



Event Report



NEPAL OWL FESTIVAL 2020



SUMMARY

According to a study by Friends of Nature Nepal, around 2000 owls are smuggled alive from Nepal every year for medicine, domestication and various superstitious activities. In a survey carried out in schools in Syangja, it was found that above 20% of total surveyed students use catapult to kill birds. This seems to create a serious threat to Owl species. People have also been found to disturb/torture owls by destroying their nests and removing eggs. Owls are also domesticated for recreational purposes due to lack of knowledge laws and punishments.

Ninth Nepal Owl Festival (NOF) was organized on 7th and 8th of February, 2020 in Rangbhang, Syangja with the main objective of raising awareness on the importance of owls to agriculture due to their ecological roles. The festival offered fusion of culture, conservation education and entertainment. It was held at the premises of **Araniko Secondary School**. The festival hosted around 5000 general public along with 1412 students from 25 schools and was successful in communicating message on the importance of owl conservation among them.



A glimpse of NOF 2020 Venue

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We would like to acknowledge with much appreciation the crucial role of organizers, our co-organizers, supporters, partners and all well-wishers for making Nepal Festival-2020, a grand event.

Organizers



Festival Partners



Financial Supporters



Media Partners



FOREWORD

We would like to express our utmost gratitude to everyone involved in various phases of Nepal Owl Festival 2020, which led to its grand success.

Our gratitude is extended to all the organizations associated with the festival. We are beholden to our main organizers; Rangbhang Club and Millennium Trek Management Committee for their cooperation and support. We are indebted to Araniko Secondary School for providing venue and for their constant support throughout. In addition to our primary financial supporters, we express our heartfelt gratitude to Rajesh Acharya, Roseanne Yoakum, Heidi Kretser, Andromeda de Gioia, Dr. Ingrid Barbara Kohl, Dot Karlsen, Anil Bhattachan, Gopal Raj Joshi, Pam Dimeler, Sabita Paudel, Aneesha Pokharel and Alejandra Panza Lamón for their financial support via our online fund-raising campaign.

A special thank you to Raju Acharya, Country Representative (Nepal), World Owl Trust for his leadership and coordination throughout the entire ‘Nepal Owl Festival’ program and for conducting conservation awareness camps as a part of it. A very special gratitude to Yadav Ghimirey, for his integral role in conducting the festival. We would also like to thank Dr. Ingrid Barbara Kohl and Kushal Neupane for their effort in owl conservation camps. Coordination of Bal Kumar Gurung in organizing the festival deserves our sincere gratitude. We are also grateful to other team members of Nepal Owl Festival 2020 organizing committee for their relentless effort and cooperation during the festival.

A special mention to Manashanta Ghimire for leading birding event during the festival. In addition, we extend our sincere gratitude to Bishal Gautam for his financial contribution to our annual grant program (Bishal Gautam Conservation Grants) which was handed to Kushal Neupane for his research proposal. We want to thank Natural History Museum, Swoyambhu and Prithvinarayan Campus for providing museum specimen of owls and their prey species. We are also grateful to Madan Gyanwali, Kabira Khadka and Bishnu Gyawali for Owl Robot, Owl Call Device and Owl Video Device. We are very thankful to Narayan Prasad Shrestha for Philately and Numismatic Exhibition and Rijan G.C for stone art on owls and other subjects.

Hunny Manandhar deserves a special mention for her continuous support as a volunteer and nail artist over the years. For photography and documentary of the festival, we want to thank Rohit Giri. We would also like to thank Raju Acharya, Prem Thapa, Sunil Bantawa, Bikash Ghimire, Dr. Ingrid Barbara Kohl, Hunny Manandhar and Ambika Regmi for additional photographs. Ram Prasad Itani, Urusha Lamsal, Anu Rana Magar deserve our thankfulness for making the festival colorful by volunteering for face painting of festival participants/visitors. Our heartfelt gratitude to Paschimanchal Community Hospital, Pokhara for providing free basic health facilities by organizing “health Camp” at the venue. For participation in poster presentation, we want to thank Sanjeev Baniya, Chiranjeevi Khanal, Prashant Ghimire, Anoj Subedi, Hemanta Dhakal, Suman Sapkota, Prabhat Kiran Bhattarai and Snake Conservation Society, Pokhara. We are also grateful to Himalayan Nature, Bird Conservation Nepal and Pokhara Bird Society for making the festival informative by their organizational stalls.

Our special thanks to Prof. Karan Bahadur Shah for writing the beautiful lyrics of the welcome song and to Rajman Maharjan, Manoj Ghimire and Bikash Ghimire for the sensational music/vocal and to the whole team involved. We would like to thank students from Institute of Pokhara (IOF) and all the other local performers and participants of the cultural programs for their respective performance.

Most importantly this festival wouldn't have been possible without the effort of our team of wonderful volunteers – Samundra Ghimerey, Bikash Ghimire, Suman Sapkota, Ravi Bikram Shah, Ashish Poudel, Yonjan Dahal, Ambika Regmi, Jyoti Dhakal, Pushpa Khanal, Dinesh Bhusal, Sujana Sunar, Chiranjeevi Khanal, Abhisek Niraula, Kushal Neupane, Hunny Manandhar, Prarthana Neupane, Sujata Shrestha, Pooja Pokhrel, Prabhat Kiran Bhattarai, Sagar Sharma, Madhav Dhital, Bikal Paudel, Sangam Paudel and Bina Phuyal. Thank you to each one of you. We are also very appreciative of all the local volunteers involved.

Finally, we would like to thank the people of Rangbhang-Bhaisegaunda, Syangja for their enthusiasm, support and participation in the festival.



Embroidered Nepal Owl Festival's T-shirts used to create its acronym

GOAL AND OBJECTIVE OF “NEPAL OWL FESTIVAL”

The overall goal of the program was to enhance public participation in owl conservation in Nepal. The specific objectives were as follows

1. To discourage the hunting and trade of owls in Nepal by elevating conservation awareness of local people, media and political leaders
2. To enhance the local capacity in owl conservation via education program
3. To recognize the hidden conservation heroes and sheroes of Nepal
4. To promote traditional culture and games of the area
5. To promote eco-tourism in the area
6. To encourage and mentor young graduates for owl conservation via opportunity of volunteering in the event



Main banner of NOF 2020

BACKGROUND

Ever since its inception in 2012 AD, the festival has been gradually growing bigger and evolving into a multifaceted event. The Nepal Owl Festival is celebrated in solidarity of the International Festival of Owls, which is celebrated in Houston, Minnesota every year in March.

When we first started, our aim was to take the festival to different parts of the country, wherein, illegal hunting and trade causes serious threat to owl species. We wanted to spread conservation awareness about owls found in Nepal by creating a festive environment where people would have access to all kinds of information about the species and could interact with conservationists and vice-versa.

While the main festival is celebrated as a two-day event, our team members go through careful planning months ahead, to find the optimum location and coordinate with the local agencies. It is essential to build good relation with the local community as community members and representatives have an important role in constructing and promoting the event, and they work hand-in-hand with us to make the festival fun and beneficial (in terms of knowledge gained), for everyone.

Once an agreement is reached with local community members or a local organization, a festival management committee is formed, followed by several meetings to discuss and allocate responsibilities; to plan and discuss event structure, venue, promotions, etc.

Event site planning and necessary preparations for the festival at our office in Kathmandu are carried out simultaneously a month prior to the festival date. Initial planning phase includes logistic arrangements and preparation, and collection of festival display components. A dedicated team of our staff and volunteers from different professional backgrounds work together round the clock and contribute their valued input to improve and support our work.

We start our promotions on social media few weeks preceding the event so more people from different parts of Nepal will have information about the event and can plan a possible weekend getaway. We often receive some curious international visitors as well, attracted by the event.

Couple of weeks prior to the festival, conservation awareness camps are held in schools located in and around the town/village of the festival site. The young children are taught about owls and their importance through interactive presentation by our experts. An interschool competition is held for art, poetry, story and essay writing on owls. Winners of the competition are later awarded during the festival and their work is displayed among the exhibits of the owl museum.

Back in our office in Kathmandu, the team divides and we work on different tasks. After making sure we have everything ready, the team moves to the festival site several days ahead to prepare the festival venue. At the venue, we work with the local organizers, plan event components and schedules, get everything ready. Finally, the day of the festival arrives, and together we celebrate!

PROMOTION

We started promotion of the festival a month prior to the festival date through our social media sites and through Radio Kantipur, which has a wide network coverage in Nepal. We also held a press conference in Putalibazar, the headquarter of Syangja district. The conference was aimed to increase media presence/coverage so as to spread our message on conservation far and wide. We also put banners in strategic locations of Putalibazar, Ghumti and Jyamire. We announced a call for poster presentation on our Facebook page for national and international researchers to present their research on wildlife during the festival. National FMs and local FMs were mobilized for the extension of the program in daily basis.

NEPAL OWL FESTIVAL 2020 (7-8 February)

नेपाल लाटोकोसेरो तथा हुचिल उत्सव २०७६ (माघ २४-२५)

FUSION OF ENTERTAINMENT, LOCAL CULTURE AND OWL CONSERVATION!!!



मुख्य कार्यक्रमहरु :
घाटु, सोरठी, झोरा, कौडा, पांग्रा घुमाउने, भुरुम, घुयत्रो, लाटोकोसेरोको संग्रहालय, रोबोट, चरा अवलोकन, अनुहार तथा नड्मा लाटोकोसेरो बनाउने, अनुसन्धानकर्मीहरुको प्रस्तुती संरक्षण प्रवचन, राष्ट्रिय पुरस्कार आदी

सम्पर्क
उत्सव : ९८५६०५२५१९
घरबास : ९८०५८८१२९८

कसरि पुग्ने ?
पोखराबाट स्याङ्जा (घुम्ती)- ३४ किलोमिटर, घुम्तीबाट राडभाङ - १० किलोमिटर
मोटरसाइकल, स्कुटी, फोर व्हिलर बस, ग्राउन्ड क्लिपरेन्स राम्रो भएको गाडीबाट आउन सकिन्छ

यहाँहरुलाई हार्दिक स्वागत छ ।

यही माघ २४ र २५ गते राडभाङ मैसेगौडा जाओ ।

नेपाल लाटोकोसेरो तथा हुचिल उत्सवमा रमाओ ॥



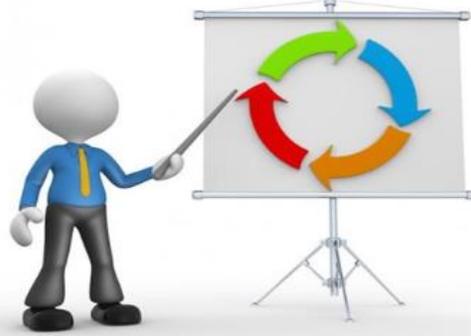
Banners for promotion of NOF 2020 in online social media

Friends of Nature-FON Nepal
12 January · 🌐

OPPORTUNITY FOR POSTER PRESENTATION AT NEPAL OWL FESTIVAL 2020

Researchers/Conservationists interested to present their research/conservation work during the upcoming 'Nepal Owl Festival 2020' can prepare a poster about their work and present during this annual conservation event. Interested candidates have to abide by the following guidelines for preparing and submitting the posters.

ELIGIBILITY: People who have completed their thesis, research field work, submitted mid-term... See more



प्रभाल किरण, Ravi Bikram Shah and 40 others · 9 shares

Friends of Nature-FON Nepal
22 January at 08:23 · 🌐

Let's be together to conserve owls!



THEASIALIVE.COM

Let's be together to conserve owls!

Kathmandu With a view to dispelling myths and fallacies about owls and to...

Niroj Paudel, Ravi Bikram Shah and 85 others · 3 shares

Friends of Nature-FON Nepal
19 January · 🌐

Mark your calendar for 'Nepal Owl Festival'
(location: Rangbhang Bhaisegauda, Date : 7-8 Feb, 2020)
स्याङ्जा जिल्लाको राङ्भाङ भैसेगाउँमा हुने 'नेपाल ताटोकोसेरो तथा हुचीत उल्लव २०७६' (माघ २४ र २५) आउन नबिर्सनु होला... See more



WWW.FONNEPAL.ORG

Nepal Owl Festival ! 7-8 Feb, 2020 !! Rangbhang Bhaisegauda !!! [Learn More](#)

Karan Shah, Jyoti Dhakal and 576 others · 2 comments 94 shares

Friends of Nature-FON Nepal
13 January · 🌐

Nepal Owl Festival 2020 preparation begins 🐾

(7-8 February, Rangbhang, Syangja) 📍



You, Barsha Tripathi, Prakriti Neupane and 214 others · 11 comments

Like Comment Share

Promotion in Social media and call for poster presentation

FESTIVAL SITE: RANGBHANG - BHAISEGAUNDA



Rangbhang-Bhaisegaunda Village, Syangja, Nepal

Rangbhang-Bhaisegaunda lies on Millennium trek route which touches four municipalities and one rural municipality of Syangja and Tanahun districts. This hilly trekking route is 72 kilometers long and lies at altitude of about 1509 meter from the mean sea level. Breathtaking views of Annapurna, Dhaulagiri and Manaslu mountain peaks can be observed. People from Gurung and Magar community are the main inhabitants of the area, so visitors can enjoy *ghatu*, *sorathi*, *jhora*, *kaura* and other traditional dances.



A local women of Rangbhang-Bhaisegaunda

Rolbaraha Community Forest, Jar Katne Dhunga, Siudi Cave (30 minutes) and temple (1 hour), Siddhababa Temple, Halhale (1.3 hours), Khangrang Cave (1 hour), Nilpokhari, Khand Devi temple, historical waterfall, Mysterious cave, Kalika Bhairav, Balkanya Devi Temple Jyamire, Rol Baraha Kshetra are the other touristic area nearer this route.

The forests in this area are the healthy habitat to barking deer, porcupine, hare, monkey, leopard cat, leopard, pheasant, jackal, spiny babbler, magpies, partridge, parakeet, dove, owls, cuckoo, bulbul and various other birds and animals. The route is good for bird watching and eco-tourism.

CONSERVATION AWARENESS CAMPS

A couple of weeks prior to the festival, conservation awareness camps were held in 25 schools in and around festival sites of Rangbhang-Bhaisegaunda, Syangja. The conservation camps were conducted by Raju Acharya, Kushal Neupane and Dr. Ingrid Barbara Kohl.

A total of 1412 students participated in the conservation camps. Our experts conveyed knowledge on the status and conservation of owls in Nepal. The camps were successful in delivering the message on ecological importance of owls and encouraged to help protect the species.



School students attending one of the owl conservation camps

A survey carried out before the conservation awareness camps in those schools showed that **69.05%** of the surveyed students have seen owls, **10.05%** of the total participants have heard about owl trade and **9.21%** of them have heard about owl domestication. **20.18%** of the participants responded positively to using catapult and **1.56%** of the total participants have consumed owls' meat.

INTER-SCHOOL COMPETITIONS

Interschool competitions were held for art, poetry, story and essay writing on owls prior to the main festival event. Students from seven different schools participated in these competitions. Each school called for participation from among their students; evaluated and submitted their best entries to compete in the interschool competition.

We received the shortlisted drawings, essays, stories and poems, which was evaluated by Prof. Karan Bahadur Shah. Top 3 entries in each category were selected as winners. They were displayed during the owl festival in the owl museum, and the students were awarded with certificates and prize during the festival.

Winners of inter-school competition

	Story Writing		Essay		Poem		Art	
	Name	School	Name	School	Name	School	Name	School
1 st	Ichhya Gurung	Shree Araniko Secondary School	Biswas Sunar	Shree Baraha Janashram Secondary School	Samikshya Shahi	Shree Kolma Barahchaur Secondary School	Saeed Mia	Shree Bhagyodaya Secondary School
2 nd	Sumina Gurung	Shree Baraha Janashram Secondary School	Bijina Shahi	Shree Kolma Barahchaur Secondary School	Aditya Godar	Shree Kajiman Haritika Secondary School	Sugam Thapa	Shree Baraha Janashram Secondary School
3 rd	Gopal B.K.	Shree Bhagyodaya Secondary School	Sushant Sapkota	Shree Kajiman Haritika Secondary School	Roshani Pariyar	Shree Araniko Secondary School	Kushal Gurung	Shree Bhagyodaya Secondary School
			Sarmila Pariyar	Shree Araniko Secondary School			Toran Thapa	Shree Araniko Secondary School



Students keenly participating in an Owl conservation camp

BIRDING

The first activity of the festival was birding in the early mornings of 7th and 8th of February 2020. A total of 45 interested locals, visitors and students from Institute of Forestry (IOF), Pokhara joined us each day to explore the morning glory of the forest and see 83 species of birds residing in this area. The event was led by Mr. Manashanta Ghimire, a conservationist and founding president of Pokhara Bird Society, on both days.



Exploring bird diversity of Rangbhang-Bhaisegaunda, Syangja

CULTURAL PROGRAM

Various local artists performed traditional dances and songs during the festival. Traditional musical instruments and dance forms such as *Ghatu*, *Jhora*, *Sorathi*, *Kaura*, *Naumati baja*, *bhajan*, *Salaijo*, *22 Taal Bhaka*, *Chhaiti nach* performed by locals captivated the visitors. Although the main inhabitants of Rangbhang-Bhaisegaunda are Gurungs and Magars, the program was successful in reflecting cultural diversity.

The program also included a number of traditional games and competitions-*Bhurum*, *ghocha gadne*, *pangra ghumaune*, *ghuyatro* that became a big source of attraction for the visitors. Students from the Institute of Forestry (IOF) also showed their participation through dances and flash mob related to conservation and more.

Welcome song that quickly became popular was written by Prof. Karan Bahadur Shah, music by Rajman Maharjan along with Bikash Ghimire and sung by Manoj Ghimire and team.



Students of IOF Pokhara performing their dance



Ghatu Dancers from Putalibazar Municipality-2, Jyamire



Welcome Song performed by the organizing team



Traditional "Ghoch-Gaadne" game



Traditional "Thela-Falne" competition which is basically a shot put event



Visitors at the festival venue

OWL MUSEUM

Owl museum was the main attraction of the festival. The museum is filled with a large collection of artworks, curios, Information display on owls of Nepal and much more.

A large number of volunteers worked rigorously in preparation of the museum while also providing information to the visitors about displayed items. Owl robots and owl call devices and owl video devices quickly drew public attention. The museum acted as a creative center in flowing information on owl biology and conservation to the people.



One component of Owl museum



Preparation for Owl museum

OWL DART BOARD

Owl dart board area was one of the most crowded areas during the festival. We set up two dart boards for the festival. One dart board had an owl and a hunter painted on it while the other had a circle at the center and owls on the periphery. Participants who were able to hit the hunter or the circle were presented with owl masks made by our volunteers.

The participants were mostly school children. However, we were excited to see many adult villagers too interested in the game and testing their darting skills. Around 400 people played the game during the festival. Those who hit the owls made a voluntary contribution which summed up to **NPR 6035 (approx. \$60)**. The amount raised will be used in the next owl festival.

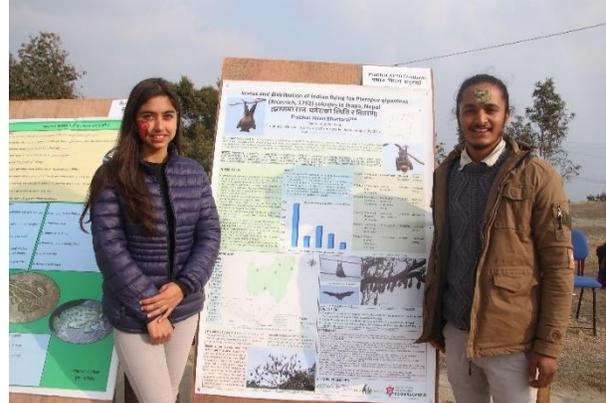


Owl dart board

POSTER PRESENTATION

Researchers and conservationists from different organizations participated and presented posters about their work during the festival. Following below is the list of presentation titles and presenters:

- a. Moth of Gaurishankar Conservation Area, Ashant Dewan
- b. Breeding habitat preference of dengue vector (*Aedes aegypti*) in Kathmandu, Alka Bhandari
- c. Status and Distribution of Indian Flying fox colonies in Jhapa, Nepal, Prabhat Kiran Bhattarai
- d. Bats of Nepal, Sanjeev Baniya
- e. Importance of Frogs, Suman Sapkota
- f. Research on Woolly-necked Stork, Prashant Ghimire
- g. Investigating the roosting habitat characteristics of Asian Barred Owlet (*Glaucidium cuculoides*) in Myagdi district, Anoj Subedi
- h. Owl Research and Conservation in South Africa, Dr. Ingrid Barbara Kohl
- i. Vultures of Nepal, Hemanta Dhakal
- j. Snakes of Nepal, Snake Conservation Society
- k. Population dynamics of owls in a mountainous old-growth forest in Austria correlated to beech mast and small mammal populations (UNESCO World Heritage Site Dürrenstein Wilderness Area, Rothwald Primeval Forest)
- l. The Ural Owl re-introduction to Austria from the UNESCO World Heritage Site Dürrenstein Wilderness Area
- m. Owl Education and Conservation in South Africa - 20 years of successes of owlproject.org



Poster presenters interacting with guests during the festival

CONSERVATION SPEECH

During the cultural program, conservationists and local leaders took the stage to speak on the importance of nature and biodiversity conservation.

Conservation speech were given by Hon. Kiran Gurung (Gandaki Province Minister for Economic Affairs and Planning), Karan Bahadur Shah (Conservationist and Professor), Dr. Ingrid Barbara Kohl (Conservationist), Raju Acharya (Country Representative for Nepal, World Owl Trust, UK), Harka Gurung (General Secretary of Millennium Trek Management Committee), Prakriti Neupane.



Dr. Ingrid B. Kohl and Mr. Raju Acharya during a conservation speech session

FESTIVAL STALLS AND HEALTH CAMP

Bird Conservation Nepal (BCN), Himalayan Nature, Pokhara Bird Society (PBS), had their stalls to explain their activities, using informative posters and books. These organizations have been actively working in the sector of wildlife conservation in Nepal.

A few stalls were set up by locals to sell local produce like baskets, jabi bags and for local food items.

FON Nepal also had some festival stalls. We had a small souvenir shop with owl printed t-shirts and owl key rings. We also had free owl face-painting and nail-painting stalls, and a photo-booth to add to the festive environment. We were able to raise some funds by selling t-shirts and key rings which will be used for the next year's owl festival. A free health camp was run by Paschimanchal Community Hospital, Pokhara where more than 200 locals were able to get basic health facilities.



Free health camp at Rangbhang-Bhaisegaunda during NOF 2020

AWARDS AND FELICITATIONS

Four distinguished individuals who made significant contributions to biodiversity and nature conservation in Nepal were presented with the **Nature Conservation Award 2020**. Awardees for this year were Avinash Chaudhary, Bishwanath Rijal, Manashanta Ghimire and Laxman Prasad Paudyal.

Local conservation awards were presented to the Division Forest Office, Syangja and Basudev Poudel, Pokhara for their contributions through collaboration, coordination and advocacy of environmental and biodiversity conservation issues in Nepal.

Shree Deep Jyoti Yuva Club, Phalelung Rural Municipality, Panchthar and Bardia Nature Conservation Club, Thakurbaba Municipality, Bardia were felicitated for their continuous effort in elevating conservation awareness of people in their respective areas. Certificates and prizes were awarded to school children who attained 1st, 2nd, and 3rd, positions in inter-school competitions on art, essay, story and poem writing.



Nature Conservation Award winners 2020

WINNERS PROFILE

Avinash Chaudhary

Avinash Chaudhary has been working as a reporter based in Dhangadi for two daily newspapers namely, 'Gorkhapatra' and 'The Rising Nepal'. He is also the News Co-ordinator for 'Paschim Today', a local media. In the past, he has also worked as an editor for "Hamara Pahura Tharu" and as a reporter for "Shree Nepal Times" a daily newspaper. Chaudhary started his career in journalism writing news reports on environmental conservation and has had an experience of 13 years just by the age of 31. He has brought over six dozen of cases/issues related to conservation in the light of public via feature and news. He often writes about birds, which also includes Owls. He hasn't limited himself to news reporting but has worked actively in their conservation too.



Avinash Chaudhary is highly inspired by the works of Bhojraj Shrestha from Kailali district. He has a keen interest in photography, travelling to new places and communicating with local people. He regards human-wildlife conflict, poaching of wild animals and habitat destruction as major challenges to conservation compounded by low funding from government and lack of co-ordination between concerned stakeholders.

Bishwanath Rijal

Bishwanath Rijal lives in Tarkeshwor Municipality, Kathmandu and has been continuously working to conserve the environment for a decade now. He has been working as a Co-Ordinator in LVDI Inc. and President for Green Guard Nepal for the past three years.



Rijal has successfully rescued up to 60 animals including five owls. He has also written 30 articles on biodiversity conservation, three of which are on owls. While working as a science teacher for almost 17 years, he encouraged students to work for nature. He also worked as an editor for magazine, "Green Guard" which provided platform to a number of students to disseminate their opinions on conservation. He has also run over hundred awareness campaigns to sensitize students and general public on conservation issues. Rijal also led the celebration of 'Monkey day' for four years now. In recent years, Rijal has been working to control hunting and poaching of wild animals. Bishwanath Rijal is inspired by the works of Dr. Chia L Tan and Dr. Andy "John" Phillips. He expresses the need of a separate authority to work in the field of wildlife research and conservation. Rijal stresses over the need of attention and co-operation between concerned organizations and individuals in this region.

Manashanta Ghimire

Currently residing at Lakeside, Pokhara, Manashanta Ghimire is a well-known name in the field of bird conservation. He is the founding president of 'Pokhara Bird Society' and has been persistently working in the area of bird conservation for a decade now.

He is a birding guide by profession and also been working as visiting lecturer of Ornithology in the Institute of Forestry, Pokhara.



Ghimire has organized over 150 birdwatching events and has been involved in rescue and rehabilitation of over 40 wild animals, five of which include owls. Pokhara Bird Fair and Nepal Bird Fair, organized in his leadership, were highly commended for their success in propagating the message on the status and conservation of birds. He has been directly involved in research related to five birds and firmly believes in the need of disseminating such research works to the light of public. He has already published two bird books and is working on the next two. In addition, he has also published twenty technical reports and research articles

Laxman Prasad Poudyal

Laxman Prasad Poudyal lives in Tyanglaphaant, Kirtipur. He is currently based in Sukla Phanta National Park in Kanchanpur District as the Chief Warden. Poudel has been contributing to the field of conservation for 28 years now during his involvement in various positions at Annapurna Conservation Area, Chitwan, Sagarmatha and Shivapuri-Nagarjuna National Parks.

Poudyal has been directly involved in the research of Pheasants, Vulture, Lesser Adjutant Stork and Bengal Florican and has published over 15 research articles. He has authored three and co-authored two books. He has organized ten birdwatching events and conservation education programs in four schools. He had significant involvement during preparation of Red List of birds in Nepal. Furthermore, he also played a pivotal role in creating conservation work plan for Rhino, Gharial, Snow Leopard, Pangolin, Pheasants, and Red Panda. Poudyal is inspired by the works of Dr. Hem Sagar Baral. He relishes birding and travelling. Poudyal firmly believes the need to simplify the procedure involved in research permit and also stresses over the need of government to fund the research projects to facilitate the growth and ensure the future of research field.



LOCAL CONSERVATION AWARD WINNERS 2020

Division Forest Office, Syangja

Division Forest Office, Syangja has played an important role in the biodiversity conservation in the district through active collaboration and coordination with relevant conservation stakeholders in the district.

Basudev Paudel

Basudev Paudel, resident of Bharatpokhari, Pokhara-33, Kaski district has contributed immensely in raising the conservation awareness of general masses through his proactive conservation focused journalism.

ORGANIZATIONAL FELICITATION 2020

Shree Deep Jyoti Yuva Club

Shree Deep Jyoti Yuva Club was established in 1996 in Falelung Rural Municipality, Panchthar district, Eastern Nepal. SDJYC has collaborated with various organisations in order to elevate the conservation awareness and capacity of the people in the area through research conservation of biodiversity, introducing conservation education at school level, promoting eco-tourism and introducing alternative livelihood opportunities.

Bardia Nature Conservation Club

Established in 2009, Bardia Nature Conservation Club played an important role in declaring Bardia a diclofenac free district in early years. Over the last decade the organization has contributed significantly in bird conservation through research and conservation of wetland birds, assisting in vulture conservation action plan, plantation and publishing the book Birds of Bardia. It also offers regular bird watching trips for interested people.

FELICITATION FOR FOUR YEARS OF INVOLVEMENT IN NEPAL OWL FESTIVAL

Natural History Museum, Swoyambhu, Prof. Karan Bahadur Shah, Kaushal Yadav, Jeevan Rai, Bidhan Adhikary, Bishal Gautam, Prarthana Neupane were felicitated for their engagement and support in making Nepal Owl Festival successful for four years.



Felicitated volunteers at NOF 2020



Locals of Rangbhang-Bhaisegaunda demonstrating a traditional game "Ghuynetro Ghumaune" at NOF 2020

NAIL ART AND FACE PAINT

Nail art and face paint are some of many attractions of the festival. Participants are encouraged to have their nails and face painted by our artists' Hunny mamandhar, Ram Prasad Itani, Urusha Lamsal and Anu Rana Magar.



Mr. Ram Itani, painting owl in face (TOP); Ms. Hunny Manandhar painting owl in nails (Bottom)

MEDIA COVERAGE

Nepal Owl Festival 2020 was covered by several local and national medias. Many individuals and media broadcast featured news and videos of the festival.

Online news in Nepali language

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YouTube Coverage

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Radio broadcast

Syangja FM
CIN Network
Kantipur FM

Television broadcast

Kantipur TV
Syangja TV
Aandhikhola TV

National Newspaper coverage

Kantipur
Gorkhapatra
Nagarik
Annapurna Post
Samadhan



Visitors at the festival



Chief Guest, inaugurating temporary Owl museum



A traditional house constructed for festival

VOLUNTEERS

Our team of volunteers deserve a special acknowledgement for their hard work and dedication in making the owl festival a grand success. The volunteers' team comprised of volunteers from Kathmandu, Pokhara and locals of the Rangbhang-Bhaisegaua region.

After arrival at Rangbhang, the volunteers worked from early morning to late hours with little to no rest until the end of the festival. They performed a multitude of tasks involved in festival preparation and continued their dedication during the two days of the festival. Everything ran smoothly and the festival saw mammoth success. A huge applaud to the wonderful team of volunteers involved in Nepal Owl Festival 2020!



Volunteers from Friends of Nature (Top) and Local volunteer (Bottom)

AFTERWORD



Announcement of successful completion of NOF 2020



A traditional "Rote-Ping" at NOF 2020 Venue



Visitors listening to owl conservation issues via a talking robot



Mr. Bishal Gautam (left) contributed to our annual grant program (NPR 40000) through **Bishal Gautam Conservation Grants** which was handed to Kushal Neupane for his research proposal on owls.

**SEE YOU ALL IN THE NEXT
EDITION OF 'NEPAL OWL
FESTIVAL 2021!'**



Thank you 😊