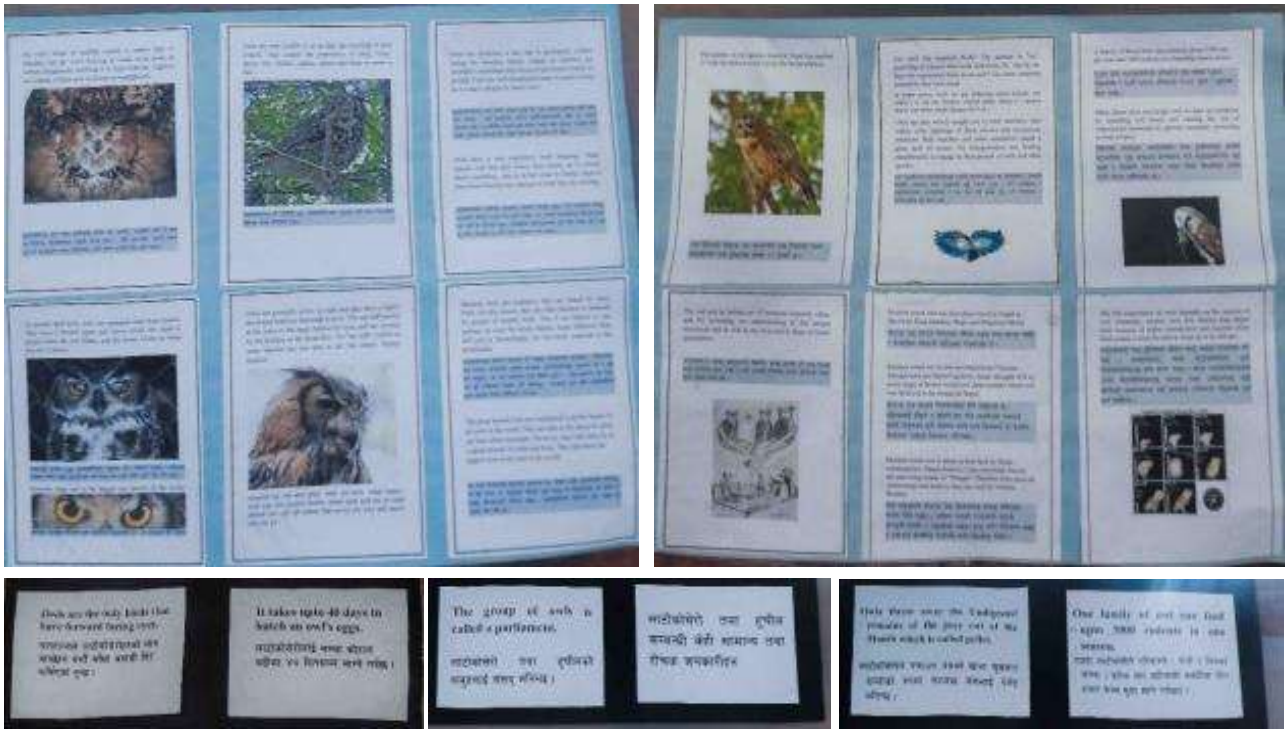
In FON publication section, publication and articles of FON in journal were put up to give general idea about the works and contribution of Friends of Nature. Previous Nepal Owl Festival Reports were also displayed in the same place. Articles on clouded leopard, vultures, and small carnivores were part of these displays.



FON publications displayed at the museum

Interesting Facts

These facts contained natural history of owls, mythology and beliefs about owls around the world.



Interesting facts about owls at the temporary owl museum



Art by Students of Creative and Modern Indian School

Sketches and arts by students of two schools from Kathmandu Valley, Creative School and Modern Indian School, were displayed. These sketches and arts have been a part of Nepal Owl Festival since 2015.



Art by students of Creative School



Art by students of Modern Indian School

Sketches of Roshan Bhandari and Sabita Gurung



Sketches by Roshan Bhandari and Sabita Gurung

Sketches and four artworks in wood of Roshan Bhandari (graduate of MFA from Central Department of Fine Arts, Tribhuvan University), National Award winner 2015, were exhibited. Exhibition of owl sketches by Sabita Gurung (M.Sc. graduate from Central Department of Zoology, Tribhuvan University) were also done in the museum.

Owl Logos/Photos/Origami



Photos and origami of owl

Logos with owl-themes, photos of owls from around the world were searched online, printed and displayed in the museum. Owl origami (Japanese art of folding paper) was also displayed during the

event.

Owl Masks and T-shirts



Owl masks were pasted on walls and hanged inside the museum. Similarly, t-shirts with owl prints were hanged inside the museum.

Museum Specimen of Owls

Museum specimen of owls and its prey from Natural History Museum, Tribhuvan University were major attractions in the museum. Brown wood owl and barn owl as well as a rodent species were featured in our taxidermy section.

Owl Documentary Show

During the entire period of Nepal Owl Festival, short documentaries on owls were played inside the temporary owl museum in a loop

Owl Robot and CCTV

Another major attraction inside the museum was owl robot made by Raunak Karki, Madan Gyawali

and Sudip Ghimire. Mostly kids were curious about this owl. The owl rotated its head at 180° and flapped its wings. Another new addition was owl CCTV. Owl CCTV was contributed by Yagyalal Gyawali, Raunak Karki and Madan Gyawali and decorated by Roshan Bhandari.

Electronic Visitor Counter

Electronic counter to record the number of visitors was created by Madan Gyawali and Sudip Ghimire. As visitors passed the gate, they broke the beam and were registered by the electronic counter.

Saving the Owls – Dart Game and Donation Box

In previous Nepal Owl Festival, we had introduced 'Save the Owl' game of darts. This year, two new darts were painted with owls by Roshan Bhandari. Participants hitting the owls were requested to donate any amount of money they wished as penalty. Participants successful in hitting the bull's eye were gifted with owl masks. Total of NPR 1,650, 10 pounds and 10 Indian currencies were collected from the donations. We plan to spend this amount in next year's Nepal Owl Festival.



Saving the owls dart game

Visitor Book

Exiting participants were requested to pen down their feelings and suggestions after visiting the temporary owl museum.



Guests penned down their feelings about the festival

Suggestions and feelings penned down by our visitors

"A wonderful exhibition, congratulations to FON!" - Carol Inskipp, Stunhlpl, UK

"We are so proud of this programme [festival and] to see [it] here in Jagadishpur. We enjoyed a lot and also want this event to be here again. Thank you so much!" - Najeer Khan, Youth Club, Niglihawa-7

"I feel grateful to be here and want to thank the entire team of organizers."- Pooja Giri, IOF, Hetauda

"Excellent"- Krishna Neupane, District Forest Office, Kapilvastu

[translated from nepali] "This owl festival seems to have great importance. Similar festivals have to be regularly held to raise awareness. We all should get involved in conservation."- Tank Acharya

Owl Photo Booth

Previous year's photo booth of mottled wood owl as well as a new photo booth of barn owl family was kept inside the museum. Karun Dewan (M.Sc. graduate of Environmental Science, Tribhuvan University)



A visitor having her photo taken at the owl photo booth

painted barn owl family for new photo booth. Many photographs with family and friends were taken in these photo booths and formed a major memento for the participants.

Free Health Camps



LITS College, Butwal, Apple International Pharmaceuticals Private Limited and National Path

Lab, Butwal conducted free health camps combined on the first festival at the festival locations. The health camp had free gynecology, eye and general checkup facility. General medicine were distributed free of cost during the camps. More than 600 locals were benefited by this free health camp.

Face Painting



Keeping the traditions alive, artist Roshan Bhandari painted colorful owls on face of visitors on second day of the festival. Face painting, like all previous owl festivals, attracted crowd of visitors. Owl stamps were also used to paint owls in different body parts of visitors.



Nail Art



Nail art was continued feature from previous Nepal Owl Festival 2016. Female visitors had their nail done with owls by artists Hunny Manandhar and Aastha Joshi on second day of the festival.

Poster Presentation



Hemanta Dhakal with his poster on slender-billed vulture

A new feature for Nepal Owl Festival, posters were presented by individuals working in conservation field. The purpose of poster presentation was to have a common platform for advocating conservation of other wildlife species.

Prashant Ghimire presented his works on population status, distribution and conservation initiation of Asian woolly-necked crane in western lowlands of Nepal

Hemanta Dhakal had his poster on participatory conservation and ecological monitoring of critically endangered slender-billed vulture in Kaski, Nepal.

The status of vulture in Nepal was presented by Krishnamani Baral.

Chiranjeevi Khanal had presented his research and conservation activities on striped hyaena in Deukhuri valley through his posters.



Chiranjeevi Khanal with his poster on striped hyaena

Updates on clouded leopard project in Sikles led by Yadav Ghimirey were presented through photographs.

FON team (Raj Prasai, Kaushal Yadav and Jeevan Rai) presented their exploration of western Nepal as photographs and texts to promote eco-tourism in the region.

Stalls of Organizations

Along with poster presentation by individual conservations, conservation organizations too had space for their respective stalls in Nepal Owl Festival 2017. These organizations displayed their previous and on-going works in conservation, their publication as well as interacted with the visitor about their organizations. Four non-governmental organizations, viz. Himalayan Nature, Bird Conservation Nepal (BCN), Global Primate Network (GPN) and Small Mammals Conservation and Research Foundation (SMCRF) had stalls at the festival.

Global Primate Network was founded by a team of young wildlife researcher in 2008 to promote science-based conservation of wildlife and its habitat in Nepal Himalaya. Besides conservation, it also works on livelihood, climate change, bio-diversity and eco-tourism. Along with their publication, they also had research equipment for display in their stalls.



Organization stall of Global Primate Network had different research equipment at display

Himalayan Nature, a development and conservation research institute, was founded in 2000 with vision to create prosperous communities that live in harmony with nature and manage biodiversity in the Himalayan region. Sustainable livelihoods in the Himalayas along with scientific research on its flora, fauna and broader environment are its field of work.

Bird Conservation Nepal is a leading organization in Nepal working for the conservation of birds, their habitats and sites. A membership based organization, it was established in 1982 and has been working continuously to promote interest on birds amongst the general public, encourage research on birds and identify major threats to birds' continued survival.

The concept of green school is to change schools into role models of sustainability and positive environmental and educational practices. This concept has been initiated in Nepal by Friends of Nature and was successfully implemented in Korak VDC of Chitwan. Currently, the green school project is running at Salyantar VDC of Dhading.



Stall of Green School in Nepal with Prarthana Neupane, field motivator of the project

Small Mammals Conservation and Research Foundation works for conservation and

research of biodiversity focused on small mammals. It is also involved in conservation with livelihood, conservation policy and promotion of future wildlife researcher and conservation biologist.

Nature Conservation Award

Nature Conservation Award was awarded to four individuals for their contribution in the field of conservation in four categories. All the awardees were presented with award certificate and award prize amount of NPR 25,000/- (\$ 238.5).



Nature conservation award winners (top right: Carol Inskipp, top left: Hem Sagar Baral, bottom right: Bharat Raj Subba and bottom right: Krishna Mani Baral

Dr. Bharat Raj Subba



Originally hailing from Gajurmukhi-3, Ilam, Dr. Bharat Raj Subba is a workhorse in the field of bird conservation in Nepal. His enthusiasm knows no bounds. Having retired as Associate Prof. from Post Graduate campus, Biratnagar he has taken up the position of adjunct Prof. at Agricultural and Forestry University, Chitwan. Second son out of 10 siblings, he is an avid admirer of Mr. Hari Sharan Kazi '*Nepali*' from whom he drew inspiration for birding.

He has great interest in the birds of eastern Nepal and is currently serving as president of Nepal Biological Society, Biratnagar.

Dr. Subba's contribution to the field of wildlife conservation in eastern Nepal is extraordinary. He has helped organize bird watching event for a mind boggling 554 times in eastern Nepal. He is also the chief editor of the online biological journal '*Our Nature*'. Publishing Journal is an arduous task however he has been doing it efficiently since 2003, which also provides an indication of his dedication. He has 52 scientific articles to his credit. Scientific research and publication is not the only thing he excels in. He also believes that people at grass root level can only conserve if they know the reason for conserving. Hence, he has organized wildlife/bird conservation camps (25), written articles in newspapers (55) and given interviews (30). He has also protected owl chicks (rock eagle owl and brown fish owl) on several occasions by barring intruders near their nest and eventually helping them to fly. Since birds migrate outside the protected areas too he suggests improving conservation measures outside the protected areas for better conservation.

Mr. Tim Inskipp and Mrs. Carol Inskipp

Mr. Timothy Peter Inskipp and Mrs. Carol Inskipp, known more commonly as Tim and Carol Inskipp in Indian subcontinent, have popularized birding in this part of the world with their regular birding trips and excellent field guides on birds of this region. Originally hailing from England, their admiration for this region is special. Their contribution to bird research and conservation has left a long lasting



legacy which is almost impossible to emulate. Currently an independent consultant, Tim has served at prestigious organizations like World Conservation Monitoring Centre, Cambridge and Oriental Bird Club, Bedford in the UK while Carol also served at Oriental Bird Club as Secretary/Conservation Officer.

Tim visited Nepal for the first time in 1970-71. His second visit was in 1977 with Carol. Since then there have been many visits, the most recent being in 2016 for carrying out activities for publishing State of Nepal's Birds (2016). They have written over 30 books/field guides on birds that include Birds of Indian subcontinent and Birds of Nepal. It has helped to better understand the status of these bird species in the country. Carol Inskipp has also co-authored important books such as Important Bird Areas of Nepal (2005), Important Bird and Biodiversity Areas of Nepal (2016), State of Nepal's Birds (2004) and State of Nepal's Birds (2010). Beside this, Carol has also worked on the status assessment of 798 bird species from Nepal which was compiled to publish the book *State of Nepal's Birds* (2016) co-authored with Dr. Hem Sagar Baral. With a wealth of knowledge on birds of Nepal and their status, they suggest using web based applications to document occurrence data of bird species in Nepal for better knowledge about their geographic distribution. "Also important is providing some degree of protection to the important bird and biodiversity areas located outside the protected areas", they suggest.

Dr. Hem Sagar Baral



First person to complete a doctorate on birds from Nepal, Dr. Hem Sagar Baral is among the finest bird researcher/conservationists to come out of Nepal. He admires Mr. Brian Houghton Hodgson for his colossal work in documenting Himalayan biodiversity and has ably followed his idol's steps. He also stresses the importance of role by communities co-existing with nature and thus loves exploring various parts of the country and

learns from these communities. Born in Prakashpur, Sunsari, Dr. Baral has been in the field of wildlife conservation for 30 years already. He currently lives with his family at Gairidhara, Kathmandu and serves as Country Representative for Zoological Society of London, the world's earliest conservation organization.

Dr. Baral's contribution to the field of wildlife research and conservation in Nepal is herculean and the list of his accomplishments is remarkable. He effectively sowed the seed of vulture conservation in Nepal by advocating and persuading the government to ban Diclofenac. Vulture conservation program is considered by many to be the most successful conservation program in Nepal. Birding has been his passion. Hence, he established Koshi bird observatory at Koshi during his time as chief technical advisor at Himalayan Nature for promoting bird research in Nepal. He also contributed in making birding popular in Nepal by translating the book 'Birds of Nepal'. His other publication works include six books, more than 100 scientific journal articles, and nearly 30 bird featured articles in various magazines to share his knowledge extensively with both scientific and general audience. He has also shared his knowledge through more than 100 TV and radio interviews. His works on owls include national status assessment of eight owl species in Nepal which was a part of bird species national red list project and establishing nest boxes for barn owls across Kathmandu valley. According to him illiteracy and poverty are two reasons that impede conservation. He believes that government needs to act swiftly and responsibly and we conservationists need to act as

facilitators, never losing hope.

Mr. Krishnamani Baral

A permanent resident of Baidam-6, Pokhara sub-metropolis, Mr. Krishnamani Baral's pen moves effortlessly when he starts writing about the issues of biodiversity conservation. He is currently affiliated with Annapurna post and has worked as reporter for reputed media houses in Pokhara such as *Samadhan Raashtriya Dainik* and *Himdoot Dainik* in the past. Eldest son in the family of nine, he has been involved in the field of journalism for 18 years now. He was born in Nuwarthok-7 and completed his graduation in English literature and Sociology from Prithvi Narayan Campus, Pokhara. His motivation to write and work for conservation is highly influenced by Mr. Raju Acharya, whose leadership, he says, has been noteworthy in the field of biodiversity conservation.



His contribution to the field of conservation in the country through journalism is exemplary, especially in the recent years. Important contributions include nearly seven dozen articles, both news and feature articles, on different components of biodiversity including bird conservation, lakes of Pokhara, wetland conservation, illegal wildlife trade, human-wildlife conflict and global warming and its impact. He believes that making students and people aware on biodiversity conservation issues will bear fruits in the future. To act on his belief, he has organized 35 conservation awareness camps for school students of Kathmandu, Pokhara, Nawalparasi and Tanahun. He loves taking photos of wildlife and believes that these photos can serve in promoting conservation awareness among people. With this belief, he has been making special contribution to vulture conservation by exhibiting his own photos for generating people's awareness regularly since 10 years. Similar exhibitions have also been organized in Pokhara and Lekhnath in order to raise people's awareness about nine lakes of Pokhara, Seti river, rivers of Lekhnath municipality, local wetlands, other lakes and wetland birds. His contribution to owl conservation is also praiseworthy

having rehabilitated and released owls on 26 occasions. He has also contributed by writing seven feature articles on owls.

Local Conservation Awards

This year, three individuals were awarded with local conservation awards for their contribution in conservation. Mr. Manoj Paudel, Journalist working at Kantipur Publication, was awarded for his contribution in conservation of birds and nature through his work in media. Mr. Jay Prakash Pandeya, chairman of Tilaurakot Collaborative Forest, was awarded for his leadership in forest and biodiversity conservation. Mr. Krishna Pokhrel from Kathmandu was awarded for his contribution in establishment of Jagadishpur Reservoir Management Multistakeholders Forum.



(left) Manoj Paudel and (right) Jay Prakash Pandeya receiving their local conservation awards

Bird Watching

Bird watching around Jagadishpur Reservoir was led by Mr. Dinesh Giri during the two days of Nepal Owl Festival 2017 from 7:30 am to 10 pm. Since it was winter, water fowls such as Bar-headed Goose, Red Wattled Lapwing, Common Coot, Asian Openbill, Indian Pond Heron, White-breasted Waterhen and White-throated Kingfisher were plenty at the reservoir.



Nature Photowalk

Mr. Bishal Gautam (owner/photographer/designer at BG Fotography) led nature photowalk during the Nepal Owl Festival in the mornings. Participants could photograph the serene Jagadishpur reservoir full of water fowls in misty mornings as well as local village life.





Cultural Events

To promote local participation and attraction during the festival, local communities performed various cultural shows. *Jhumra* dance by Tharu community, *Lathi* dance by Homestay group, *Badki* dance by Tharu community, *Biraha* Dance and *Farwahi* by Yadav community, *Sayari* from Muslim community, *Magar* dance from Magar community, *Bhajan* from Brahmin community, *Aalha* for Awadhi community, *Gadasi* dance and *Lathi* dance from local community, songs/dances related to conservation by local *Aamasamuha* (mother's group), *Muharram* from Muslim community and wildlife dance from students of Institute of Forestry were major attraction in the festival.

Traditional Games

Local communities participated in three traditional games played locally in Jagadishpur area. *Rassitanne* (tug of war), *Chikka* and *Lathi Pradarsan* were played in Nepal Owl Festival 2017. *Chikka* was played just as exhibition game and was not an official competition.



Owl Mascot

Gifted by Mr. Rajesh Acharya, owl mascot is a major entertainer during Nepal Owl Festival. It attracts visitors of every age group, from children to adults, with its cartoonish look and acts. Waving and dancing, the mascot helps to relate owl as lovable bird of prey. Every year, people compete to take photos with our owl mascot.



Traditional Food Items

Local communities had their traditional food items on sale.

These included food items such as *ghoongi*, duck meat, *pakoudas* (fried vegetables) and others.

Live Broadcasting of Events

For the first time, events of Nepal Owl Festival 2017, was broadcasted live on Facebook. Live broadcast was managed by Yagyalal Gyawali (freelance photographer) and Bishal Gautam. Cultural shows, games, face painting and temporary owl museum were covered during the live broadcast.

Conservation Speech



Conservation speeches were given by Abdul Rashid Khan, Raju Acharya and other speakers

Raju Acharya, Country Representative of World Owl Trust and Executive Director of Friends of Nature delivered speech on the importance of owls and their conservation. His message of owl conservation was repeated and stressed by other speakers as well.

Public Owl Conservation Camp

Public owl conservation camp was organized on February 3 around 20:00 near to the festival location in Jagadishpur. Owl documentaries were shown during camp at open public space near a junction. Around 200 locals participated in the event.



Public owl conservation camp



Certificate of Appreciation for Volunteers

The success of Nepal Owl Festival depends on the dedication of our volunteers and supporters. To appreciate their contribution in making Nepal Owl Festival a successful conservation event in Nepal, six volunteers were felicitated with special certificate of appreciation. Our volunteers Roshan Bhandari (Srijana College of Fine Arts and executive board Member of FON), Manoj Shakya Panju (Modern Indian School), Sabita Gurung (Small Mammals Conservation and Research Foundation), Madan Gyawali (Himalaya College of Engineering), Som Sharma (Pokhara) and Som G.C. (executive board member of FON) were presented with the special certificates. Each of them had volunteered in more than four festivals and contributed in their own special way.



Volunteers received special certificates of appreciation

Certificate of Appreciation for Conservation and Support

To encourage organizations working in the field of wildlife research and conservation, Small Mammals Conservation and Research Foundation (SMCRF) and Global Primate Network (GPN), were presented with certificate of appreciation. These youth-led organizations have been working tirelessly for the research and conservation of wildlife in Nepal.



(top left) Hem Bahadur Katuwal from SMCRF, (top right) Ganga Ram Regmi from GPN receiving certificate of appreciation for conservation for their respective organizations and (bottom right) Rajesh Acharya receiving certification of appreciation for his constant support to Nepal Owl Festival

Similarly, to show our gratitude for their constant support for Nepal Owl Festival, certificate of appreciation were presented to Natural History Museum and Mr. Rajesh Acharya. Natural History Museum has been providing museum specimen of owls and its prey to Nepal Owl Festival since 2014. Mr. Rajesh Acharya has been a trusted and reliable supporter of Nepal Owl Festival from its humble beginnings. The owl mascot, one key highlights of the festival, was also gifted by him to Friends of Nature.

Owl Research Grant

Hotel Crown Himalayas Owl Research and Conservation Grant of amount NPR 30,000 (USD 286.3) was established in memory of late. Hari Shankar Aryal, resident of Lakeside Pokhara, by his family to support young students in their dissertation. The grant is



Upama Poudel was granted this year's owl research grant

awarded every year on the occasion of Nepal Owl Festival. This year's Hotel Crown Himalayas Owl Research and Conservation Grant was awarded to Ms. Upama Poudel, a resident of Kathmandu. The title of her thesis is “A Study on Owl Habitat and its Conservation: A Case from Jagadishpur Lake Area”.

Prizes

Prize for the winners of school-level competition on poem, essay and art were awarded on the second day of the festival. Stationery items and books with conservation themes were included in these prizes.

The winners of traditional games were awarded with cash prize on the same day.

Troubles during Nepal Owl Festival 2017

Every year, Nepal Owl Festival grows a little. We learn more and more. Even then, we face some obstacles unforeseen every year. This year, power failure was a constant problem for us. Though, local partners had arranged for alternate source of power, a petrol generator, it was just enough for our cultural shows and stage events. These power failures didn't let us show how some electronic items such as owl call device and owl robots operate and work. It was disappointing for us as well as our visitors. We had to request them to come back again when the power was back.

Comparing with our previous Nepal Owl Festival, Nepal Owl Festival 2017 had undisputedly the largest crowd of participants. It was a little difficult to manage their enthusiasm as we didn't expect such huge turnovers. At times, it looked like we were really short of volunteers. However, our volunteers didn't give up and we were able to run the show without any major incidents.

Nepal Owl Festival 2017 in Media

Nepal Owl Festival 2017 attracted the attention of media from all over the nation. The event was covered by local, national as well as international media.



Online News

1. <http://www.madheshvani.com/details/15770/madhesh-updated>
2. <http://www.a2zsamachar.com/15528>
3. <http://www.lumbinireview.com/2017/02/05/5274>
4. <http://gorkhapatraonline.com/news/35890>
5. <http://nepal.ekantipur.com/news/2017-01-29/20170129152803.html>
6. <http://www.jagaransanchar.com/?p=11267>
7. <http://hamrosagarmatha.com/archives/8684>
8. [http://www.epaper-hub.com/nepal/epaper/gorkhapatra\(the-rising-nepal\).aspx](http://www.epaper-hub.com/nepal/epaper/gorkhapatra(the-rising-nepal).aspx)
9. <http://www.news24nepal.tv/2017/01/31/%E0%A4%B2%E0%A4%BE%E0%A4%9F%E0%A5%8B%E0%A4%95%E0%A5%8B%E0%A4%B8%E0%A5%87%E0%A4%B0%E0%A5%8B-%E0%A4%89%E0%A4%A4%E0%A5%8D%E0%A4%B8%E0%A4%B5-%E0%A4%95%E0%A4%BF%E0%A4%A8/>

10. <http://hamrosagarmatha.com/archives/category/%E0%A4%B8%E0%A4%AE%E0%A4%BE%E0%A4%9A%E0%A4%BE%E0%A4%B0>
11. <http://emountaintv.com/details?id=219&title=%E0%A4%B2%E0%A4%BE%E0%A4%9F%E0%A5%8B-%E0%A4%95%E0%A5%8B%E0%A4%B8%E0%A5%87%E0%A4%B0%E0%A5%8B-%E0%A4%89%E0%A4%A4%E0%A5%8D%E0%A4%B8%E0%A4%B5-%E0%A4%B9%E0%A5%81%E0%A4%A8%E0%A5%87->
12. <http://revoscience.com/np/1348-2/>
13. <http://www.esajhanews.com/?p=1545>

National Daily

1. Gorkhapatra National Daily
2. Kantipur National Daily
3. Nagarik National Daily
4. Annapurna National Daily

TV Channels

1. News 24
2. Sagarmatha
3. NTV
4. Mountain

FM

1. BBC Nepali Service (six million listeners)
2. Badganga FM
3. Other three FM from Kapilbastu
4. Community Information Network (75 districts coverage)
5. Ujyalo Network (national coverage)

Birds sighted during Bird watching at Nepal Owl Festival 2017 (Compiled by Raj Prasai, volunteer)

1. Great Cormorant 2. Little Cormorant 3. Lesser Whistling Duck 4. Common Pochard 5. Red Crested Pochard 6. Ferruginous Pochard 7. Eurasian Wigeon 8. Great Crested Grebe 9. Little Grebe 10. Tufted Duck 11. Common Coot 12. Mallard 13. Common Teal 14. Northern Shoveler 15. Northern Pintail 16. Bar Headed Goose 17. Bean Goose 18. Greylag Goose 19. Ruddy Shelduck 20. Common Moorhen 21. White Breasted Waterhen 22. Red Wattled Lapwing 23. Asian Openbill 24. Sarus Crane 25. Lesser Adjutant 26. Purple Heron 27. Indian Pond Heron 28. White Throated Kingfisher 29. Common Kingfisher 30. Stork Billed Kingfisher 31. White Wagtail 32. Red Vented Bulbul 33. Red Whiskered Bulbul 34. Black Drongo 35. White Bellied Drongo 36. House Crow 37. House Sparrow 38. Greater Coucal 39. Black Hooded Oriole 40. Barn Owl 41. Eurasian Collard Dove 42. Coppersmith Barbet

Owls Rescue Prior to the Festival

Two species of owls were rescued by Raju Acharya, executive director of FON, and Chiranjeevi Khanal, executive board member of FON, prior to the Nepal Owl Festival 2017 during preliminary visits to Jagadishpur. On January 15, seven barn owls were rescued by District Forest Office, Dolakha as well. We took it as good omen for our upcoming festival!



Event Photographs





INVITATION TO 'NEPAL OWL FESTIVAL'
February 3-4
Jagdishpur, Kapilbastu

FUSION OF ENTERTAINMENT, LOCAL CULTURE AND OWL CONSERVATION
For details see <https://web.facebook.com/nepalowl2005>

Organized by: Friends of Nature (FON) Nepal and Jagdishpur Festival Management Multi-stakeholders Forum
Email: naturesfren@yahoo.com Phone: 977-9841308266

प्रतिष्ठा निश्चय

धराको स्वयं मानिने काँफलेकसको जग्दीशपुर (जगती) लाटाकासेरो तथा हचिल उल्लसमा रमउती ।

लाटाकासेरो तथा हचिल उत्सव

आवृत्तिका
अतिथि: सभ्यता (संस्कृत) पारी
पिया प्येलिना (पुर्बिमाला) विन-शुभारम

मिति : ०३३ माघ २१ र २२, (फेब्रुअरी ३ र ४, २०१७)
स्थान : जग्दीशपुर, कापिलबस्तु

आयोजक
आवृत्तिका काँफलेक तथा
जग्दीशपुर उत्सव्य सञ्चालक मण्डल

Design
Creative Consulting



