



**WILDLIFE AND NATURE PROTECTION SOCIETY
OF SRI LANKA (CEYLON)**

ESTABLISHED 1894

ANNUAL REPORT

AND ACCOUNTS 2019



01 JANUARY TO 31 DECEMBER 2019

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WNPS GENERAL COMMITTEE 2019

President

Mr. Sriyan de Silva Wijeyeratne

Vice Presidents

Ms. Tami Flamer-Caldera

Mr. Spencer Manuelpillai

Hon. General Secretary

Mr. Jehan CanagaRetna

Hon. Treasurer

Mr. Dilshan Hettiaratchi

Immediate Past President

Mr. Rukshan Jayewardene

General Committee Members

Mr. Vidya Abhayagunawardena

Dr. [Ms.] Nirmali De Silva

Dr. Hemantha Perera

Ms. Caryll Tozer

Prof. Lakdas Fernando

Ms. Zaineb Akbarally

Mr. Avijja Fonseka

Mr. Rahula Dassenaieke

Mr. Shanaka Wijesinghe

Mr. Graham Marshall

Ms. Sarasi Wijeratne

Mr. Ranjan Josiah

Hon. Editor – Loris

Ms. Sarasi Wijeratne

Hon. Editor - Warana

Mr. Sanjaya Weerakkody (from Oct 2019)

Hon. Auditors

M/s. Tudor V. Perera & Company, Chartered Accountant,
No 296/20, Shanthi Mawatha, High Level Road, Kirulapone, Colombo 6

WILDLIFE & NATURE PROTECTION SOCIETY of SRI LANKA

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The Pangolin is the most trafficked mammal in the world and as of January 2020, three of the 8 species are listed as critically endangered while another three are listed as endangered and the balance two are listed as vulnerable on the Red List of Threatened Species. It is said that a Pangolin is killed every 5 minutes in the wild (Source: The Wildlife Justice Commission).

Image courtesy of Dr. Priyan Perera. Our cover photograph is courtesy of L J Mendis Wickramasinghe.

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Dear Member,

**NOTICE OF THE 126th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF
THE WILDLIFE & NATURE PROTECTION SOCIETY OF SRI LANKA**

The Annual General Meeting of the **WILDLIFE & NATURE PROTECTION SOCIETY OF SRI LANKA** will be held on **Sunday May 17th, 2020** at the WNPS Head Office, #86 Rajamalwatta Road Battaramulla, commencing at 5.00 pm. All Ordinary Members of good standing and Life Members are entitled to attend and vote at the AGM. Junior and Honorary Members may attend but are **NOT** entitled to vote. Admission to the meeting will be on production of a valid membership card.

AGENDA

1. Reading of the Notice convening the Annual General Meeting.
2. Two minutes silence in respect of members who have passed away in 2019.
3. Apologies for absence.
4. Adoption of the Minutes of the 125th AGM held on May 26th, 2019
5. Matters arising from the Minutes.
6. Adoption of the Report of the Hon. General Secretary for 2019.
7. Adoption of the Statement of Accounts for 2019.
8. Tabling of the Accounts of the WNPS Education and Propaganda Trust.
9. The President's address.
10. Election of members to the General Committee.
11. Election of Office Bearers.
12. Election of Auditors.
13. Resolutions for which due notice have been given.
14. Conferment of Honorary Membership.
15. Any other matters for which due notice have been given.



Jehan M. CanagaRetna,
Hon. General Secretary
March 23rd, 2020

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE HON. GENERAL SECRETARY



2019 was a tumultuous year for Sri Lanka with the horrific Easter Sunday bombings of Apr 21, 2019, killing and injuring hundreds of innocent civilians and seriously debilitating an already sputtering economy. As a nation Sri Lankan is resilient, but the Sri Lankan body politic has been dealt a series of deadly blows over the past 30 years, an experience seen in very few countries. In the latter part of 2019, Sri Lanka also saw a presidential election with the peaceful transfer of power to a new President. However, despite these major political and economic changes, and if political history is anything to judge by, we, here at the Wildlife and Nature Protection Society (WNPS), one of the leading conservation organisations in the country, do not anticipate these governmental changes having a great deal of positive impact on either wildlife management or conservation efforts in Sri Lanka. We hope and pray we are proven wrong.

Those of us in the wildlife management and conservation community often ask the question, why is it so difficult for someone passionate about wildlife and conservation to assume leadership of our Wildlife Ministry and lead the country forward in the right footing of conservation. Why has that been such a challenge for so many decades? It appears that the leadership positions assigned to the Ministry of Wildlife may not be ideal choices to take the mandate of wildlife conservation forward. In the last 5 years, we have had approximately 5 or 6 different Cabinet Ministers in charge of Wildlife, a development that resulted in many of the administrative problems and roadblocks that have halted the progress of wildlife conservation in our country.

Those of us in the wildlife management and conservation community often ask the question, why is it so difficult for someone passionate about wildlife and conservation to assume leadership of our Wildlife Ministry and lead the Country forward in the right footing of conservation?

In many instances, the answers to our conservation problems are obvious but implementing these solutions turn out to be complex and onerous. To some of us, these obvious solutions would also hamper the illicit profit making activities of individuals. As an example, the now Cabinet approved 'National Elephant Policy', co-authored by conservationists and conservation organisations, in conjunction with the Department of Wildlife Conservation (DWC) was held up with different Secretaries of the Ministry of Wildlife since 2006, and only got approval in late 2019. Is there an explanation for this 13 year delay? We, here at the Society, cannot fathom a legitimate, policy-driven reason for this complete lack of action: except to speculate that decision makers see approving and implementing the 'National Elephant Policy' as being unfavourable to various personal interests. The Society, which helped create the 'Fauna and Flora Protection Ordinance' (FFPO), even after working closely with the Department of DWC, finds it extremely difficult to protect Sri Lanka's forests from being destroyed

by various political interests. In specific cases, the continued stripping of our forests and clearing of forest land for personal gain continues unabated across Sri Lanka. There are also large scale illegal forest clearance projects and in other instances, smaller scale projects such as illegal chena cultivation to secure votes at election time. We hope the current political leadership changes this trend and makes conservation one of its key strategies to protect our country's rich biodiversity. This act will bring quality tourism to our country, justifying the 2019 and 2020 tourism awards such as "Lonely Planets No 1 in the Top 10 Countries to Visit" and Travel Leisure's "World's Best Island" to name a few.

The Management of our national parks, specifically of Yala, Minneriya and Horton Plains, leaves much to be desired. We hope that in collaboration with the Sri Lanka Tourism Development Board (SLTDB), and with instructions from our political hierarchy, the DWC will adopt the comprehensive visitor plan developed, in 2015, for the Yala National Park, by a committee chaired by Dr. Sumith Pilapitiya, which included stakeholders from conservation and tourism, as well as representatives of the DWC. This plan included restrictions in daily entry to the park, zoning the park and creating more roads within it, opening up blocks 3, 4 & 5 by developing a far reaching road system in those blocks, online booking, management of the bungalows by experts, et al. It was meant to be completed at Yala and then rolled out to other parks taking into consideration specific aspects of that park along with the learning from Yala. This comprehensive visitor plan has been shelved in the hoard of files at the Ministry.

We are years behind attaining the necessary standard of providing visitors with a quality wildlife tourism experience when compared to our African or even Indian counterparts. We hope the next few years will see the Government pushing all concerned to achieve these very attainable goals. It requires vision and understanding that for the long-term benefit of the country, providing a quality experience at a higher price is far better than quantity at a lower price thereby, achieving the required country's financial goals as well as getting quality visitors to come back to Sri Lanka repeatedly.

Moving to more positive developments, the Society has executed an unprecedented amount of work in 2019 and in some months averaging about 10-15 different activities. These activities include membership programmes (lectures, wetland walks), Youth Wing (YW) educational workshops, Human-Elephant Conflict (HEC) awareness seminars, Reforestation of the Rain Forest (ROAR) events, Conservation Committee legal efforts, the CAT Subcommittee discussions and the recently launched Green Isle and Marine Subcommittee lectures. Most of the work have been aptly described under the individual Subcommittee reports.

In more positive developments, the Society has executed an unprecedented amount of work in 2019 and in some months averaging about 10-15 different activities.

In an effort to commemorate and celebrate the 125th Anniversary of the Society, there was a major gala event planned for May 10, 2019 at the Colombo Hilton. However, as a result of the Easter Sunday bombings a few weeks before, the Society postponed this event to November 12, 2019. The gala event was a roaring success and many observers noted that it was both innovative and unprecedented within the conservation community in Sri Lanka. The work commenced in the latter part of 2018; three teams reporting to President, Sriyan de Silva Wijeyeratne, were appointed to organise the various activities relating to the gala. The 3 teams were:

- Stalking Leopards led by Ranil Peiris (2018/19) and Graham Marshall (2019/20), who were in charge of fundraising, communications and public relations;
- Soaring Eagles led Dilshan Hettiaratchi, who was in charge of event publications, including the LORIS, commemorative souvenirs, sale of commemorative items, gift items and the invitee list;
- Charging Tuskers led by Jehan CanagaRetna, who was in charge of hotel arrangements, all logistical details relating to the gala, including music, ticket sales, video graphics and equipment.

The gala event included a 4-course dinner with background jazz music, along with a performance by the Workshops Players. The main highlight of the 125th Anniversary gala evening was an informative and entertaining speech delivered by our chief guest, Ms. Saba Douglas-Hamilton, Special Projects Director for the renowned charity Save the Elephants. Ms. Douglas-Hamilton committed to working with the Society going forward, on issues related to Human-Elephant Conflict (HEC). Another highlight of the evening was a speech delivered by the Society's Conservation ambassador, former Sri Lanka Cricket Captain, Mahela Jayawardena. Mahela's quiet observations on the importance of conservation and protecting our environment hit home like a flurry of sixes. We hosted a second event at Jetwing Colombo Seven, dubbed a 'Chat with Saba.' As a third and final event, the Committee organised a safari with Kulu Safaris where 19 Society members, on a first come, first serve basis, were given the opportunity to spend a day and a half with Ms. Douglas-Hamilton in a safari setting.



The Reforestation of a Rain Forest (ROAR) Project completed its 4th year in 2019. The project, which covers a five hectare plot in Diyakothakanda, at the foothills of the Sinharaja forest, is progressing well. The project, broken into three zones were initially planted with pioneer species, and zone A & B have now also being planted with primary forest species.



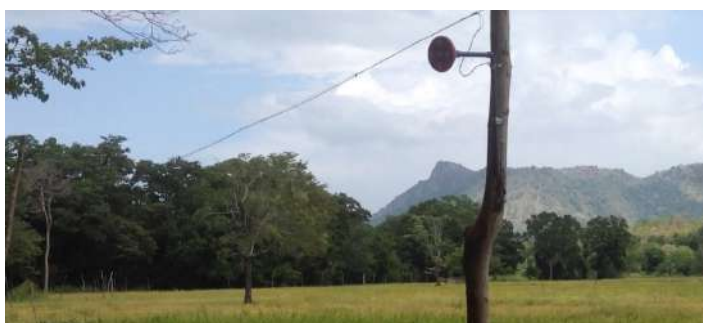
The Society launched two new subcommittees in the latter part of the 2018, namely The Green Isle and Marine Subcommittees. The Marine Committee is focused on protecting and sustaining, whilst creating awareness on, the rich biodiversity of Sri Lanka's marine ecosystems. The Green Isle focuses on a 50 acre island in the Bellanwila-Attidiya Sanctuary. The project's primary aim is to restore the environment to its natural habitat enrichment by controlling invading water weeds, di-siltation and clearing of small canals at the site. Year one of the project has been completed very successfully.



The Society's lecture series has now become a top-line event in Colombo, regularly drawing more than 500 people to each lecture, even beyond those in the conservation arena. These lectures are held every 3rd Thursday at the BMICH, except in April and December. Importantly, we have expanded the lecture series to other cities, in both English and Sinhala, with lectures being conducted in Kandy and Galle in 2019. For 2020, there are plans to expand the lecture series even further in all three languages by conducting lectures in the North and East. Due to a demand, we have also conducted supplementary lectures in some months garnering a lot of interest.



Our field trips have advanced significantly with each trip generating more interest and popularity. We need to thank our resource personnel, who have contributed towards the success of the field trips by generously sharing their expertise on specific conservations subjects with participants. The positive comments and feedback from the participating members in these field trips, remains a source of encouragement.



The HEC Subcommittee has struggled and campaigned for years (since 2006) to get the National Elephant Policy adopted and put into action. However, we did have one positive factor, the Cabinet approved the policy in the latter part of 2019. The Committee, in order to mitigate human-elephant conflict, is also looking to launch a national PR and Communication campaign on HEC in 2020.

The Society continues to partner with the Environmental Foundation Limited (EFL) and also work independently on legal matters as petitioners on numerous illegal conservation issues. The WNPS is involved with 7-8 legal cases, with the Wilpattu road case, Pallenkandal Church matter and the adoption of the Elephant Policy taking priority. A description of each case has been outlined in the Legal Subcommittee report.

In 2019, our District Representation work and the printing of the Warana magazine have been disappointing. We were unsuccessful in completing these two projects last year and it is our objective to make amends in 2020. We will catch up with issues related to the Warana magazine, as we have appointed a new Editor in October 2019 along with an Editorial Committee. This new team will work hard to draw level on the printing of outstanding editions in 2020. In addition, we are outlining a plan to transform the District Representation Programme to make it more effective in 2020.

The Society initiated a series of reforms with regard to administration and hired Ms. Kamaya de Soysa in May 2019 to take over as Administrative Secretary and Office Manager. Her role will evolve further in 2020 with Ms. de Soysa taking over fundraising responsibilities with organisations and institutions both in and outside Sri Lanka. Mr. Pradeep de Silva, has also been employed as a Consultant to handle the day to day accounting functions at the Society. It is my pleasure to note that the Society's monthly accounts are now prepared and released in a very timely manner. It is noteworthy that our long standing office staffer, Ivan Prematilaka

completed 20 years with us and the Society rewarded him with a monetary contribution for his services. In a further effort to improve efficiencies and the impact of the Society's administrative capabilities, we plan on adding a Research Assistant and an Office Assistant position in 2020.

Chandrika Gardiwasam, who manages the library at the Center for Policy Alternatives (CPA) was brought on board to restore the society library to a functional state. Working on a largely voluntary basis, Ms. Gardiwasam's team compiled a digital database of the books available. In 2020, the team will manually sort the books and put in place a referencing system. Furthermore, Ms. Gardiwasam will use her expertise to assess the books of higher value to be preserved separately.

A note of thanks to John Keells Office Automation (JKOA) for continuing to support the Society by donating a Toshiba Printer, Copier and Scanner all in one. This machines proves to be very useful to the Society. Thank you Mr. Janoda Thoradeniya and Mr. Malik Edwin for keeping conservation in your heart and mind.

It is with regret, we report that the first issue of the Loris Journal belonging to the Society has been misplaced a few years back. We have contacted several members to either gift or sell this volume to the WNPS library, but we have been unsuccessful to date. Since we had completed scanning all the old LORIS a while back, we do have the online version for member reference.



KUMANA, SRI LANKA



ELEPHANT GATHERING (IMAGE COURTESY RANJAN JOSIAH)

We have a healthy balance sheet with more than 15 companies partnering with us to ensure we stay on top of the conservation ladder in an effort to create positive impacts in Sri Lanka.

In conclusion, I am pleased to report that the Society is on track to meet its mission objectives of enhancing conservation, improving advocacy, widening and disseminating scientific information and educational awareness and providing a range of services to its membership. In addition, I am also pleased to report that the finances of the Society remain at its healthiest in decades, with this financial stability beginning in 2017. We have a healthy balance sheet with more than 15 companies partnering with us to ensure we stay on top of the conservation ladder in an effort to create positive impacts in Sri Lanka. I firmly believe that good corporate governance is critical in any organisation and the financial discipline that has been implemented at the WNPS has enabled the Executive Committee (EXCO) to make bold decisions and propel the Society ahead. I would like to thank the General Committee, our partners, suppliers, sponsors, the office executives and staff, all other conservation organisations we work closely with, not forgetting the DWC, for making our journey towards better conservation a lot easier.

The COVID-19 pandemic laid to rest what all conservationists around the world have been saying – give Mother Nature a break, stop polluting the environment, reduce the usage of plastic, decrease global warming, stop deforestation and the poaching of wild animals. This global pandemic will create severe financial downfalls on everyone and economies all over the world. The world as we knew it will be quite different. Rich or poor, Buddhist, Christian, Muslim or Hindu, the pandemic has not singled out any race in our country but has affected all humans a like. As citizens, at the time of writing this report, we are fortunate that our government took the action it has taken to control the pandemic in our Country to the levels we are experiencing. Western countries that chose to ignore the key factors of the pandemic are now suffering. We each in our individual way, need to take stock of what we do in the future and reduce our carbon footprint by doing our part in society – not tomorrow, but today.

In these trying times, when Mother Nature is under grave threat from so many disparate angles, it is imperative that we humans reflect and explore how we can minimise our negative effects on the planet. Easier said than done but as a wise person once told me:

“Mother Nature does not need us, but we need Mother Nature”.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jehan CanagaRetna'.

Jehan CanagaRetna
Hon. General Secretary

WILDLIFE AND NATURE PROTECTION SOCIETY GENERAL COMMITTEE 2019



Clockwise from top left: Sarasi, Dilshan, Sriyan, Spencer, Jehan, Tami, Rukshan, Rahula, Caryll, Graham, Lakdas, Zaineb, Hemantha, Nirmali, Ranjan, Shanaka, Avijja

MEMBERSHIP

The WNPS welcomed a record number of new Ordinary and Junior Members in 2019. The increasing numbers are directly linked to the growing interest in activities hosted by the Society, primarily the Public Lectures, which are held monthly and open to the public.

An administrative consultant was hired to review the status of the membership. Using a series of phone calls, emails, letters and paper notices (2) a more accurate number of 'Active' Life Members was established. This is the number represented in the 31/12/2019 "Life (Active)" figure. Life Members who remained unreachable due to incomplete contact information were recorded as 'Non-active' and removed from the active database. Hence the decline in the 31/12/2019 Life Membership number. If you know of a member that is not getting their notices or magazines, please ask them to contact the office.

OBITUARIES

It is with deep regret we record the passing away of the following members of our Society during the course of 2019, as per the information that has reached us. We appreciate their commitment to the Society and to conservation.

Mr. M.D. Herath (Life) & Mr. David Bolling (Ordinary)

EXTERNAL REPRESENTATION

Mr. Ranil Pieris

Trustee of the Friends of Wilpattu [P]

Member of the Western Province Megapolis Environment & Conservation Subcommittee [P]

Member of the Protected Areas Management & Conservation Plan (World Bank) [P]

Mr. Jehan CanagaRetna

Trustee and Treasurer, Federation of Environmental Organisations (FEO) [P]

Committee Member, Human-Elephant Conflict Management Committee – Department of Wildlife Conservation (2019)

Committee Member, Improving of the Quality of Wildlife Tourism in Protected Areas – Department of Wildlife Conservation (2019)

Ms. Caryll Tozer

Trustee of the Lissenburgh Trust [P]

Mr. Rukshan Jayewardene

Director of Environmental Foundation Limited (EFL) [P]

Trustee of Leopard Trust [P]

Chairperson of the Wilderness & Protected Area Foundation [P]

Joint President of the Wildlife Conservation Forum [P]

Mr. Rahula Dassenaieke

Joint President of the Wildlife Conservation Forum [P]

**[P] indicates engagement in a personal capacity*

2019



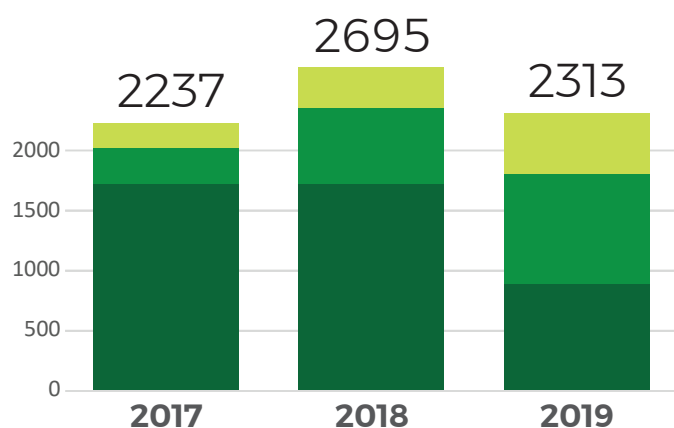
883
ACTIVE LIFE
MEMBERS



930
ORDINARY
MEMBERS



500
JUNIOR
MEMBERS



Total Memberships 2017-2019

GENERAL COMMITTEE MEETINGS 2019

The General Committee of the Society convened a total of twelve times during 2019.

The following is a record of the attendance of each Committee Member from January - May 2019, and of the new Committee from June – December 2019.

Committee Member	January - May 2019		June - December 2019	
	Meetings	Present	Meetings	Present
Mr. Sriyan de Silva Wijeyeratne	5	5	7	7
Ms. Tami Flamer-Caldera	5	5	7	4
Mr. Spencer Manuelpillai	5	5	7	7
Mr. Jehan CanagaRetna	5	5	7	7
Mr. Dilshan Hettiaratchi	5	5	7	7
Mr. Rukshan Jayewardene	5	4	7	3
Mr. Vidya Abhayagunawadena (Member until Nov 2019)	5	2	7	1
Ms. Caryll Tozer	5	5	7	6
Ms. Zaineb Akbarally	5	4	7	6
Dr. Hemantha Perera	5	4	7	5
Mr. Shanaka Wijesinghe	5	4	7	6
Mr. Avijja Fonseka	5	1	7	6
Mr. Rahula Dassenaieke	5	4	7	4
Prof. Lakdas Fernando	5	4	7	4
Dr. [Ms.] Nirmali De Silva	5	4	7	5
Mr. Ranjan Josiah	-	-	7	6
Ms. Sarasi Wijeratne	-	-	7	4
Mr. Graham Marshall	-	-	7	6
Mr. Ranil Pieris	5	5	-	-
Ms. Ayanthi Samarajeewa	5	1	-	-
Mr. Ravindralal Anthonis	5	5	-	-

EXECUTIVES & STAFF OF THE SOCIETY - 2019

Name	Designation	Location
Mr. George Thambapillai *	Administrative Secretary	Head Office (until April 2019)
Ms. Kamaya de Soysa	Administrative Secretary / Manager	Head Office (from May 2019)
Mr. Ivan Prematilaka	Office Assistant	Head Office
Mr. Damith Susantha	Bungalow Keeper	Palatupana (Yala)
Mr. Amila Perera	Project Coordinator	Green Isle / ROAR Projects
Mr. Pradeep De Silva	Financial Consultant	Head Office (From Apr 2019)
Ms. Shiromi Ekanayake	Administrative Consultant	Head Office (May to Aug 2019)

* Resigned

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS



HUMAN-ELEPHANT COEXISTENCE SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT

COMMITTEE

Jehan CanagaRetna (Chair), Graham Marshall, Sarasi Wijeratne

Co-opted: Rohan Wijesinha, Tina Jayaratnam, Rapti Dirckze, Aneesha Hameed, Shyan Gershon, Asitha Pinnaduwa

SUMMARY

The direction of Sri Lanka's wildlife management and conservation is hopelessly awry due to the lack of knowledgeable leadership at the helm. With 5 - 6 Ministers being appointed in the last 5 years, and with no clear leadership of wildlife management, the task of containing HEC has taken a nosedive, as proven by the increase in elephant deaths in 2019. Whilst the figures for how many elephants there are in this country is debatable, if we take the number of approximately 6000 reached by a DWC census as a working number, at the present rate of attrition, within the next 25 years we may face the bleak prospect of not having any wild elephants living on our Island. The birth rate of elephants is also an unknown factor but it is widely known amongst elephant researchers that a high percentage of elephant calves die before their 2nd year, due to malnutrition and starvation. Again, bad wildlife management has resulted in habitat destruction, illegal felling of forests and, on top of that, permitting domestic cattle and buffaloes to graze in National Parks, National Reserves or Strict Natural Reserves (SNR), where they consume, in volume, the Elephants' basic fodder and grasslands, has resulted in bleak survival options for elephants. Where else can these elephants go to live?

No single HEC mitigation method will work independently to deter elephants entering and raiding crops. They are far too intelligent. A combination of methods: starting with fencing of village and crops as introduced by eminent Elephant Researcher, Dr. Prithiviraj Fernando is a vital strategy that must be used as it gives both the human and elephant mutual benefits, and protection. Along with that, using other mitigation methods like the LRS, sounds, smell and other deterrents are important to reinforce this strategy. The farmers' viewpoint has to be changed, while any mitigation methods used have to account for their needs too. While we can hit our heads against a brick wall in stating the obvious, the Government must stop future relocation of humans into elephant corridors and habitats. We just need one strong leader to put his /her hand up and make that decision. Adopting and approving the National Elephant Policy will do just that as long as the proposed actions are enforced comprehensively, and not on an ad hoc basis.

The WNPS will continue to battle the odds, take on the perpetrators, and go to Court if needed to safeguard our national resources whether they are elephants, another species, our forests or our rivers; this is our present commitment to the future generations.

Pictured here: Ravana (Hambegamuwa Raja) photographed probably for the last time in Udawalawe (Aug 2016) carrying a festering gunshot wound to his left hind leg. His carcass was found not long after.

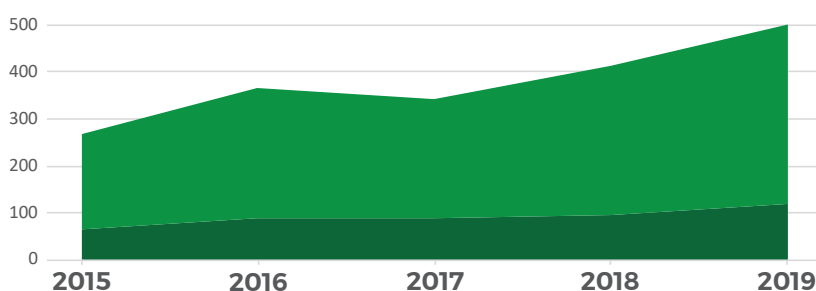
The mandate of this HEC Subcommittee is to work on methods of mitigation of HEC around Sri Lanka, while arranging awareness programmes for villagers living on the frontlines of this conflict. We have done our best to make a difference but, in all honesty, have not been successful in battling the existing demons that consistently prevent real progress, or to convince the Department of Wildlife Conservation (DWC) to work in a systematic way with the protection of these majestic animals being their sole focus in this continuing conflict. In justification for this final assertion, the

Ministries that cross swords with the DWC to try and eliminate the HEC, quite rightly, worry about humans – their losses to crop damage and their lives. That is what they have been set up to do. The DWC's has the sole mandate to look after protected areas under their jurisdiction, including wild animals in the country as a whole, a segment of which are elephants; a valuable and globally endangered species. Yet, we all know what happens, and the sad plight our elephants have to endure.

The charts below illustrate the number of deaths of humans and elephants, over the past 5 years:

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Gunshots	44	52	50	53	
Hakka pattas	51	47	54	64	
Electrocution	17	26	24	38	
Not known	39	54	50	29	
Poison	5	6	7	3	
Accident	6	17	25	32	
Natural	11	35	22	38	
Train	12	12	7	16	
Other	20	30	17	46	
Total	205	279	256	319	384

Causes of elephant deaths in the last five years (Source: DWC / Dr. Sumith Pilapitiya)



Deaths of humans and elephants in the last five years (Source: DWC)

1440
Elephant deaths
since 2015

452
Human deaths
since 2015

An unprecedented number of humans and elephants have died in this time, with a significant increase in 2019. The DWC has yet to release the cause of the deaths of elephants in 2019 but, it is estimated from historical data that over 45% of elephant deaths are caused by gunshots, 'hakka-pattas' (explosives hidden in food) and electrocution.

The highest numbers of elephant deaths were recorded in the Polonnaruwa, Anuradhapura, Ampara, Monaragala and Trincomalee districts. This amounts to more than 65% of the total number of deaths recorded. Correspondingly, the highest number of human deaths were also from these same areas.

While a lot of publicity, due to social media and a natural sense of empathy, is generated by elephant train deaths, the number in 2019, was lower than that in 2018. A reliable source informed the Society that the reasons for this are initiatives being taken by the DWC and Railway Department to reduce the number

of trains travelling at night on the Batticaloa and Jaffna lines. Another factor is that a genuine effort has been taken by the Railway Department Operators to slow trains at known elephant crossing points. This is fundamental to the long-term, sustainable resolution of this problem.

NATIONAL ELEPHANT POLICY

The Committee worked hard to have the National Policy for the Management and Conservation of the Wild Elephant in Sri Lanka, initially drafted in 2006 by the DWC in consultation with other stakeholders (WNPS included), approved by the Cabinet of the Government of Sri Lanka. The previous Minister of Wildlife, the Hon. John Amaratunga, appointed a Committee under the Secretary of the Ministry and the DWC, and headed by Dr. Sumith Pilapitiya, called the Human-Elephant Conflict Management Committee consisting of nine (9) individuals. Two members of the Human-Elephant Coexistence Subcommittee, Jehan CanagaRetna and Rohan Wijesinha, were also appointed to this

Committee. The Committee got as far as getting the DWC to agree on the final policy document and hand it over to the Secretary of the Ministry to be approved by Cabinet. We have to thank Minister John Amarunga for his efforts to push the document through, as the approval for the National Policy was granted by Cabinet in late 2019. However, with the change of Government in November 2019, the process of transforming adoption into action has got shelved again but we will continue the good fight to push the DWC to commence work on adopting the policy. With that in mind, and the current Governments' decision to distribute guns to farmers as its own possible solution for HEC, along with the DWC's inactiveness to halt such a move, the Society has taken legal action in March 2020 for the DWC to adopt the National Policy. The National Elephant Policy is the most scientific way of sustainably resolving this conflict in the long-term, and adopting the policy should be the only method employed in the country.

The Committee's continuous suggestions of mitigation methods for HEC, as highlighted in the 2018 Annual Report as well, continue to fall on deaf ears with the DWC's hands tied by politically motivated decisions made by whichever Minister is in office. These key suggestions, which are also part of the Elephant Policy, are:

- Implement Conservation Laws (FFPO) especially with regard to maintaining the integrity of protected areas.
- Clear habitat (elephant) corridors of illegal settlement and permit elephants to use their traditional movement pathways.
- Employ strategic electric fencing – along ecological boundaries rather than institutional boundaries, as at present. There are more elephants living outside of DWC lands, and in Forest Department lands, than in National Protected Parks (NPs).

- Enclose villages and cultivations with fencing, leaving elephants free to use their traditional movement pathways outside. Some of this fencing will be seasonal and when removed, will give valuable fodder for elephants who will feed on the stubble left behind. (Dr. Prithiviraj Fernando's experiment now proven true)
- Ensure that local communities derive direct economic benefit from having elephants as neighbour's i.e. nature-based tourism.

PUBLIC AWARENESS OF HEC

The Society is hoping to launch holistic Public Relations and Communication campaigns which we plan on commencing in 2020 depending on the funding we acquire. The campaigns will include Conservation, Farmer Livelihood, Advocacy, Education and Awareness Programmes whilst a set of objectives and a strategic approach have been identified to implement these campaigns. It is hoped that these campaigns will play a vital role in creating a culture of co-existence for humans and elephants in the future. Currently, the Human-Elephant Coexistence Subcommittee is in discussion with a few companies and non-governmental agencies for funding these proposed campaigns. They will engage with a variety of relevant stakeholders inclusive of government, non-governmental development agencies, conservationists, local government authorities, farmers, media, and IT companies, the latter to assist with social media initiatives.

The Society firmly believes that it should be at the forefront of raising public awareness of HEC issues and will continue to use all of its resources to ensure the public is made aware of them.

Pictured here: Explanation of the LRS system to Akram Cassim (CJS), Ms. Saba Douglas-Hamilton, and Dr. Frank Pope



ELEPHANT LIGHT SYSTEM: A POTENTIAL EXPERIMENT ON HEC MITIGATION

As per the 2018 Annual Report, the Human-Elephant Coexistence Subcommittee worked with a senior serving Army Officer, Colonel Sudath Udayasena, on an invention of his to deter human-elephant conflict using a light repel system (LRS). In brief, the Colonel, through extensive research and testing, concluded that in the absence of a fovea (clear vision of the eye) and the dominance of rods (provide twilight vision) throughout the retina for good night vision, when a flickering LED light hits an elephant's retina, it is temporarily blinded and disoriented and moves away or avoids the light.

PROJECT

Based on the Colonel's research and findings, the General Committee of the WNPS approved the Subcommittee to conduct further trials, on a wider scale, with different populations of elephants, and in areas of differing habitat, to ensure that this would prove the system's universal viability. As a start, the northern border of the Udawalawe National Park was chosen – in the town of Pokunutenna. The system was set up, in May 2019; over a length of 2.5km. This was the first time the LRS had been tried as a linear system to protect elephants coming through to paddy fields. These fields belong to 18 farmer families with each family having about 2-3 square kilometers of paddy. The previous methodology of the LRS system was to surround the property of a farmer and his crops, to the extent of one square kilometer.

The linear system proved to be a failure, for a few reasons, mostly human related:

- The battery had not been charged sufficiently for the lights to work properly.
- Villagers quarreling amongst each other as to who should be paying for the electricity and cutting the electric lines
- The villagers had been negligent in not clearing the 'maana' grass between the fence and 10 meters from the light, as is required. It had reached a height that interfered with the line of sight of the lights.

As such, it was decided to abandon any future linear LRS systems and only work with villagers who wished their house and cultivation protected, as had worked before. With this in mind, the WNPS has decided that in 2020, it would set up three locations - in Galgamuwa, Ehatuwewa or Wilachchiya and Pokunutanne - to further test the long-term feasibility of the LRS system.

In locations where the LRS has been installed for more than 2 years, the finding is that as long as the farmers have maintained the LRS, elephants have not entered their properties. What is baffling and frustrating is the behaviour of farmers who know that when the LRS works, elephants do not enter their property yet they

neglect to fix the inherent issues that need attention to maintain the efficacy of the system. This may be due to lethargy, financial constraints or even lack of interest.

As mentioned previously, it is important to note that the LRS is an experimental system and only after a few years of trial and error can a definitive decision be made to assess if the LRS is a potential HEC mitigation system. Ultimately, the success of the LRS will depend on whether humans can adjust and be smarter and kinder than we have been to elephants prior to this. The contribution of time, technical expertise, and energy by Col. Udayasena and the Sri Lanka Army, to install LRS systems is truly inspiring as they derive no financial benefit from it but are motivated only by the love of saving elephants and a hope that this system would enable both humans and elephants to live in harmony. The Society cannot thank them enough.

A special thank you also to Colombo Jewellery Stores and Spa Ceylon for coming forward and sponsoring the initial experiments of the LRS in Pokunutanne.



COMMUNITY PRODUCTION OF LRS



LRS SYSTEM INSTALLED

YOUTH WING SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT

COMMITTEE

Zaine Akbarally – Chair from May 2019, Jehan CanagaRetna - Chair up to May 2019, Avijja Fonseka, Ranjan Josiah

Co-opted: Sangharshanaa Ainkaran, Nadiya Azmy, Darrel Bartholomeusz, Gajani Baskaran, Mishal Benjamin, Sarah Benjamin, Mandi Daluwatta, Mega Ganeshan, Shyan Gershon, Chethana Gomez, Buminda Jayasuriya, Karthika Jeganathan, Dhulanjaleeh Joseph, Daniella Kern, Shailajaha Kumaresan, Himayande Loganathan, Shontaal Manuelpillai, Upekshi Perera, Parami Peiris, Amaya Pieris, Lahiru Rajapakse, Piyumani Ranasinghe, Vinhara Randeny, Suren Thambirajah, Ananda Welikala, Ashan Wijetilleke, Rishan Yaheya, Ashinsa de Silva Wijeyeratne, Sayuri Yahampath

In 2019, the Youth Wing built on the enormous success of the programme in 2018, expanding its initiative to work with forty (40) schools in the Northern Province, Central Province and Western Province. The main project of the Youth Wing is the 'Education for Conservation' programme which consists of an awareness raising lecture that covers topical issues such as Climate Change, marine pollution, deforestation and Sri Lanka as a biodiversity hotspot. In areas prone to human wildlife incidents such as Hatton, the children were engaged on the need for human-leopard co-existence and similarly in the Wasgomuwa region human-elephant co-existence was discussed, to encourage the protection and conservation of these iconic species.

Following the lecture, participating students are placed in breakout groups to critically think of ways to integrate positive change within their schools and communities. During this group activity, students of the 2019 schools suggested a wide array of initiatives ranging from the segregation of waste at home and school to starting a large-scale petition to be given to the government to address the issues surrounding the unethical dumping of garbage.

Field trips to the Wilpattu, Horton Plains and Wasgomuwa National Parks were made, which gave the children an opportunity to experience Sri Lanka's wildlife first hand, bringing to reality the life forms spoken and presented about at the seminars.

Following the completion of the field trips, the schools received special 'elephant dung paper' and were asked to nominate a team of five (5) students to create posters that told a story under the theme of 'Conservation and Development'. The second edition of 'Colouring Our Future' concluded with four regional poster competitions held in the Jaffna, Gampaha, Hatton and Wasgomuwa – with 20 schools selected from these to participate at the All Island Poster Competition which was held in Colombo on the 3rd of November 2019.



At the regional and all island poster competitions, participating schools had to also verbally present their work – this activity allowed for the children to express the inspiration behind their artwork whilst also developing the important skill of presenting information to an audience.

Annaikoddai RCTMS from Jaffna were adjudged 'Winners' based on their excellent poster presentation which was on the thematic area of fostering human-elephant coexistence. First and second runners up were awarded to Chavakachcheri Ladies College, Jaffna and Puthukulam Maha Vidyalayam, Vavuniya respectively.

In addition, the Youth Wing reached out to schools that participated in the 2018 programme, requesting them to submit a report on an environmental project the school had implemented in the past year. The schools that participated are Dharmaloka Vidyalaya Monragala Udawalawe, Giribawa Maha Vidyalaya, Habaraluwewa Maha Vidyalaya, Vidyarthi Maha Vidyalaya Tissamaharama, and Vidyarthi Maha Vidyalaya Pahala Maragaha wewa. Vidyarthi Maha Vidyalaya, from Tissamaharama, near Yala, was judged winners for having carried out a fantastic project to better manage solid waste within their school premises.

The schools that received places in all competitions were gifted a television for school use.

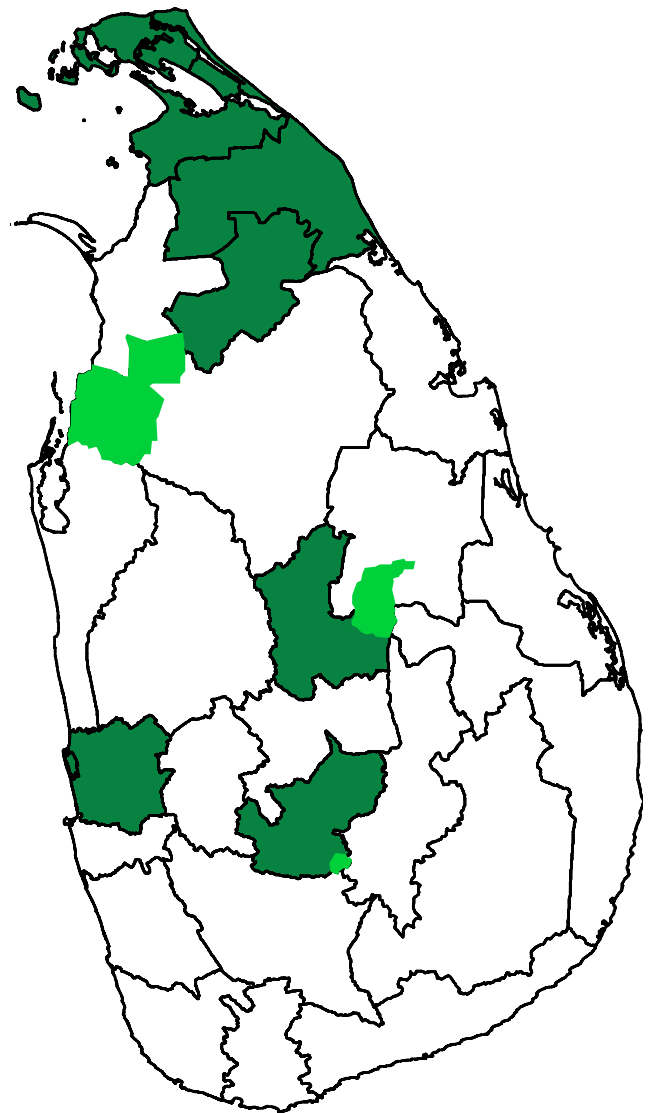


DISTRICTS COVERED IN 2019

Gampaha, Jaffna, Kilinochchi, Matale, Mullaitivu, Nuwera Eliya, Vavuniya

NATIONAL PARKS VISITED IN 2019

Horton Plains
Wasgomuwa
Wilpattu





58 SCHOOLS ENGAGED
ISLANDWIDE IN 2019
35 NEW SCHOOLS
PLANNED IN 2020



441
CHILDREN
PARTICIPATED
IN FIELD TRIPS



2034
CHILDREN
REACHED VIA
LECTURES

The programme during the year was conducted in the three languages of English, Sinhala and Tamil depending on the region and demographic participating in the programme. In total, 2034 children were engaged through the lectures and 441 children participated in field trips to national parks in the year 2019. The Youth Wing has grown into a dynamic, youthful and vibrant arm of the society that is successfully engaging with youth from all across the island to inspire a new generation of environmentally conscious leadership in Sri Lanka.

We are incredibly grateful to NDB bank, our exclusive financial partner for this 'Education for Conservation' project of the Youth Wing. With the support of NDB Bank, in the past two years, the Youth Wing has now engaged with 58 schools from all across the island.

A special thanks also to Elephant Maximus and Mr. Thusitha Ranasinghe (Chairperson) for donating the elephant dung paper yet again in 2019 for the final poster competition.

We have also further joined hands with NDB bank to continue the programme in 2020, with a twofold vision of a.) Engaging and bringing into the fold of the Youth Wing thirty- five (35) new schools from the North-western, Northern, Eastern and Southern Provinces. b.) Initiating environmental projects within schools already engaged with in the Youth Wing programmes to ensure the ethos of sustainability is developed into action within school and community level environments. For this NDB has agreed to a sponsorship value of Rs. 4.5m in 2020.

LIST OF SCHOOLS ENGAGED WITH BY YOUTH WING IN 2019

District	Name of School
Gampaha	Thakshila College, Bandawatta Parackrama College, Holy Cross College
Hatton	Kuilwatte TMV - Rozella, Kadawala Vigneswara College - Ginigathhena, Shannon TMV - Hatton, Fruithill TV - Hatton, Ganesha TMV - Rozella, Watawala TMV - Watawala, Ganesha TMV - Rozella, Dickoya Fine Arts College - Dickoya, Abbotsleigh TV - Hatton
Jaffna	J/Yarlton College, T/Karanaigar Hindu College, Jaffna Central College, J/Kokuvil Hindu College, Chundikuli Girls School, J/Hartley College, J/Navatkuli Maha Vidyalayam, J/Puttur Sri Somaskantha College, J/Kaithady Nuffield Deaf and Blind School, J/Anaikottai RCTMS, J/Chavakachcheri Ladies College, Madduvil Kamalasany Vidyalayam, J/Methodist Girls High School, Angel International School
Killinochchi	Kn/Veravil Hindu College, Kn/Vivekananda Vidyalayam, Kn/Murugananda College
Mullaitivu	Mu/Visvamadu MV, Mu/Puthukkudiyiruppu Central College, Mu/Mullaitivu MV
Vavuniya	V/Omanthai Central College, V/Puthukulam MV, V/Vavuniya Tamil MV, V/Nelukkulam Kalaimagal MV, V/Saivapragasa Ladies College
Wasgomuwa	Maraka Maha Vidyalaya, Naminioya Central College, Handunugama Maha Vidyalaya, Weheragalayaya Primary School



YOUTH AMBASSADOR PROGRAMME (YAP) REPORT: JAWAI INDIA

COMMITTEE

Avijja Fonseka (Chair), Sriyan de Silva Wijeyeratne, Jehan CanagaRetna

Youth Ambassadors: Ashan Wijetilleke, Amila Perera, Emad Sangani

Sponsor: Cinnamon Nature Trails

The Youth Ambassador Programme was set up in 2019 by the WNPS's Wildcat Subcommittee and three ambassadors were picked for the programme based on a screening, and a subsequent interview process. They were also vetted by Cinnamon Nature Trails. However, only two could attend the Jawai programme as Emad Sangani was going to be away in Australia. The aim of this programme and of the ambassadors was to spread awareness on conservation to the youth of Sri Lanka and inspire a generation of future conservationists and environmentalists in the country. Cinnamon Nature Trails were the architect and the sponsor of the programme with the sponsorship value exceeding Rs. 500,000/-

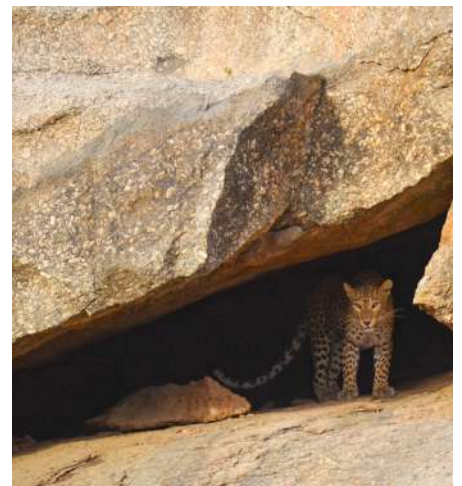
FIELD TRIP TO JAWAI

The tour was scheduled to Jawai, India during 10th to 17th of April 2019 to explore the amazing balances between large cats (specifically leopards) and the Rabari Tribe. The study included safaris to the rocks hills and villages, discussions with the Rabari villagers, findings on how the Rabari tribesman perceive the leopard, the implications of big cats hunting their livestock and how the local authorities mitigate this by bridging the gap of what is lost to the tribesmen.

The Rabari community is a nomadic pastoral community indigenous to north-west India, particularly modern-day Gujarat. Traditionally, the Rabari kept camels but in recent times they maintain flocks of sheep and goats as well. The life behind the Rabari villages is very interesting to know and somewhat similar to

some areas of our own countryside. These villages are in between large rocks which belong to the Indian Government and the land belongs to the villagers. There are about 300 families of Rabari living in few villages in the area of study. This co-existence of a human community and the leopard population for such long period of time is such a beautiful model to follow-up back in Sri Lanka. While we were gathering information from the Rabari people, we found out that there was negligible to no conflicts with the elusive cat.

As the Rabari people are well known Shepherds, their livestock includes goats, cows, camels and buffalo. They obtain milk from these animals and produce local curd, cheese, ice-cream etc. The leopard population around the Rabari villagers depends for food on the wild boar, chital (spotted deer), other animals like rats and mongooses along with the occasional killing of livestock of the Rabari people.



The system that works well for the Rabari people to co-exist peacefully with the leopards of the area is the compensation scheme set up by the Local and Federal Government of India where a value between Indian INR 4,000 to INR 70,000 will be paid to the Shepherd depending on the type of livestock and the age of the animal and the potential of milk that animal can produce at its time of death. The Rabari people earn an average income of about INR 3,000 to INR 4,000 per month from an animal. Therefore, this compensation scheme is deemed fair by the Rabari people and it helps to keep the peaceful co-existence between the leopard and the Rabari people. With this in mind, the Rabari people have built several tube wells in the area where the structure made for the tube wells allows both humans and wild animals alike to drink the same water. When humans draw water from the wells, they draw extra water and pour it to a small pond built specifically for this purpose so that water can be drunk by wild animals.



SRI LANKA

The idea of the ambassadors going on this programme was to see whether a similar success story could be replicated in Sri Lanka. Unfortunately, the Department of Wildlife Conservation (DWC) does not have such a compensation scheme but the WNPS hopes to have discussions with private organisations to set up a similar scheme in Yala, Wilpattu, or somewhere in the hill-country. However, once we have more data on a location, the WNPS would like to structure an insurance scheme with working farmers of the chosen area.

FUTURE PLANS FOR 2020

One element of the plan is to conduct an awareness programme in Udawalawe in a few Schools since there was a leopard killed by poachers in the vicinity of the National Park. The programme would concentrate on the leopard being a primary species and the importance to our entire eco-system and the balance of nature in the environment around it. This programme was implemented by the Ambassadors in March 2020 at the following schools: Habaraduwewa M/V and Dharmaloka M/V.

The two ambassadors have also identified the areas of Nawalapitiya and Bogawantalawa and the villagers bordering the peak wilderness for similar awareness programmes to be carried out to spread the message of conservation and the importance of the leopard as a key species to keep the balance of nature.

A third programme planned by the WNPS is the partnership with the Serendipity Foundation in Kenya to send 2 individuals to Kenya as part of a global twelve member team. This would be for the 2020 July Cheetah count and research programme to be conducted from July 15th to the 28th. This global team will:

- Assist in going out on patrol in a 4x4 vehicle for locating, tracking, and monitoring of Cheetahs.
- Taking photographs for identification and documentation of behavior and territory.
- Setting up camera-traps, collecting and documenting data from them.
- Have the opportunity to visit the Anti-Poaching and dog-tracking units to see how they operate.
- They will also have the opportunity to observe the remaining two north African white rhinos.

We hope the individuals chosen would be able to replicate and share the knowledge gained through their conservation exposure upon their return to in Sri Lanka. Unfortunately, one individual has dropped prior to the commencement of the programme due to personal reasons.

This once-in-a-lifetime experience would not be possible without support from the founder of the Serendipity Foundation, Mr. Ravi Perera. The Society thanks him and appreciates the conservation work he does in Sri Lanka as well as in Africa. A sincere thank you also to Mr. Chitral Jayathileke (CEO) and Cinnamon Nature Trails for their continued pursuit of supporting conservation in the country and also for supporting the WNPS in their endeavors.

CONSERVATION SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT

COMMITTEE

Caryll Tozer (Chair), Rahula Dassenaieke

Co-opted: Ashani Basnayake

The Conservation Subcommittee was originally established as an umbrella subcommittee that was to take care of all conservation issues outside of elephants and activities undertaken by the Youth Wing Committee. Overtime, further subcommittees, with a focus on species have formed including the Cat Committee and Marine Committee. This has raised the question of where the Conservation Subcommittee should focus its efforts. The Conservation Subcommittee has evolved to address two areas:

1. Longer term efforts to influence policy and planning related to land use
2. Short to medium term efforts to support or raise public awareness on biodiversity conservation that are not addressed by other subcommittees.

To this end, the following activities have been carried out in 2019.

LONGER-TERM STRATEGIC EFFORTS

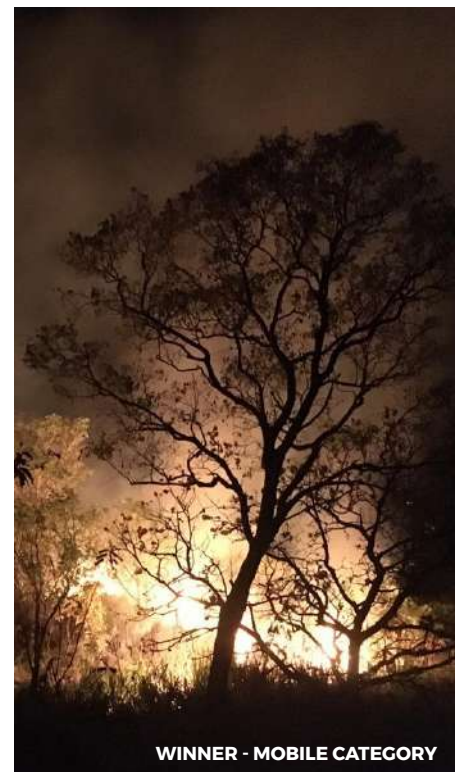
The longer term strategic efforts encompasses the creation of a Trust or a Guarantee Company within the Society's purview to preserve privately donated land to the Society. Preserving Land and Nature Trust (PLANT) which is a key initiative of the Conservation Subcommittee is being formalised into a legal document required to set up the trust or the Guarantee Company. The team working on the legal framework led by Mr. Ranil Angunawala is in the process of completing the document taking into account all possible legal scenarios that need to be addressed. In the meantime, the Sub-Committee is hard at work in lining up financial donors to purchase land and one such donor has already been identified. The PLANT document will be submitted as a resolution at the 2020 AGM.

SHORT TO MEDIUM-TERM EFFORTS

The Subcommittee planned the below during the 2019 year:

125th Anniversary conservation photographic competition. The competition winners were presented with their awards at the Gala event and cash gifts along with hotel vouchers were distributed to them by our Chief Guest, Ms. Saba Douglas-Hamilton. The Conservation Photography competition addressed humans' adverse impact on the environment and wildlife. The challenge posed to the competitors in sending in their photographs was that they should be:

- Impactful
- Carry a Conservation message (make us want to change what we see in the photograph)
- Have artistic merit, and
- Be technically sound



WINNER - MOBILE CATEGORY

There were two categories of the competition. Namely; best conservation photograph, and best mobile phone instagram photograph. A winner and runner-up from each category were chosen. The competition was possible because of the sponsorship of Mr. Shastha Bulathsinghala from Wijeya Graphics. Ranweli Holiday Village also provided vouchers for the winners.

Butterfly and Dragonfly Heroes – approximately 50 plant packs with 30 butterfly and 25 dragonfly friendly plants were handed out to children and WNPS members at WNPS gatherings such as the monthly lectures and Wetland Walk held in December. We must thank Mr. Wijesiri, an Ecologist who put together the plants packs for distribution.

Advocacy - Partnering with Rainforest Protectors to investigate the reasons of paving the main road of the Kudawa entrance of the Sinharaja Forest to reduce soil erosion. This project which was funded by the World Bank (ESCOMP) was terminated as the investigation proved that the project was being constructed beyond the approved scope of the World Bank.

Design and Sale of 100 canvas tote bags carrying two conservation messages. A big thank you to Mr. Bandu Kodituwakku who was the kind donor of this project.

The Subcommittee worked with different organisations and people in advocacy, PR, and communication. They also participated in protest marches in instances where conservation practices were being violated.

ACTIVITIES PLANNED FOR 2020

Longer term initiative: The Conservation Subcommittee is in the process of exploring how the WNPS can strategically contribute efforts to urban tree management. Urban areas are both increasing in population density as well as expanding rapidly, especially Asian cities that are on their way to increasing urbanisation. Peri-Urban (outskirts) and rural areas are becoming more and more developed impacting biodiversity and increasing the urban heat island effect e.g. cities can be up 5 degrees in the day time and up to 12 degrees warmer at night - which in turn impacts flora and fauna, especially overlaid with the overall effects of climate change. The Conservation Subcommittee is in discussion with several potential partners to assess project feasibility and scope.



LEGAL SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT

COMMITTEE

Shanaka Wijesinghe (Chair), Jehan CanagaRetna

The Society has filed as co-petitioners along with the Environmental Foundation Limited (EFL) the following cases in court. However, no cases were filed in 2019. The Pallenkandal Church Festival Case has been the most talked about, with both parties unable to come to an agreement and an interim agreement as to the conduct of the church festivities was reached in 2019. It is understood that this interim agreement will continue for next year's (2020) church festivities as well given the prolonged process.

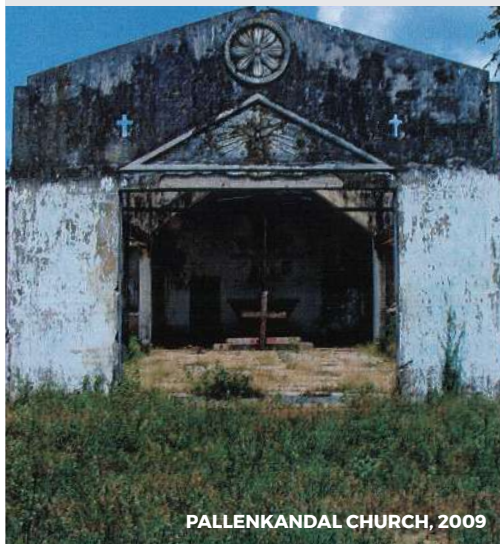
The Society with Julius & Creasy serving as its legal recourse, went to court to force the Department of Wildlife Conservation to adopt the National Elephant Policy that was approved in Cabinet as a mitigative method of human-elephant conflict. The case was filed on the 26th of February 2020.

PALLENKANDAL CHURCH FESTIVAL CASE - CA(W)/51/2018

EFL (Environment foundation Ltd) together with the WNPS filed a Writ Application against the illegal festive activities that occur inside the Wilpattu National Park (WNP). This Church was in existent for a long time as a small jungle shrine in Pallenkandal / Pompparippu area which was recognised as a Catholic place of worship. However, after WNP was re-opened after the war this church was rapidly expanded with permanent structures. Moreover, there is increased human intrusion into the National park as a result of the large scale festivities of the church. In this case, we are mainly challenging the unlawful/unregulated activities which are taking place as a result of the religious activities.

After much deliberation, discussion, and site visits by the parties concerned, the Court made an interim order regulating last year's festival.

Thereafter, the Court directed the parties to attempt to settle the matter based on last year's terms of settlement. However even after much deliberation there was no possibility to enter into terms of settlement. The case is now fixed for argument on the 2nd of July, 2020.



PALLENKANDAL CHURCH, 2009



PALLENKANDAL CHURCH, 2019

WILPATTU ROAD CASE - (SCFR 224/10)

EFL together with the WNPS and WPAF (Wilderness and Protected Area Foundation), instituted this application in public interest and in objection to the illegal construction of two roads within the boundaries of the Wilpattu National Park, which violates the provisions of the FFPO (Fauna and Flora Protection Ordinance).

The concern of the petitioners was that the two roads, were not in existence when the five blocks that formed the Wilpattu National Park were gazetted at various times between 1938 and 1973. It appeared that these roads have come into existence for military purposes during the period when the Wilpattu National Park was closed due to the said area becoming a battleground between the Sri Lankan Security Forces and the LTTE. However, after the war was over, a strenuous attempt was

made to turn these roads into commercial roads serving traffic between the Puttlam and Mannar Districts.

The petitioners position is that such development would be highly detrimental to the National Park and should not be permitted under the terms of the Fauna and Flora Protection Ordinance.

However, this case has been at a standstill for a longtime due to the effort made by the parties to settle the matter. Proposal and counter proposal by the parties as well as the interim petitioners were rejected and also the petitioner were unable to agree with the proposals. The case was to be taken up for argument on 13th March 2020 but was later postponed to December 8th 2020.



NEW MANNAR ROAD (IMAGES COURTESY OF NAMAL KAMALGODA)

UDAWALAWE (DAHAIYAGALA) ELECTRIC FENCE CASE (SC/FR 529/11)

This case is a connected matter to a case (SCFR 410/2008) instituted by EFL together with the WNPS and WPAF. The SCFR (410/2008) is in regard to a proposed electric fence covering the Dahaiyagala Sanctuary which threatened the movement of the elephants. In this case the Court directed that elephant corridor should not be blocked by the proposed electric fence.

This fundamental rights application (SCFR 529/11) was filed by the petitioners who are farmers on the question of the new proposed electric fence which was encroaching on to their lands. EFL and the WNPS are not a party to the said case but only included as added respondents subsequently.

Throughout the years alternate lands have been identified for the families including the Petitioner who lived in the vicinity of the proposed electric fence. The Divisional Secretary has now granted permits for agricultural lands in alternative places but the petitioners are insisting that they should be given grants for the alternative lands they were given

Furthermore, the petitioners do not want to accept the alternative land due to many other different reasons. However, a final date was given for the purpose of settlement and this case will be mentioned on 1st of June, 2020 for the same

GALGAMUWA TUSKER CASE - MAHAWA MAGISTRATE COURT (B/1052/2017)

This case is related to the killing of the famous Galgamuwa Tusker popularly known as the Dala Puttuwa in or around November, 2017. Eight suspects have been arrested by the Police for the alleged shooting and possession of tusks. The suspects were arrested by the Walana Crimes squad when the Tusks were being handed over at the Temple in Nikawewa.

The 8 suspects have now been produced before Court and bailed out. The investigations are now done by the special investigation Unit 1 of the Criminal Investigation Department (CID). The DNA test carried out by the Genetech Sri Lanka

Institute has reported that the Tusk taken into the custody is compatible with the DNA of the dead Elephant.

The EFL and WNPS were added only as agreed parties to this case.

Unfortunately, this case has not moved any further during the year concerned as the CID has failed to handover the investigation book extracts to the Attorney General's Department for the purpose of filing charges/indictment. The next mention date of this case will be on the 25th March 2020



GALGAMUWA TUSKER (IMAGE COURTESY ERICH JOSEPH)

SAND MINING CASE (SCFR 29/2020)

This case was filed on 06.02.20 by the EFL and WNPS challenging the mining circular which was issued on 31/12/2019 by Geological and Mines Bureau.

This circular has amended the permits / license issuing procedure by removing the safe guards in the mines and minerals Act 33 of 1992 as well as

other safe guards and regulations issued by the Geological and Mines Bureau with regard to sand, gravel, and clay

This case was taken up for support on 25.02.2020. However, the Geological and Mines Bureau moved for further time and this case has now been fixed to support on 22.05.2020.

Even with the current constraints we all have to endure in our country, the Society will continue to uphold the law on any conservation or illegal encroachment matter and will take legal recourse if the need arises.

A special thank you Ms. Prashanthi Mahindaratne of Julius & Creasy and senior counsel Mr. Sanjeewa Jayawadana, PC for representing the Society pro-bono on the adoption of the National Elephant Policy case. We also would like to extend our thanks to the lawyers and team at EFL and Ms. Wardani Karunaratne for appearing on all the cases filed jointly with EFL.

REFORESTATION OF A RAINFOREST (ROAR) SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT

COMMITTEE

Prof. Lakdas Fernando (Chair), Dr. Nirmali de Silva

Co-Opted: Dr. Praveen Abhayaratna, Rohan Abeygunawardena, Chandrika Gunawardena, Ravindi Galagamudali, Amila Perera – Project Co-ordinator, Prof. Nimal Gunatilleke – Project Consultant, Prof. Savitri Gunatilleke – Project Consultant

Diyakothakanda is located in Dikhenā, a village about 14 km from Badureliya Town in the Kalutara District, Western Province of Sri Lanka. The site lies in the wet zone of Sri Lanka which receives its major precipitation from the Southwest Monsoon (May–September) and inter monsoonal rains (March–April).

The total extent of the project site which belongs to the Forests Department is approximately 5 acres in extent (2 hectares). The site is divided into 3 Zones A, B, and C. The upper part of the site, Zones B & C and the lower part Zone A covers areas of extent of 2.210, 1.552 and 1.238 acres respectively.

The Zones B & C on top have a slope of about 30 degrees while the Zone A at the bottom has a slope of around 40 degrees. (Figure 1)

After an initial drawback, the current phase of the project commenced in 2016.

In the year 2019, the site work continued based on the technique of Relay Floristics and successful results are beginning to emerge as evidenced in the accompanying photographs. Relay floristics technique involves a succession of incoming and outgoing plants leading to an equilibrium of the rainforest habitat. It was clearly observed that some pioneer species have done well particularly, Weraniya (*Hedyotis fruticosa*), Bovitiya

(*Melastoma malabathricum*) and Kenda (*Macaranga peltata*). However, Gedumba (*Trema orientalis*) a pioneer species that thrives well in the area has distinctly shown a retarded growth in the site.

Since it was observed that some parts of the site are deficient in soil nutrition, the National Institute of Fundamental Studies (NIFS), Kandy was commissioned to carry out a soil sampling test of the entire project area. The soil test report clearly indicated deficiencies in soil nutrients and an application of biofilm developed by NIFS has been recommended. The modality of this application and the cost involved are being studied.



Pictured here: Newly reforested zones of at Diyakothakanda

Type of Tree	# in Zone A	# in Zone B	# in Zone C	Survival Rate	Avg. Height
Pioneer	2,800	3,000	1,800	75%	12'
Primary	950	825	675	tbd	3 ½'

The sun-loving fast-growing pioneer species provided the necessary shade particularly in Zone A which provided the required environment to introduce early successional and climax forest trees. This will be extended to Zones B & C at the right time.

Improvements in biodiversity have been observed with the changes in the vegetation cover by the return of more birds, butterflies and mammals such as sambhur, mousedeer, porcupine and pangolin. A faunal survey of the site will be undertaken in 2020/2021 to establish these changes in a more scientific manner. The table below illustrates the progress as of March 2020.

The objective of this study will be to restore this fragmented patch of rainforest with a similar type of vegetation found in the surrounding forest. Further to achieve this objective, it is planned to carry out a survey of the surrounding forests to identify the prevalent plant species. Nurseries of wildlings of such species will be established. The plant nurseries of early successional species are being maintained by a few families in the Dikhenā village.

Diyakothakanda Conservation Society which was initiated for the purpose of encouraging the involvement of the community with the project has not achieved the expected results.

The contact with the Botany Society of the University of Colombo has not worked out as planned. In the coming year, the Coordinator is expected to devote more time to establish and consolidate the linkages with external scientific agencies such as the Universities, Forest Department, neighbourhood schools and the village. A member of the Subcommittee has been given the task

of developing a proposal to improve the village-project connectivity. The WNPS is planning to strengthen its own staff with a scientific officer who would be engaged in all extension work relating to scientific research.

At the Asia Pacific Chapter Meeting of the Association of Tropical Biology and Conservation (ATBC) held in Sri Lanka, in September 2019, Professors Nimal & Savithri Gunatilleke made a presentation on the reforestation project at Diyakothakanda.

This is a sustainable model for Sri Lanka on reforestation of a rainforest using a mixture of early and late successional species with a strong representation of native and naturalised species, with optimal rate of growth and relatively low investment which links conservation, science, community development, education and youth. Flood relief work, medical camps, donation of laptops to five schools in the area to monitor progress of the site and building a store room for the Dikhenā Junior School are some of the community projects the Society has completed in the area.

The Coordinator plays an important role for the success of the project. A special thank you to Mr. Amila Perera for the work he is doing at the project site.

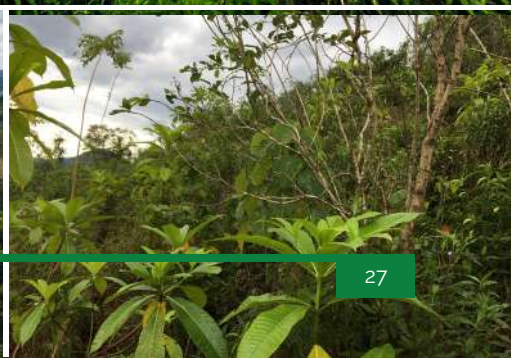
While thanking the initial sponsors: Rotary Club Colombo West, Teejay Lanka PLC and Bureau Veritas Consumer Products Services Lanka (Pvt) Ltd, we gratefully acknowledge the single handed sponsorship of Mr. Ajita de Costa in the years 2018 and 2019 for the "Rainforest Initiative" in memory of his late father Mr. Ray de Costa.



PROJECT INITIATION, 2016



REFORESTATION PROGRESS, 2019





THE GREEN ISLE SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT

COMMITTEE

Prof. Lakdas Fernando (Chair), Dr. Nirmali de Silva, Sriyan de Silva Wijeyeratne

Co-Opted: Charith Fernando (Abans), Suhada Jayawardena (DWC), Devika Rohana, Ravindi Galagamamudali, Farzana Khan, Murtaza Tajbhoy, Chandrika Gunawardena – Treasurer, Amila Perera - Project Coordinator

Project Consultants: Prof. Siril Wijesundara (National Institute of Fundamental Studies, Kandy), Prof. L P Jayatissa (Head, Department of Botany, University of Ruhuna), Dr. Jinie Dela (Primatologist)

The Bellanwila-Attidiya sanctuary was gazetted in year 1990. According to references it extends 372ha and is situated on the south-eastern outskirts of Colombo, directly east of Attidiya and south of temple of Bellanwila. The Bellanwila-Attidiya sanctuary falls within the upper catchment of the Bolgoda river basin. Although the conservation management plans were published, only a few activities were implemented on ground. The habitat has deteriorated with the spreading of invasive and exotic species covering sunlight and space of the native floral species. Hence, the abundance of native species has drastically reduced.

The Sanctuary houses more than 150 species of birds including migratory and endemic birds, more than 20 species of mammals including Mousedeer (*Moschiola meminna*), Otter (*Lutra lutra*), Fishing cats, Rusty Spotted cat and many bat species. The largest predators observed are salt water crocodiles and rock pythons.

The Green Isle Project commenced as the 'Saving Nestor' project for habitat enrichment to provide a refuge for the endemic Purple Faced Leaf Monkey in Western Sri Lanka known as Nestor which is critically endangered mainly due to loss of habitat.

The current Green Isle project while encompassing the objectives of the project 'Saving Nestor' covers a much wider area of habitat restoration for species conservation in the Bellanwila-Attidiya Sanctuary.

The project was symbolically inaugurated on World Environment Day 6th June 2019 after a religious ceremony and an MOU was signed between the WNPS and Abans PLC. The project sponsor Abans PLC has committed a sum of Rs.6 Mn over a period of 5 years. A Memorandum of Understanding on these terms was signed between Abans PLC and the WNPS on 6th June 2019. Prof Lakdas Fernando, Project Chairperson, signed the MOU on behalf of the WNPS.



This simple ceremony was attended by the Director General Wildlife Conservation, Deputy Director Mr. Buddhika Dharmawardena, and Head of Home Appliance Products Mr. Ruwan Gunasekara. The WNPS was represented by the President, Hon General Secretary, other members of the General Committee and the members of the Green Isle Subcommittee. About sixty school children participated in the tree planting ceremony at this inauguration.

A formal project opening on a grander scale was organised by Abans PLC led by their flagship brand LG on the 7th August 2019. The Secretary to the Ministry of Wildlife Conservation, Tourism and Christian Religious Affairs was the Chief Guest. The VIP guests included LG Electronics Product Director Mr. Terry Kim, Product Manager Ms. Sol Lee and Mr. Brian Kwak. Abans' Group Senior Management was represented by the Group Chief Executive Officer Mr. Sriyan de Silva Wijeyeratne, Mr. Buddhika Dharmawardena, Mr. Ruwan Gunasekara and Mr. Charith Fernando. We need to thank Abans flagship brand LG which has been of immense financial support to the project.

It was significant that the inauguration took place on the World Environment Day in the year that Abans PLC celebrated 50 years of the Abans group and the WNPS celebrated its 125th Anniversary. About 200 school children from neighbouring schools were present at this function. They assisted in the tree planting and subsequently participated in a presentation on the importance of wetlands by Dr. Iroja Caldera, Senior Lecturer, Department of Plant Sciences University of Colombo.

This project site belongs to the Department of Wildlife Conservation who has provided us with an island of 40 acres with the specific condition of strictly adhering to the project objectives as stated in the proposal. The project work commenced with a major repair to the barrel bridge near the Bo-tree temple on Kahawita Road to gain access to the site.

The first year success of this project is also largely due to the support received from the Sri Lanka Land Reclamation & Development Corporation (SLLRDC) who provided a heavy duty Amphibian Dredger to clear the thick vegetation of Wel Atha (*Annona Glabra*) and to a lesser extent Keena (*Acacia*) Invasive Alien Species (IAS) which covered the entire Island. It is hoped that SLLRDC will extend their co-operation in 2020 also to complete the clearing work which will assist the zonation of the project site as recommended by the project consultants. Cleantech (Pvt) Ltd., also participated in the cleaning and clearing of the site.

The initial task of creating a walkway round the island has been almost completed and two large ponds have been created within the island.



A team of three consultants have been engaged on a voluntary basis to assist the WNPS in achieving the project objectives. The Consultants met at the site for a field visit and a subsequent discussion on 28th July 2019. Zonation to demarcate areas to plant different species. The periphery to be used for domestic fruit trees (Nestor friendly species).

The recommendations of the Consultants were

1. Zonation of the site into distinctly demarcated areas. The mangrove species to be introduced close to the water after assessing the water quality for the suitability of mangrove plants.
2. Introduction of medicinal plants, aquatic plants, sedges and creepers where priority should be given to rare species that need conservation.
3. Creation of a network of small drains based on a contour map. The water should be drained into ponds along the drains.
4. Provision of specific tree species for habitat enrichment along project objectives

The project is at a very early stage of development. Up to now the work carried out has been mainly highly labour intensive land preparation work which is still continuing. The project has had the potential to attract public and private institutions and schools on tree planting and other exercises. These activities could not be organised in a methodical manner as the site ground preparation is yet to be completed. There is great public interest in the site particularly because of the presence of many species of birds and crocodiles.

Scientific measurement of water quality and soil properties of the site will be undertaken and analysed in the coming year to determine the most suitable plant species. Also historical data for the assemblage of indigenous plant species that were in the Bellanwila – Attidiya sanctuaries before the invasion and complete take over by *Annona Glabra* and *Acacia* will be researched.

It is hoped that from the second year onwards, the project will lend itself for more community, school and university participation in tree planting, scientific research, with greater cooperation of the Department of Wildlife Conservation.

Due to heavy land preparation work in the early months, only part of the recommendations of the experts were carried out. More attention will be paid to the recommendations of the Consultants in 2020 when the land becomes more manageable for planting activities. Prof. Jayatissa's request to monitor water quality also could not be carried out but has been deferred as a priority for 2020.

A preliminary land survey was carried out by the Survey Laboratory of the University of Moratuwa. The survey revealed that extent of the site is about 40 acres.

At the very outset, aerial pictures provided by Mr David Colin Tholme helped in the writing of the project proposal to secure project funding. These photographs showed the thick vegetation cover of *Annona Glabra* in the entire area.

Up to now more than 1000 plants have been tagged, numbered, inventorised, and planted on the walkway. The embankment has been planted with (heen dang - *Syzygium Caryophollatum*). Plant growth will be monitored at regular intervals from 2020 onwards and records will be managed and maintained by the WNPS.

The sponsorship of this project by Abans PLC and the valuable contribution of SLLRDC are gratefully acknowledged. Also Mr. David Colin Thome and University of Moratuwa for their contributions at the preliminary stages. The contribution of Cleantech (Pvt) Ltd is also gratefully acknowledged.

The role of the Project Coordinator, Mr. Amila Perera and some key members of the Subcommittee need to be mentioned here as their contribution has also been a great reason for the success of the project's 1st year.





MARINE SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT

COMMITTEE

Graham Marshall (Chair)

Co-Opted: Jagath Goonawardene, Dr. Malik Fernando, Rex De Silva,
Maxime Wickramasinghe, Anne Amaratunga, Dilranjan Ranasinghe, Shadia Suhayb

SUMMARY

The Marine Subcommittee is in its infancy in the Society but it is with great understanding that it takes on the issues related to marine conservation in the country. The Society really appreciates the participation and contribution of its Subcommittee who have years of experience in the field of conservation be it marine or otherwise. It is with great vigor we hope that we can make a difference and a key factor for 2020 would be to partner with DWC's marine unit as well as work alongside partner agencies to reduce the pollution of our waters, be it both on land or sea.

Sri Lanka being an island nation, has its landmass within the confines of a coastline that is home to very diverse and rich marine habitats. The island's coastline is also an integral component of the fabric of the country's economy. The Fisheries and Tourism industry, combined, contribute to approximately 15% of the country's GDP. Conserving marine habitats therefore is of vital importance in maintaining a healthy balance between economic priorities and the long term sustainability of these habitats. Wanton destruction of these marine habitats, severe plastic pollution, unregulated tourism and fishing, are some of the most pressing conservation challenges that glare threateningly at us, now, and will be so in the future.

There was uncontested understanding within the Committee, at the outset of the period that only projects that had a high probability of being taken to completion would be considered. This would ensure that the focus and energy levels were sustained. Another important factor in governing the extent of activity was the bench strength of the Subcommittee which still continues to be a challenge.

With the above criteria in view, three broad areas were identified as the pillars for activity.

1. Conservation
2. Awareness
3. Stakeholder relationships

CONSERVATION

Whilst there were many opportunities for involvement in tactical conservation activity, the Committee decided that it will embark on a few large long term projects which would have a much stronger and more sustained impact on the country's marine habitats.

CONSERVATION OF MANGROVE HABITATS

Mangroves are a critical factor in protecting our marine ecosystems, is also a pivotal factor in Sri Lanka's ability to deal with climate change and flooding. In addition, it is a vital part of the fishing communities' livelihood. One of the biggest threats to the destruction of Mangrove Habitats is prawn farming where some of the most virgin habitats are now under threat of destruction.

In March 2020, a project to restore abandoned prawn farms, which were previously mangrove habitats was mooted. The Committee would work in collaboration with the DWC and the Ministry. The current situation, rather unfortunately, did not permit further progress. This vital project will be initiated once the tide through the current impasse is passed.

CONSERVATION OF SHIPWRECKS

As Sri Lanka is home to over 50 shipwrecks around its waters, there was a need to ensure that the unique habitats in and around these shipwrecks be preserved and classified as marine sanctuaries. These marine habitats can then be promoted as marine sanctuaries for value added tourism.

The Committee is now working with the Sub Aqua Club, who is in possession of detailed information on these shipwrecks. The first step in the process is the representation to the Department of Archeology and the Cultural Affairs Ministry who will then classify these wrecks under the antiquities ordinance. As the scope of the project to take on many wrecks at the same time was beyond the capacity of the Committee, it was decided to start the project with the classification of the wreck British Sergeant on the East Coast of Sri Lanka.

PLASTIC POLLUTION OF MARINE HABITATS

Plastic Pollution and Ghost fishing as a result of Polypropylene and Nylon nets being discarded both in the ocean and on shore is one the most significant contributors to marine pollution. The other is the disposal of plastic waste which ends up in oceans and on the beaches. As with the other two areas of activity under the conservation pillar, it was decided that involvement in this project would be long-term where there would be a possible sustainable solution to the problem.

The Committee was presented with an opportunity to work on a project in Northern Sri Lanka with the Sri Lanka Blue Swimming Crab Fisheries Improvement Project and Pelagikos Ltd. This involved collection, distribution, transportation, and recycling of the nets. One of the key success factors for such a project is the funding, particularly the logistics and recycling for which the Committee was not able to find a sponsor.

Another initiative in the area was a collaboration with a group called the Pearl Protectors, an active group working on creating awareness and reducing marine pollution. This is an initiative to reduce waste being thrown into the canal network and also supporting them on some of their initiatives like the Annual Christmas Tree Project, where a large Christmas tree is made out of plastic bottles collected on the beach around the Wellawatte area.

The Committee will continue to search for and reach out to partners with a view to collaboratively reduce marine pollution.

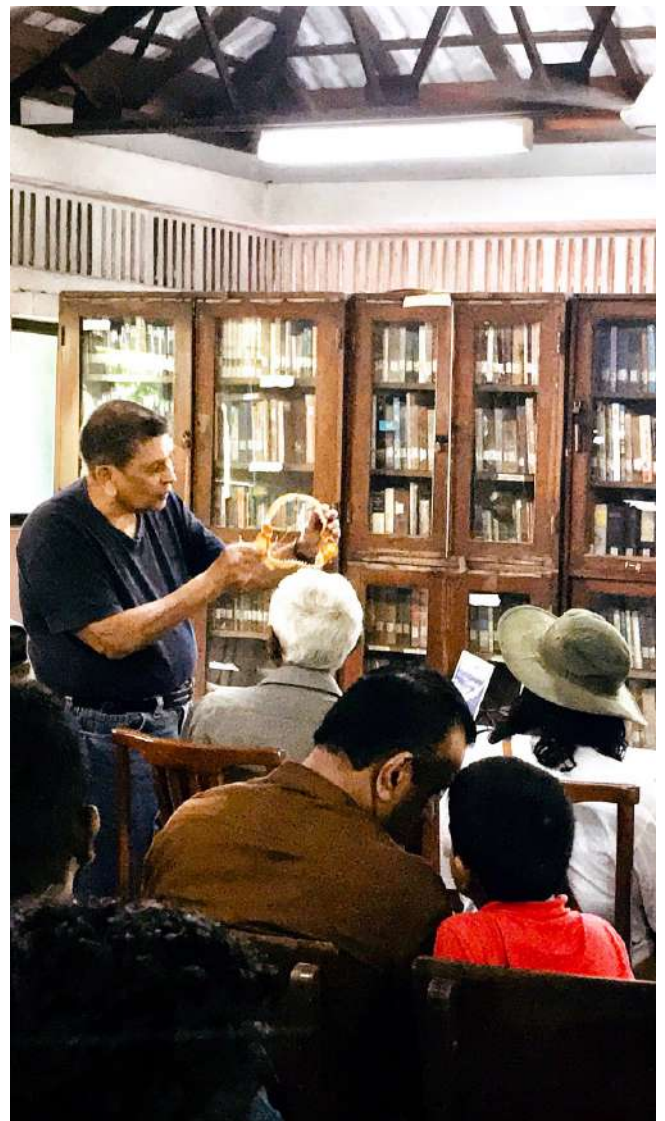
AWARENESS

The Committee has the good fortune of having within its membership a pool of resources, whose combined experience on the oceans and marine habitats and their species is in excess of a hundred years. Dr. Malik Fernando, Mr. Rex De Silva and Mr. Jagath Gunawardena have been and will continue to share their experience and knowledge to those who are keen on learning more of marine species and habitats.

MARINE CHATS

The 'Marine Chat' is a monthly feature held at the WNPS head office. The following chats have been completed. These chats are all conducted free of charge.

- Oct 12 – Identification of Marine Fish
Mr. Rex De Silva
- Nov 30 – Marine Habitats and their Inhabitants
Dr Malik Fernando
- Jan 25 – Marine chat on Sharks
Mr. Rex De Silva
- Feb 29 – Understanding Corals
Dr. Malik Fernando



PARTNERSHIP WITH THE SUB AQUA CLUB AND PEARL PROTECTORS

A programme to create awareness of marine pollution in schools was mooted by the Sub Aqua Club and the WNPS Subcommittee partnered with them on this project. The Pearl Protectors were invited by the Marine Subcommittee to also be a part of this project. Dates were fixed for the initial session at Royal College and Lyceum International School but the unforeseen events that followed led to a postponement of this initiative.

FIELD TRIPS

The Subcommittee embarked on its first field trip early 2020 to the Chilaw Mangrove Museum and its precincts and to the visit the Sand Spits and the beaches in Chilaw.

STAKE HOLDER RELATIONSHIPS

It was essential that the Marine Subcommittee build a network of stakeholders to support its activities. The most important of these is with the Department of Wildlife Conservation. A meeting with the Director General of Wildlife, to be held in November was postponed to the beginning of 2020. The Subcommittee would like to partner and support the DWC's marine unit in any areas they see fit.

The partnerships with the Sub Aqua Club and the Pearl Protectors was a result of initiatives under this section of activity.



WILDCAT SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT

COMMITTEE

Spencer Manuelpillai (Chair), Rukshan Jayewardene, Sriyan de Silva Wijeyeratne, Avijja Fonseka

Co-Opted: Ashinsa de Silva Wijeyeratne, Deepthi Bulankulame, Ishan Rajasuriya, Thilan Jayatilaka

The Wildcat Subcommittee continued its chats with the wildcat research groups in Sri Lanka with the objectives of the chats spelt out clearly.

1. To facilitate interaction among the wildcat researchers in Sri Lanka and to provide a common platform for their work.
2. To develop a master list of all research being carried out across the island, to avoid duplication, overlapping and waste of resources.
3. To identify threats and issues and put together a document from which extracts can be used at a national level for decision-making.
4. To support and assist with funding and fundraising for specific projects, and to provide logistical support.

We were able to have two such sessions in the year under review. The 2nd Cat Chat held on August 31st, 2019 was held at the residence of Dr. Sriyanie Miththapala and the 3rd Cat Chat on September 11th, 2019 at the Association for Tropical Biology and Conservation (ATBC) event.

Based on the 1st Cat Chat event held in December last year, a positive outcome was collaboration of the WNPS with Anjali Watson and the Wilderness and Wildlife Conservation Trust (WWCT) to distribute leaflets to locals on 'Living with Wildcats'. The Youth Wing of the WNPS distributed these leaflets during their field trip for the school children of Hatton to Horton Plains.

The 2nd Cat chat took place at Dr. Sriyanie Miththapala's residence on August 31st, 2019 and was attended by about 20 Cat Specialists and Conservationists. The final outcome of this chat was the following:

- Training programme for District DWC persons
- Leopard Policy document – by end December 2019
- Building a proposal bank
- Media discussion on local terminology related to wildcats

CAT CHAT EVENT AT ATBC

On 11 September, the WNPS hosted a discussion on the assessed threats of and proposed conservation actions for the wildcats of Sri Lanka, titled "Cat Chat". Cat Chat was a part of the larger Association for Tropical Biology and Conservation – Asia Pacific (ATBC-AP) chapter's conference.



The aim was to discuss aspects of ecology and conservation relevant to the leopard and the three small cat species living in Sri Lanka. The event featured a presentation on the four wildcats of Sri Lanka by Dr. Andrew Kittle, Ms. Anjali Watson, Mr. Ashan Thudugala, and Mr. Thilina Nimalrathna, and was followed by a panel discussion with about 50 individuals participating.

CAT CHAT - ENEWSLETTER

The eNewsletter exclusively sharing the information on the work of the Subcommittee and the independent researchers was shared with the members and other conservation bodies in Sri Lanka. The newsletter is edited by the Subcommittee Secretary Ashinsa, if the members have any feedback please send in your thoughts and ideas.

MONTHLY LECTURE : FOCUS ON WILDCATS

The Monthly lecture schedule included two Cat lectures, Dr. Enoka P. Kudavidanage starting the year with her presentation “Unravelling The Mysteries of An Elusive Cat: The Leopards of The Horton Plains National Park” Rukshan Jayewardene joining the panel discussion in May and addressing “The Conservation of Leopards”

MEDIA TRAINING

A special segment was included into the WNPS annual media training programme addressing the recent misreporting and sensationalising of human-leopard incidents, especially in plantation areas. The contact details of Dr. Sriyanie Miththapala, Dr. Inoka Kudavidanage, Dr. Andrew

Kittle, Ms. Anjali Watson, Mr. Kithsiri Gunawardena and Mr. Rukshan Jayewardene were shared with media personal to verify their facts when in doubt.

CHEETAH MONITORING PROGRAMME: KENYA

The WNPS in partnership with the Serendipity Wildlife Foundation offered two spaces to members for a special cheetah monitoring programme from July 15th - 28th 2020. The programme brings together 12 interested persons from across the globe for 2 week opportunity to do in depth study related to wildcats.

CHALLENGES AHEAD

With the increased loss of habitat for wildcats outside protected areas, we are bound to see an increase in human-leopard incidents in the future. The Society is focusing on a few programmes which include:

1. School education programmes in the conflict areas identified
2. A compensation programme for livestock losses; a project offering quick compensation to farmers whose livestock have been killed by leopards to mitigate retaliatory killing of leopards in Sri Lanka.
3. Conservation action plan: An action plan, protocol is being compiled by Dr. Sriyanie Miththapala with the input and collaboration of all wildcat research specialists in Sri Lanka. This is expected to be completed shortly.



MEDIA WORKSHOP



CAT CHAT AT ATBC



CAT CHAT WITH DR. DR SRIYANIE MITHTHAPALA

BUNGALOW SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT

COMMITTEE

Mr. Rahula Dassenaieke (Chair), Jehan CanagaRetna, Shanaka Wijesinghe, Kamaya de Soysa

The bungalow revenue did not meet the expected contribution to the Society compared to previous years. This was mainly due to the aftermath of Easter attacks on 21st April 2019, which resulted in restrictions of holiday travel throughout the country for a substantial period of time. This effect was not faced by only the WNPS but the entire hospitality industry in Sri Lanka.

Yet, the Society made a net profit of Rs. 68,960 against a profit of 259,948 in the previous year. A detailed breakdown of the 2019 accounts is shown in the annual accounts under “notes to the financial statements”.

The Five year financial comparison of the Bungalows is stated below in the chart:

Bungalow	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Yala	(5000)	188,000	228,000	110,235	(92,670)
Wilpattu	(257,000)	(117,000)	(11,000)	204,000	173,000
Udawalawe	(366,000)	(487,000)	126,000	(54,287)	(11,370)
Net profit	(628,000)	(416,000)	343,000	259,948	68,960

Source: AGM reports of the WNPS

PALATUPANA (YALA)

The Yala Bungalow managed by the Society had a serious setback with bookings after the deadly Easter attacks on 21st April '19. The fear factor continued for some time resulting in restrictions in holiday travel by locals and foreigners alike. As the tense situation was easing and things were falling into place, severe drought conditions compelled the Yala National Park to close for a period of one and a half months, further preventing guest occupancy of our bungalow. Whilst bookings through the WNPS HO were very low, thanks to Bungalow-Keeper, Mr. Damith, we managed to sell a few more nights on an ad-hoc basis to non-members. If not for these extra bookings, losses would have been much greater than they appear in our accounts.

There are over 375 lodges, guesthouses, and hotels in the vicinity of Yala NP with far better facilities available than the WNPS Bungalow. The EXCO along with the Bungalow Subcommittee have taken a decision to renovate and upgrade the facility in 2020.

Additionally, to get the required electricity, a minimum 5 kva generator/solar system is in place to operate a fridge, a few fans, and lights. Further, renowned Architect Romesh Fonseka who recently visited the site has volunteered to redesign and provide the bungalow with a facelift to suit the ambience of this beautiful location. We are waiting for his final plan and cost to make a decision on how to fund this renovation, as the bungalow in its current state will not garner any bookings to make a difference to the Society's net gain.



UDAWALAWE

Management of The Udawalawe bungalow has changed hands to Mr. Mahawatte, on behalf of the Society. Mr. Mahawatte has invested a considerable sum in order to uplift basic standards including bathrooms and also by making an additional room, where now up to 10 guests can easily sleep at this bungalow. WNPS also contributed Rs. 175,000 for this purpose to be deducted in 12 monthly installments from the monthly management fee, which is Rs. 20,000 per month. Unfortunately, despite making special rates and offers specially for the WNPS, poor patronage by members has created a situation where Mr. Mahawatte is also finding it a non-viable project as he cannot cover his basic expenses such as staff wages, electricity, maintenance etc. Therefore we ask our members to make use of the bungalow, which is situated in a beautiful location not far from the park entrance.

WILPATTU

The management of the Wilpattu bungalow has been contracted to Mr. A. Stephen for a sum of Rs. 20,000 per month. Since the contract is expiring in August 2020, the Committee has decided to call for fresh tenders in 2020 in order to provide the Society the best financial option along with the most competent management for running of the bungalow. When ready, the Bungalow Committee will send out details of the tender via its social media and email to its membership. They will also advertise in the newspapers for individuals other than members to have an opportunity to put in their tender.

GENERAL

As stated in previous reports, the management of the Udawalawe and Wilpattu bungalows are outsourced on the condition that members of the Society are given priority booking at the subsidised rates as stipulated by the General Committee, and as revised by them from time-to-time.

Once again, we request all members to patronise these bungalows, so conveniently located close to the entrances of the major National Parks, and enjoy the benefits. The Society is also working on having a tracker from the DWC allocated for the duration of the booking, subject to the rules and regulations of the Society.

Since the primary intention of the Society is to divert net funds it generates from the bungalow management towards conservation and scientific projects, we seek financial and / or material contributions from our generous membership, donors, and sponsors to make our bungalows some of the favorite holiday accommodations in the vicinity of our three key National Parks.

As per the chart shown at the beginning of the report, we see a clear direction of upward mobility in the net revenue from 2017, albeit 2019 taking a hit due to the barbaric Easter Sunday bombings and subsequent severe drought that closed the parks for an extended period. Furthermore, the conditions of the Wilpattu and Yala bungalows need to be evaluated for further upgrading. We do understand that the management of bungalows takes a special skill and three fabulous locations given to the WNPS by the Government need to be taken full advantage of.

The Committee extends its great appreciation for the work undertaken by the Administrative Secretary Ms. Kamaya de Soysa and the Finance Consultant Mr. Pradeep De Silva after taking over duties from former Mr. George Thambapillai. A special thank you to our bungalow keeper Mr. Damith for diligently keeping our members satisfied to the limits of what he has been dealt with. Coordinating the bookings for members with different management groups is not always an easy task. Our HO team will always endeavor to ensure that the needs of the membership are paramount.



VIEW FROM THE WNPS BUNGALOW, WILPATTU

MEMBER SERVICES REPORT

COMMITTEE

Spencer Manuelpillai (Chair), Rukshan Jayewardene, Prof. Lakdas Fernando, Jehan CanagaRetna

PUBLIC LECTURE SERIES

The monthly lecture series of the WNPS is now a monthly gathering looked forward to by both the membership and the general public. The depth of knowledge shared in the 60 minute lecture by an excellent line up of speakers in 2019 has not only enriched the audience but has enabled the society to initiate measures in various conservation fronts. The extensive media coverage each of the lectures receive has enhanced the visibility of the society throughout the year.

We are encouraged by the change of the age profile of the audience with the lectures now attracting a large number of the school children and youth. The Lecture series has been a catalyst to attract new members and a large number of volunteers who have signed up to share their time and knowledge. The post-lecture social gathering which goes on for more than an hour every month has enabled conservation conversations amongst the likeminded audience who attend the lectures. The lecture in May 2019 was changed to a panel discussion format to make

it a special one to mark the 125th Anniversary of the Society.

A significant addition is the extension of the lectures to our key regional cities. We were able to hold a well-attended lecture in both Kandy and Galle in 2019. This would continue to expand to other key cities around Sri Lanka in 2020.

The Society is grateful to the panel of speakers who have volunteered their time and delivered very well prepared lectures.

We are extremely grateful to Nations Trust Bank for partnering our lecture series for the last 3 years. The partnership has enabled us to deliver invaluable knowledge to a monthly audience of over 500 conservation enthusiasts.

A special thank you to Sarva Integrated for being our communication partner and assisting with communication material, and Dilmah for facilitating discussions with a warm cup of tea.





MONTHLY LECTURE IN PROGRESS AT THE BMCH

Month	Topic	Guest Speaker
Jan 17th	Unravelling The Mysteries Of An Elusive Cat: The Leopards Of The Horton Plains National Park	Dr. Enoke P. Kudavidanage
Feb 21st	The Art Of Wildlife Photography	Dr. Lalith Ekanayake
March 21st	Sinharaja: From A Timber Reserve To A Biological Treasure Trove -What Next?	Drs. Savitri & Nimal Gunatilleke, Professors Emeritus, University of Peradeniya
May 29th	Where Is Wildlife Conservation In Sri Lanka Today?	A Panel Discussion Moderator – Dr. Sumith Pilapitiya The Conservation Of Leopards: Mr. Rukshan Jayewardene Human – Elephant Conflict: Dr. Prithviraj Fernando Marine Conservation: Mr. Nishan Perera Conservation Of Birds: Dr. Sampath Seneviratne
June 20th	Climate Change & Our Responsibility	Dr. Erandathie Lokupitiya
July 18th	The Secret Lives Of Sri Lanka's Giants	Dr. Asha De Vos
August 15th	Insects- The Hidden Treasures Of Sri Lanka	Profs. Nirmalie Pallewatta & Jayanthi Edirisinghe
September 12th	Are We Really Engaging In Biodiversity Conservation?	Dr. Sriyanie Miththapala
September 23rd Additional Lecture for the Month	From Giant Crocs To Sea Serpents: Understanding Ecology For Better Conservation Of Reptiles	Dr. Ruchira Somaweera
September 28th Regional Lecture (Kandy)	WNPS Public Lecture In Kandy “Human-Elephant Conflict Management” Presentation By Dr Sumith Pilapitiya “The Great Elephant Gathering Of Asia” Screening Of Documentary By Dilum Alagiyawanna	Dr. Sumith Pilapitiya Mr. Dilum Alagiyawanna
October 17th	The Greatest Dance On The Planet: A Collection Of Stories Of The Long-Distance Migration Of Birds From Our Neighbourhood	Dr. Sampath Seneviratne
October 19th Regional Lecture (Galle)	Capturing Wildlife – With The Eye And The Heart!	Mr. L J Mendis Wickramasinghe
November 21st	The Western Purple-Faced Langur Tree Top ‘Soap’: Who holds the ‘Remote’?	Dr. Jinie Dela
Jan 16th	Tigers and Conservation	Dr. Sahil Nijhawan from India
Feb 20th	Prioritising Marine Conservation: Facts vs Fuzz	Mr. Nishan Perera

FIELD TRIPS

The field trips fulfilled a key part of the member services element in 2019 with trips planned and carried out to some of the rich biodiversity spots in the country. Every trip was oversubscribed, and the facility was strictly limited to the society members. The resource persons who guided the members on every field trip ensured that these members were enriched with the depth of knowledge shared. We are encouraged by the commitment and adherence to the strict rules and disciplines set out by the society. The 2020 plan for the trips looks exciting with us adding more day trips to places of interest. The society is grateful to the resource persons who assisted us in educating our members on the rich fauna and flora of our country. We are also happy to build friendships amongst the society members who have gone on to join the subcommittees and volunteer their time.



SAFARI WITH SABA

The highlight of the 2019 calendar was obviously the one in November where we had our chief guest for the 125th Anniversary celebrations of the society Ms. Saba Douglas-Hamilton and Dr. Frank Pope.

Members of the society were able to join Saba on a field trip covering 3 National Parks within the span of 48 hours. First a visit to Udawalawe National Park followed by an evening park run at Block 5 of Yala. Next day visiting the Block 1 through Katagamuwa entrance. A moving highlight of the trip was the time spent at Elephant Transit Home, where both Saba and Frank were given a presentation by Dr. Vijitha on the great work being done at the ETH to rehabilitate and reintroduce the elephants back to the wild.

We are grateful to Kulu Safaris and Colombo Jewellery Stores for their support to make this field trip a monumental one.



FIELD TRIP SCHEDULE 2019

Month	Venue	Resource Person
Jan 19th to 21st	Mannar	Dr. Sampath Seneviratne
Feb 23rd	Hikkaduwa	Dr. Malik Fernando, Mr. Jehan Pieris
March 23rd and 24th	Sinharaja	Mr. Kasun Dayananda
June 14th to 16th	Horton Plains	Dr. Enoka P. Kudavidanage & Mr Chandimal Ranathunga
July 27th and 28th	Wilpattu	Mr. Kithsiri Gunawardena
August 24th	Kanneliya	Mr. Rahula Perera
September 20th to 22nd	Kumana	Mr. Shirley Perera
October 26th & 27th	Udawalawe	Mr. Srilal Miththapala
November 13th & 14th	Yala	Ms. Saba Douglas-Hamilton and Dr. Frank Pope



15 PUBLIC
LECTURES
400-600
MONTHLY AUDIENCE



09 FIELD
TRIPS



05 WETLAND
WALKS

MEMBER GATHERING

The member gathering, which was due to be held in August 2019, had to be cancelled due to the unfortunate Easter Sunday attacks as the mood in the country was not apt to hold such an event. The December member gathering was canceled due to the Gala 125th event held in November 2019.

WETLAND AND NATURE WALKS FOR JUNIOR MEMBERS

The society organised four Wetland Walks in Colombo and one Nature Walk in Kandy for young conservation enthusiasts in 2019. The society owes much gratitude to Nations Trust Bank for their continued support in making this event successful.

The Walks are mainly scheduled during school holidays to allow youngsters the opportunity of participating in a fun and educational programme. Each event can accommodate up to one hundred children, aged 4-12. Parents are encouraged to accompany younger participants. Junior members and non-members are encouraged to attend. Junior members are given free entry; entrance fee for non-members covers Junior Membership for one year.

Small groups are taken on a guided walk by members of the Young Zoologists' Association of Sri Lanka, who educate them on the flora and fauna they see along the way. Following the Walk the children enjoy light refreshments, while engaging in a discussion with a local expert about their experience. A special thanks to Ms. Narmada Dangampola from the UDA for going out of her way to make the Wetland Walks successful to the Society.



WETLAND WALK SCHEDULE 2019

January 6th	Beddagana Wetland Park
March 31st	Beddagana Wetland Park
August 18th	Diyasaru Park, Thalawathugoda
September 29th	Udawattakele Forest Reserve (Kandy)
December 8th	Beddagana Wetland Park

PUBLICATIONS

LORIS EDITORIAL COMMITTEE

Rohan Wijesinghe – Editor (Up to May 2019), Sarasi Wijeyeratne - Editor (from May 2019), Rukshan Jayewardene, Jehan CanagaRetna, Dr. Sampath Seneviratne, Arefa Tehsin

WARANA / WARANAM EDITORIAL COMMITTEE

Vidya Abhayagunawardena – Editor (until Sep 2019), Sanjaya Weerakkody – Editor (From Oct 2019), Jehan CanagaRetna

LORIS

Volume 28, Issue 5 was printed as a special Collector's Edition hard copy 125th Anniversary edition. This edition contained messages from past Presidents, reprinted copies of former LORIS journals and the table of contents of the very first LORIS edition (Volume 1, No 1). The volume also included pictorials and letters from the 100th year celebration, a congratulatory message from Michael Brune, Executive Director of the Sierra Club (founded in 1892) and a reprint of the editorial of the 1st LORIS journal (1936) written by Prof. W.C.O Hill. A heartfelt thank you to Mr. Rohan Wijesinha whose tireless efforts to launch the journal in time has to be appreciated.

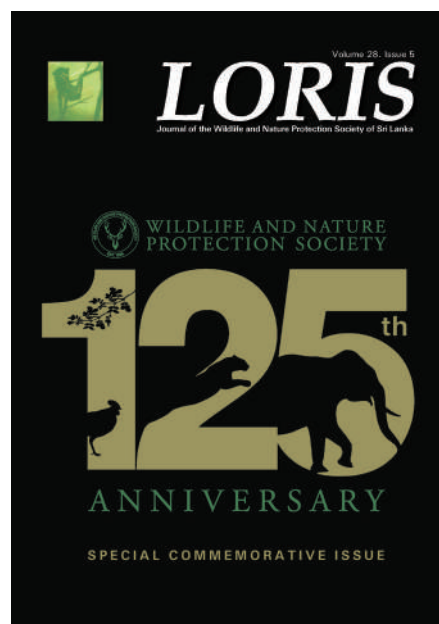
The Society is in the process of completing the next issue (6) and hopes to print out this edition after the Government declares normalcy from the COVID19 pandemic.

WARANA / WARANAM

The Society has failed to publish a Warana / Waranam magazine in 2019 and with the appointment of the new Editor, we hope to print three issues in 2020, specifically Volume 10 and Issue 6, Volume 11, Issue 1 & 2 and Volume 11, Issue 3 & 4.



Pictured here: Valmik Thapar, one of India's most respected conservationists, wildlife and tiger experts, who was in Sri Lanka on the invitation of the Government, was presented with a copy of the 125th Anniversary LORIS by our Vice President Tami Flamer-Caldera





DIGITAL MEDIA AND PUBLICITY

COMMITTEE

Spencer Manuelpillai (Chair), Sarasi Wijeratne, Zaineb Akbarally

Co-Opted: P J Williams

The society has embraced all key social media platforms and utilised them to a great extent for its communication with the members and the general public at large. We are glad to note that the current follower base on all our platforms has been acquired organically, hence all followers are keen on conservation related matters. The Society has allocated a special monthly budget to boost certain selected content to facilitate greater reach. We are trying our best to keep up with the ever-evolving development in the digital space and would like to invite members who are specialists in this area to volunteer their time and skills to further enhance our utilisation of the digital platforms.

The team has been working on the revamp project of the Society website most of last year and are planning to launch the new website sometime in the middle of 2020.

The Society has enjoyed extensive media coverage during the year under review with feature articles in leading newspapers highlighting key conservation issues. The society has led the conservation community in taking on sensitive issues exposing the individuals and organisations behind environmental damage. We are grateful to all editors, feature editors and journalists who have supported the society wholeheartedly.

We are grateful to Wijeya Newspapers for being our print media partner in the Conservation Photography Competition and 125th Anniversary Gala Dinner in 2019. The society enjoyed advertising space in excess of Rs 2 million in value. We express our thanks to the MBC & MTV Networks for being the electronic media partner for the Conservation Photography Challenge.

MEDIA WORKSHOP

The 2nd annual workshop for media personnel involved in environmental issues was conducted together with the Sri Lanka Press Institute and supported by Nations Trust Bank. The full day session was well attended in spite of the torrential downpour on the day of the sessions. The key areas which are misrepresented and misrepresented in the media were handled by a professional team of speakers who are authorities on each subject. We plan on taking this workshop to the key regional cities to educate the regional correspondents especially from key human-wildlife conflict areas.



CREATIVE PARTNERS

A special word of thanks to Sarva Integrated for the creative support extended throughout an event-packed 2019. Including the photography competition, 125th Anniversary celebration, lectures, and creative campaigns throughout the year.

Ariel Holdings for the historic 125th Anniversary logo used extensively in 2019.



Pretty Disturbing?

Because environmental damage isn't a pretty picture.



CONSERVATION PHOTOGRAPHY CAMPAIGN

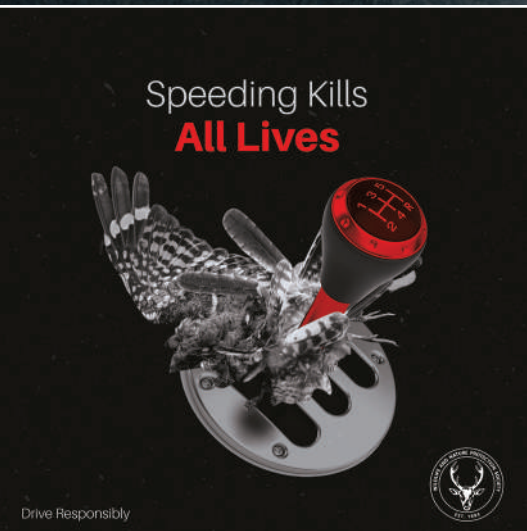
Pretty Awful?

Because destroying nature isn't a pretty picture.



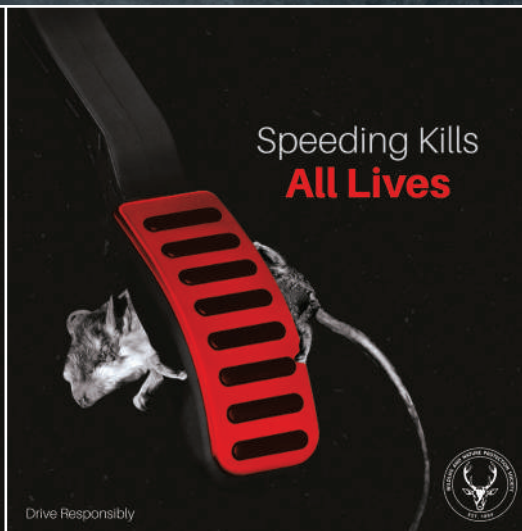
Pretty Devastating?

Because endangering lives isn't a pretty picture.



Speeding Kills
All Lives

Drive Responsibly



Speeding Kills
All Lives

Drive Responsibly



Speeding Kills
All Lives

Drive Responsibly



MEDIA WORKSHOP, SRI LANKA PRESS INSTITUTE





FUNDRAISING SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT

COMMITTEE

Jehan CanagaRetna (Chair), Sriyan de Silva Wijeyeratne, Prof. Lakdas Fernando, Dilshan Hettiaratchi

Fundraising during the year was carried out through both the Fundraising Committee and the 125th Anniversary Committee who jointly raised approximately Rs. 11.6 million during the year. This compares with Rs.8 million collected in the previous year for the same activities. As the scope of activities of the society have grown substantially during the year, the Subcommittee aims to find more donors to roll out the Societies wider range of activities. This report outlines the activities of the Fundraising Committee for regular events of the society. The fundraising activities of the 125th Committee are covered under the section covering events of the 125th Anniversary.

The key criteria of collections continued with the same rule of thumb as 2018: any WNPS project had to have a committee member heading it and the funds to be received agreed through an MOU with the respective company, with 10% of the total reserved for the administration of the project. The main objective in devising this fundraising strategy was to avoid jeopardising the cash position of the Society by having to divert funds to implement special projects. As of the last two years, the decision to generate funds for special projects independent of the regular cash flow of the Society improved its overall financial position.

NDB Bank was the Society's largest sponsor for the year, with a very generous donation of Rs.3.5 million for the Youth Wing initiative managed by the Youth Wing Subcommittee. The youth are the future of our country and this project is instrumental to further the Society's outreach to achieve a key factor of conservation awareness through education for future generations. Thank you Mr. Dimantha Seneviratne (Director / CEO), Mr. Sanjaya Perera (VP Retail, Branches & Marketing) and Ms. Sharon de Silva (Senior Manager – Corporate

Sustainability) for making this sponsorship possible and helping the Society be an instrumental cog in the wheel of conservation awareness with our Youth in the country. Ms. Sharon de Silva's invaluable support needs to be appreciated.

Nations Trust Bank (NTB) supported a number of initiatives of the Society during the year and provided the society with approximately Rs.3 million in funding during the year. NTB's contribution included sponsoring the monthly lecture programme, sponsoring the LORIS journal and WARANA / WARANAM magazine, sponsoring the Wetland Walk, which is an initiative to ingrain conservation interest and values in the young children and sponsor other events such as the Media Workshop and the 'Chat with Saba'. Thank you NTB and their key people, Ms. Renuka Fernando (CEO), Mr. Priyantha Talwatte (Deputy CEO / Senior VP Consumer Banking), Mr. Theja Silva (General Counsel / Group Company Secretary) and Mr. Adheesha Perera (Sustainability Manager) in ensuring the donations which have boosted the Society's image tremendously.

Prof. Lakdas Fernando's continued efforts in finding the main Sponsor, Mr. Ajita de Costa for the ROAR project from 2018 to 2020 secured the Society Rs.4.2 million for 3 years. The installment of 2020 of Rs 1.5 million of this payment was received in late 2019. In addition, a donation of Rs.125,000 was also received for ROAR from Bureau Veritas during the year. The generous donation from Mr. Ajita de Costa and Bureau Veritas is enabling the ROAR Subcommittee and the Society to continue the scientific work to reforest a rainforest. We hope in the future, this would be a catalyst for other organisations to follow.

Sampath Bank has been a long term sponsor of the Society going back more than 20 years. Infact, Sampath Bank is our oldest partner in terms of beneficial agreement between both organisations. The agreement between both institutions was possible because of Mr. Kumar Weerasuriya's intervention, which has generated the Society approximately 20m or more in the last 20 years. These funds have enabled the Society to ensure its longevity where the funds are spent on Admin and Educational Awareness expenses. We must also thank Mr. Nanda Fernando (Managing Director), Mr. Pujitha Rajapaksa (Chief Manager, Marketing) and Mr. Nuwan Pathirana (Manager – Sustainability).

We are extremely grateful to Abans PLC for providing us a sponsorship of Rs. 2m during the year to kick off the first phase of the Green Isle Project under the watchful eye of Dr. Lakdas Fernando. The project aims to rehabilitate a section of the Attidiya wetlands. The total value of the Abans sponsorship is Rs. 6m and will be paid over five (5) years with Rs. 2m paid in 2019 and Rs. 1m each additional year until 2023. The sponsorship was obtained through the hard work of Mr. Sriyan de Silva Wijeyeratne and Prof Lakdas Fernando. We are appreciative and grateful to the Chairperson of Abans PLC, Mrs. Pestonjee, Managing Director, Mr. Tito Pestonjee and his team Mr. Buddhika Dharmawardena, Mr. Charith Fernando and Mr. Ruwan Gunasekara of Abans PLC and the LG team for their valuable contribution towards the Green Isle Project.

Brandix Lanka partnered with the Society for the 3rd year in funding smaller projects and the day-to-day running of the Society along with sponsoring our Gala event. Their unsolicited support proves that our corporates in our country do value conservation as a key factor that should be included along with development. Teejay Lanka PLC whose full donation was taken into accounts for the lack of finances in 2015 will officially end its sponsorship period in 2019. We thank them for their continued contribution, including a significant Fabric donation for our 125th Anniversary t-shirts.

We would also like to thank Spa Ceylon and Colombo Jewellery Stores for sponsoring our newest scientific initiative under the HEC Subcommittee, the Light Repel

System (LRS) to mitigate HEC. This experimental LRS if proven to be successful will be a game changer in the conservation of elephants in our country.

Our key sponsors and donors for the 125th Gala event have been endorsed and recognised under the 125th report along with the Treasurer's report. We thank them all as their partnership with the Society was treasured in more ways than one.

A big thank you to the Fundraising Subcommittee who worked as a team and independently to bring the required funds to the society. If not for the collective efforts of these individuals and a few others on the General Committee, the Society would be hard pressed to find the required funds. We plan on soliciting more foreign conservation benefactors in 2020 and have will have Ms. Kamaya de Soysa leading the charge in this area from the office.

We thank Pro Image for videotaping our lecture series for the third year on a pro bono basis enabling us to also post this lecture series on our website

We thank all our sponsors, donors and every other contributor to the Society with the utmost sincerity. Thanking the membership goes without saying as without their co-operation we won't be a society at the helm of conservation in our country.

The following years will be hard pressed for sponsorships and funding. The Corvid 19 pandemic will create such mayhem financially around the world that companies will find it hard to spend money on conservation and conservation related matters. Ironically, this is not what should happen but the corporates around the world and Sri Lanka need to re-think their strategies and contribute a lot more to the preservation of our natural resources such as our fauna, flora and the environment. It is the mandate of our Society to take the lead in the endeavor of conserving our environment and we know the Committee at hand along with the membership will leave no stone unturned to make a positive contribution in the years to come.

THE KEY SPONSORS OF THE YEAR WERE:

Project and Event Sponsors	Description	Towards	Value
National Development Bank	Sponsorship	Youth Wing Project	3,500,000.00
Nations Trust Bank PLC	Sponsorship	Public lectures, Wetland walks & Media	2,285,650.00
Abans PLC	Sponsorship	Green Isle Project	2,000,000.00
Mr. Ajita De Costa	Sponsorship	ROAR Project	1,500,000.00
Sampath Bank PLC	Sponsorship	Admin & Educational Awareness Expenses	1,267,685.00
SPA Ceylon	Sponsorship	Elephant Light Repel System	250,000.00
Bureau Veritas	Sponsorship	ROAR Project	125,000.00
E.W. Balasuriya & Co.	Sponsorship	Kandy Lecture	125,000.00
Colombo Jewellery Stores	Sponsorship	Elephant Light Repel System	90,000.00

125TH ANNIVERSARY: CELEBRATING A MILESTONE YEAR

In 2018, the WNPS Committee made some visionary and ambitious plans to celebrate our 125th Anniversary with a difference, with class and a focus on impact. The ambition was to execute a series of events aimed at all different segments of society and our membership. The objective was to use the milestone as a trigger point to draw attention to specific issues, link up with new partners to help us engage in our common cause, launch new activities to further conservation, attract new members and galvanise the old even further and to create something memorable and lasting for our membership. A lot of preparation went into many activities, only to have the horrific and tragic bombing events of Easter push the team to postpone many of the initiatives. The team responded with a lot of passion, courage and determination to not let these externalities defeat us, and through some remarkable efforts by many, the WNPS was able to pull off a full series of events across 2019, to achieve many of the above objectives.

The highlight was when WNPS celebrated 125 years in style with a Gala Dinner in November at the Hilton, which played host to famed conservation cum media personality Ms. Saba Douglas-Hamilton. The formal event, preceded by cocktails and music, featured an inspiring presentation by Saba, a stirring talk by our President, a passionate plea from WNPS Conservation Ambassador and former Cricket Captain Mahela Jayawardena, scrumptious food and free drinks along with colourful entertainment from the Workshop Players, a moving video montage and great in house atmosphere. Winners of the first Conservation Photography competition also received prizes and their work was exhibited. Colombo Jewellery Stores gifted 125 commemorative elephant pendants for fundraising while Spa Ceylon provided lovely valuable gifts to all who were present, in addition to the society's free gift of a beautiful glass drinking bottle. Numerous media exposures with the event and the mini build-up events being leveraged; focused on conservation, the challenges being faced and responses desired. Thanks to the generous engagement of many new partners, we were able to not just pull off the mega event series, but also ensure that we had a small net financial surplus, highlighting just how hard the team pursued the initiative and how positively partners responded in appreciation.

During the year, the society published a bumper special edition of Loris which is a collector's item and will stand the test of time. Mr. Rohan Wijesinha was editor of the same and we appreciate his great effort. We did a 125th special lecture cum panel discussion for the membership on key conservation issues with some of the top names in different areas as panelists,

had a special public event on Elephant Conservation titled 'Chat with Saba' in the company of Dr. Frank Pope as well. We also had a first-day cover launch, ran the first local conservation photography competition, conducted health camps for Wildlife Department staff, did a special wildlife safari with member guests and Saba, renovated the Head Office and bungalows with significant investment, launched a Youth Ambassador Programme, launched the Conservation Ambassador Programme and had Mr. Mahela Jayawardena along with Ms. Jayanthi KuruUthumpala, Mr. Johann Peiris and Mr. Adam Flamer-Caldera be our first set of spokespeople. We began exposing people internationally through sponsored trips and kicked off the new 'Green Isle' Programme to reforest and recreate the Attidiya Marsh ecosystem through a multi-year initiative. These were examples of the 125th year actions outside the regular work being done by the team.

The support received from corporates, the public, the DWC and Government, and our membership, was incredible. Our sponsor and contributory partners for the different 125th year activities included Colombo Jewellery Stores, the Jetwing Group, Brandix, Spa Ceylon, Kulu Safaris, Mercantile Investments, Wijeya Graphics, Wijeya Newspapers, MTV & MBC Networks, the Abans Group, Shirohana, Ariel Holdings, Video Image, Sarva Integrated, Workshop Players, Hi Magazine, the Department of Wildlife, Nations Trust Bank, the Rockland Group, Cinnamon Nature Trails, the Philatelic Bureau, Janashakthi Group, Mr. Shanaka Amarasinghe, Citrus Events, Mr. Kumar Weerasuriya and Ceylon Hospitals. Outside of this, support from our corporate sponsor partners ensured lots of regular events continued as a complement to these activities over the period. Our solid financial platform is a further testament to the team's successful efforts.

The milestone year was certainly not an end result but provided the team and membership with an opportunity to collectively pause, reflect, redirect, rejoice, reenergise and revamp the WNPS to prepare itself to better face the next twenty five years and beyond. Two organising teams had to straddle two General Committee periods and effectively organise two mega events and more and the contribution of all those indefatigable team members are deeply appreciated with gratitude.

The 125th year action planning was chaired by Mr. Sriyan de Silva Wijeyeratne and consisted of three subcommittees which covered many difference facets of the work. These three groups were composed as follows:



- The Stalking Leopards team was led by Ranil Pieris (2018/19) and Graham Marshal (2019/20) and consisted of Spencer Manuelpillai, Zaineb Akbarally, Shanaka Wijesinghe and Sarasi Wijeratne
- The Soaring Eagles team was led by Dilshan Hettiaratchi and consisted of Rahula Dassenaieke, Ayanthi Samarajeewa, Rukshan Jayewardene, Prof. Lakdas Fernando, Dr. Nirmali De Silva, Vidya Abhayagunawardena and Ravindralal Anthonis
- The Charging Tuskers team was led by Jehan CanagaRetna and consisted of Tami Flamer-Caldera, Caryll Tozer, and Caryll Van Dort. Avijja Fonseka, Dr. Hemantha Perera, Ranjan Josiah, and Kamaya de Soysa

Several other members also played their different parts and the society will always remain indebted to them all.

Sriyan de Silva Wijeyeratne
President

125TH ANNIVERSARY EVENT - FINANCIAL AND OTHER DONATIONS (CONTRIBUTIONS)

Donor	Description	Towards	Value
Brandix Lanka (Pvt) Ltd	Sponsorship	Corporate and Event Sponsor	886,150.00
Nations Trust Bank PLC	Sponsorship	LORIS 125th Commemorative Issue	642,000.00
Colombo Jewellery Stores	Sponsorship	125th sterling silver Limited Edition Pendants (Earn of LKR 625,000 to the WNPS)	625,000.00
Colombo Jewellery Stores	Sponsorship	125th Dinner	500,000.00
Kulu Safaris	Donation	Complimentary nights for 19 people at the Yala campsite inclusive of safaris	455,000.00
Jetwing Hotels Ltd	Sponsorship	125th Dinner - Event Sponsor	300,000.00
Nations Trust Bank PLC	Sponsorship	Partner for Chat with Saba	250,000.00
Jetwing Eco Holidays	Sponsorship	126th Dinner - Event Sponsor	200,000.00
Wijeya Graphic (Pvt) Ltd	Sponsorship	125th Anniversary Conservation Photography Competition	200,000.00
Janashakthi Insurance PLC	Sponsorship	125th Dinner - Event Sponsor	75,000.00
Ceylon Hospitals Ltd	Sponsorship	125th Dinner - Event Sponsor	50,000.00
Mr. Kumar Weerasuriya	Donation	LORIS 125th Commemorative Issue	40,000.00
Rockland Group of Companies	Donation	Compliments for the table at the event	
SPA Ceylon	Donation	Complimentary entrance gifts	
Workshop Players	Donation	Complimentary performance at the 125th event	
Shirohana	Donation	All floral arrangements provided on complimentary basis for the event	
Citrus Worldwide	Donation	Provided stage, lights, sounds and video wall for the event on a complimentary basis	
Ariel Holdings	Donation	Design of 125th event logo on a complimentary basis	
Sarva Integrated	Donation	Creative Partner for the Event and the WNPS	
Pro Image	Donation	WNPS audio video production	
Video Image	Donation	Conservation Ambassador video series	
MTV and MBC Networks	Donation	Electronic Media Partner for 125th Anniversary Conservation Photography Competition	
Hi Magazine	Donation	Print Media Partner	
Mr. Shanaka Amarasinghe	Donation	Compered the event free of charge	
Wijeya Newspapers	Sponsorship	Print Media Partner 125th Anniversary events and Conservation Photography Competition	
Ranweli Holiday Village	Donation	Gifts for the winners of the Conservation Photography Competition	
Tequila Sri Lanka	Donation	Event logistics coordination for "Chat with Saba" event	
Teejay Lanka Limited	Sponsorship	Fabric and corporate assistance	
Mr. Sarath Perera	Donation	Photography coverage of 125th Gala Dinner	

TREASURER'S REPORT 2019

THE REPORT

I am pleased to inform the members that the Society has delivered a strong 2019, amidst tremendous challenges and odds, recording an Income over Expenditure of Rs.2,295,973. The last three year surpluses resulting from the passionate commitment and hard work from everyone has ensured that the Society is on a very strong financial footing. In addition to the strong bottom line, the quality of the sources of income improved significantly, with many of the income streams of the Society performing very well. The primary source of income for the Society, subscription fees was substantially higher than the previous year and has grown 50% within two years, resulting from renewed focus on collection of subscription income and the sustained new membership drive. Additionally, operational activities and new projects have also contributed very strongly to the income of the society and has ensured that we are no longer dependent on subscription and interest income for our existence. Specific mention is due to income from activities such field trips, wetland walks, lectures, and seminars. Project funding too eases the pressure on shared overhead cost, and we see the entrance of several new corporate partners who now work closely with us. Interest income has also grown multiple fold resulting from consolidation of investments and improved Treasury Management. The year also saw a multitude of events to celebrate the Society's 125th Anniversary. I am pleased to inform the membership that the collective 125th anniversary events provided the Society with an income over expenditure of over Rs. 300,000 and was accretive to the Society's financials. This was despite all the setbacks and postponements resulting from the Easter attacks and the fact that the team put together a fantastic high-profile Gala Dinner event graced by international dignitaries and our membership, at a subsidised rate.

Through the tireless efforts of the Fundraising Committee, supported by the 125th Anniversary team and the General Committee, the Society has been able to attract donations and sponsorships of Rs. 15,953,491 during the year.

This is easily the largest sum we have raised and demonstrates the confidence our partners have in the execution capabilities, strong delivery, and accountability of the team. Conservation is facing an uphill challenge and we need to accelerate our efforts even further in the coming years.

Expenditure on administrative activities was higher during the period resulting primarily from the enhanced staffing levels to meet the expanded activities of the Society and our future ambitions. The team also took the opportunity to write off many older and damaged stock items, invest in infrastructure upgrades for the Head Office, and consolidate our banking activities.

The Balance Sheet footing of the society has also increased to Rs. 22,188,182 from Rs. 20,360,213.92 in 2018, reflecting a healthy position for both operational activities and projects managed by the Society. This will stand us in good stead in the coming year where fundraising will be challenged due to the new global realities.

Propaganda and Educational Trust - As per the minute in last year's AGM (125th - 2019), item #7 (page 58), it was recommended by Dr. Malik Fernando that the Trustees be consulted and move the fund to a better return yielding option to support the work of the newly formed Youth Wing Committee. The EXCO tried its best to get the consensus of all the Trustees of the Trust to move the funds from the Public Trustees to a better yielding investment mechanism but could not get the required approvals from all the Trustees.

We would like to take this opportunity to sincerely thank Corporate Doctors - the Society's outsourced Accountants, Tudor V Perera & Co - the Society's Auditors, and the General Committee and EXCO of the Society, The Finance Consultant and the Administrative Manager of the Society for their assistance and role in the preparation of the accounts. Additionally, I would like to specifically thank the Finance Consultant for improving the Treasury Management activities of the Society which has resulted in a multiple fold increase in interest income. Finally, we are most appreciative of our many donors and sponsors, thanks to whom we have been able to undertake many conservation related initiatives and actions during the year. We hope to continue this battle aggressively despite the challenges faced due to COVID-19 and other developments.

Thank You



Dilshan Hettiaratchi
Hon. Treasurer

DONATIONS AND SPONSORSHIPS FOR 2019

The General Committee's sincere thanks are extended to the following for their generosity and support of the Society:

PROJECT AND EVENT SPONSORS

Donor	Description	Towards	Value
National Development Bank	Sponsorship	Youth Wing Project	3,500,000.00
Nations Trust Bank PLC	Sponsorship	Public lectures, Wetland walks & Media	2,285,650.00
Abans PLC	Sponsorship	Green Isle Project	2,000,000.00
Mr. Ajita De Costa	Sponsorship	ROAR Project	1,500,000.00
Sampath Bank PLC	Sponsorship	Admin & Educational Awareness Expenses	1,267,685.00
Spa Ceylon	Sponsorship	Elephant Light Repel System	250,000.00
Bureau Veritas	Sponsorship	ROAR Project	125,000.00
E W Balasuriya & Co.	Sponsorship	Kandy Lecture	125,000.00
Colombo Jewellery Stores	Sponsorship	Elephant Light Repel System	90,000.00

FINANCIAL DONORS

Mr. N G Wickremeratne	Donation	Legal Fund	100,000.00
Mr. Bandu Kodituwaku	Donation	Merchandise - Tote Bags	75,000.00
Mr. Spencer Manuelpillai	Donation	Online publicity for public lecture series	73,206.00
Ms. Naima Macan Makar	Donation	General Donation	70,000.00
Mr. J L A Welikala	Donation	Life Member Donation	50,000.00
Mr. Sriyan de Silva Wijeyeratne	Donation	Wildcat brochures	44,250.00
Mr. Sriyan de Silva Wijeyeratne	Donation	AGM 2018 - Refreshments	33,750.00
Dr. P D Aluthge	Donation	Legal Fund	20,000.00
Mr. Sarath C Edussuriya	Donation	Life Member Donation (USD 60)	10,800.00
Mr. Ananda Wijesinghe	Donation	Kandy Lecture	10,000.00
Mr. Kirthi Moonesinghe	Donation	Kandy Lecture	10,000.00
Mr. Lalantha Wijesinghe	Donation	Kandy Lecture	10,000.00
Mr. S Srikumar	Donation	Life Member Donation	10,000.00
Mr. Niranjana Bandaranayake	Donation	Life Member Donation	10,000.00
Ms. Antoine Theodore Edirisinghe	Donation	Life Member Donation	10,000.00
Mr. A Wimaladharma	Donation	Life Member Donation	10,000.00
Mr. N K M Cooray	Donation	Life Member Donation	10,000.00
Mr. D D Wijemanne	Donation	Life Member Donation	10,000.00
Mr. G V M Nariayakkara	Donation	Life Member Donation	10,000.00
Dr. M P Pinto	Donation	Life Member Donation	10,000.00
Ms. Leela Peries	Donation	Life Member Donation	10,000.00

MATERIAL GIFTS

John Keells Office Automation (JKOA)	Donation for the Office	Donation of a complementary photocopy machine
Cinnamon Nature Trails	Sponsor - Youth Ambassador	Sponsorship of the Youth Ambassador Project, including accommodation, safaris, and air tickets etc. for two Youth Ambassadors to travel to Jawai India
Eco Maximus	Donation - Youth Wing	Donation of elephant dung paper for the Youth Wing Poster competition
Sri Lanka Land Reclamation and Development Corporation (SLLRDC)	Donation - Green Isle	Provision of a Amphibian dredger to prepare the land and create the walk way and two main ponds on the site

REPORT OF THE AUDITORS TO THE MEMBERS OF WILDLIFE AND NATURE PROTECTION SOCIETY OF SRI LANKA

1. We have examined the Statement of Financial Position of Wildlife and Nature Protection Society of Sri Lanka as at 31st December 2019 and the related Statement of Comprehensive Income for the year then ended, together with the Accounting Policies and Notes thereon.
2. Respective Responsibilities of General Committee and Auditors
The General Committee is responsible for preparing and presenting these Financial Statements in accordance with the Generally Accepted Accounting Principles. Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these Financial Statements, based on our audit.
3. In common with similar organizations, Society's system of control is dependent upon the close involvement of the General Committee, who have been appointed by the members. Therefore where independent confirmation on the completeness of accounting was not available, we have accepted assurances from the General Committee Members that all the Society's transactions have been reflected in the books of account.
4. Basis of Opinion
An audit includes examining, on a test basis, evidence supporting the amounts and disclosures in the said financial statements, assessing the accounting principles used and significant estimates made by the General Committee Members, evaluating the overall presentation of the financial statements, and determining whether the said financial statements are prepared and presented in accordance with the generally accepted accounting principles. We have obtained all the information and explanations which to the best of our knowledge and belief were necessary for the purposes of our audit.

We therefore believe that our audit provides a reasonable basis for our opinion.

5. Opinion
In our opinion, so far as appears from our examination, the Society maintained proper books of account for the year ended 31st December 2019, and to the best of our information and according to the explanations given to us, the said Statement of Financial Position and related Statement of Comprehensive Income and the Accounting Policies and Notes thereto, which are in agreement with the said books and have been prepared and presented in accordance with the Generally Accepted Accounting Principles.


TUDOR V. PERERA & CO.
Chartered Accountants.

Colombo
Date: 12.5.2020

Partners:
S.M.N.L. Senanayake, B.Sc. (Pub.Adm.Jn), FCA
Mrs. B.A.R.W. Senanayake, FCA
B.A. Kapila Ariyatilaka, ACA
S.M. Deshapriya Senanayake, ACA, ACMA (UK)
M.T. Lantra

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

As at 31st December,

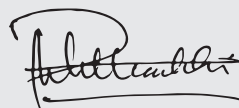
	Notes	2019 Rs. Cts.	2018 Rs.
Funds Employed			
Accumulated Fund	5	12,112,016.14	10,428,774
Specific Funds	6	10,093,741.31	9,931,440
		<u>22,205,757.45</u>	<u>20,360,214</u>
Employment of Funds			
Property, Plant and Equipment	7	7,965,808.81	7,314,775
Specific Fund Investment	8	10,137,741.28	9,931,440
Current Assets			
Stock in Trade	9	667,161.74	861,731
Debtors, Deposits and Advances	10	4,964,082.30	428,631
Cash and Cash Equivalents	11	6,827,136.91	5,709,495
		<u>12,458,380.95</u>	<u>6,999,857</u>
Current Liabilities			
Creditors and Accrued Charges	12	5,603,007.45	2,615,592
Current Tax Liabilities	13	-	-
Income Received in Advance		449,338.00	449,338
		<u>6,052,345.45</u>	<u>3,064,930</u>
Net Current Assets		<u>6,406,035.50</u>	<u>3,934,927</u>
Non-Current Liabilities			
Retirement Benefit Obligation	14	289,300.00	306,975
Projects	15	2,014,528.14	513,953
		<u>22,205,757.45</u>	<u>20,360,214</u>

The General Committee is responsible for the preparation and presentation of these financial statements.

Approved and signed on behalf of the General Committee.



President



Treasurer

Colombo
Date: 15th April 2020

STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME

For the Year Ended 31st December,

	Notes	2019 Rs. Cts.	2018 Rs.
Income			
Subscription - Annual		1,351,500.00	1,140,325
Donations		1,636,604.00	933,950
Entrance Fees		246,000.00	304,500
Interest on Investment		607,562.31	181,677
Allocation of Income from Projects		746,500.00	157,500
Amortization of Life Membership Fund		74,000.00	99,630
Profit on Sale of Greeting Cards, Books and Other Items		213,205.19	179,662
Profit on Bungalow Operations		68,960.50	259,948
Net Donation / Loss on "Loris" and "Warana" Publications		23,200.00	219,846
Net Surplus/ (Deficit) on 125th Anniversary Events		389,358.60	-
Net Surplus/ (Deficit) on Other Society Events		1,296,421.71	827,089
Net Surplus / (Deficit) on Completed Projects		-	(66,751)
		6,653,312.31	4,237,376
Expenses			
Administration Expenses		4,132,951.12	2,884,122
Financial Expenses		30,638.03	21,002
Annual General Meeting Expenses		193,750.00	137,835
		(4,357,339.15)	(3,042,959)
Income over Expenditure for the Year		2,295,973.16	1,194,417
Taxation for the Year		Nil	Nil
Balance carried over to Accumulated Fund		2,295,973.16	1,194,417

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

1. General

The Financial Statements of the Society have been prepared on the historical cost basis. In accordance with generally accepted accounting principles. No adjustments have been made for inflationary factors affecting the Financial Statements. Figures and phrases relating to the previous years have been restated where necessary to conform to the current years presentation.

2. Assets and the Basis of their Valuation

2.1. Property, Plant and Equipment

Property, Plant and Equipment are shown at cost less accumulated depreciation. Depreciation is charged on written down value basis at the following rates in order to write off the cost of such assets over their estimated useful lives.

Building and Bungalow
Office Equipment
Furniture and Fittings
Sundry Assets

Depreciation is charged in the year of purchase, whilst no depreciation is charged in the year of disposal.

2.2. Short Term Investments

Fixed Deposits, Call Deposits and Treasury Bills are reflected at cost.

2.3. Stocks

Stocks are valued at cost or Net realizable value which ever is less.

2.4. Debtors and Receivables:

Debtors and other receivables are stated at the values estimated to be realized.

3. Liabilities and Provisions

3.1. Current Liabilities

The liabilities which fall due for payment of demand or within one year from the Balance Sheet date are shown under the Current Liabilities.

3.2. Taxation

Provision for income tax has been made in accordance with the Inland Revenue Act No.10 of 2006.

3.3. Retirement Benefit Obligation

Provision for retiring gratuities have been made in the Account under the payment of Gratuity Act No. 12 of 1983 and is not externally funded.

4. Income and Expenditure

4.1. All income have been accounted for on accrued basis.

4.2. Expenses incurred in running the Society and maintain the Fixed Assets have been charged to Revenue Account.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

For the Year Ended 31st December,

	2019 Rs. Cts.	2018 Rs.
5. Accumulated Fund		
Balance as at the Beginning of the Year	10,428,775.62	8,924,957
Prior year Adjustments	(612,732.64)	309,399
Excess of Income over Expenditure for the Year	2,295,973.16	1,194,417
Balance as at the End of the Year	12,112,016.14	10,428,774
6. Specific Funds		
6.1. Life Membership Fund		
Balance as at the Beginning of the Year	1,482,956.40	1,992,601
Add / (Less):		
Adjustments		(419,084)
Amortization of Life Membership Fund	(74,000.00)	(99,630)
Interest Credited		186,288
Interest Transferred	(32,956.40)	
Interest Receivable		30,281
Membership Fees	30,000.00	150,000
Balances Written off		(357,500)
Balance as at the End of the Year	1,406,000.00	1,482,956

The Balances Written-off reflects the effects of the write-off of unreconciled differences (Fund Vs Investment) carried forward as at 31st December 2015 in the Life membership fund, The write off was effected in the 2018 Financial Accounts.

6.2. Scientific Research Fund		
Balance as at the Beginning of the Year	7,722,024.89	6,801,488
Add / (Less) :		
Adjustments	-	419,084
Interest Credited	489,526.86	590,246
Interest Receivable	86,706.00	241,602
Payments / Transfers	(400,200.00)	
Transfers to ROAR Project		(180,000)
Transfers to Other Projects		(12,573)
Balances Written Off		(137,821)
Balance as at the End of the Year	7,898,057.75	7,722,025

The Balances Written-off reflects the effects of the write-off of unreconciled differences (Fund Vs Investment) carried forward as at 31st December 2015 in the Scientific Research fund, The write off was effected in the 2018 Financial Accounts.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

For the Year Ended 31st December,

	2019 Rs. Cts.	2018 Rs.
6.3. Educational and Propaganda Trust Fund	452,438.66	417,328
6.4. Patron's Fund	337,244.90	309,132
Total Specific Funds	10,093,741.31	9,931,440

Note:

The summary of total Specific Funds and the total Specific Fund Investments are as follows:

	Investment	Fund	Difference
Life Membership Fund	1,406,000.00	1,450,000.00	(44,000.00)
Scientific Research Fund	7,898,057.75	7,898,057.75	-
Educational and Propaganda Trust Fund	452,438.66	452,438.66	-
Patron's Fund	337,244.90	337,244.90	-
	<u>10,093,741.31</u>	<u>10,137,741.31</u>	<u>(44,000.00)</u>

The Variance of Life Membership fund Vs Investment is due to the following reasons,

New Life Membership	30,000.00
Ammortization for the year 2019 (20 Years)	(74,000.00)
	(44,000.00)

7. Property, Plant and Equipment

	W.D.V as at 01.01.2018	Additions	Depreciation for the year	W.D.V as at 31.12.2019
Building and Bungalow	6,802,074.64	705,061.48	176,138.75	7,330,997.37
Furniture and Fittings	84,326.21	100,500.00	13,136.65	171,689.56
Office Equipment	164,009.37	90,519.00	42,800.33	211,728.04
Sundry Assets	264,364.36		12,975.50	251,388.86
Total Property, Plant and Equipments	7,314,774.58	896,080.48	245,051.23	7,965,803.83

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

For the Year Ended 31st December,

	2019 Rs. Cts.	2018 Rs.
8. Specific Fund Investment		
8.1. Life Membership Fund Investment		
a) Savings Account - Hatton National Bank PLC A/c. No. 002020615642	-	32,956
b) Fixed Deposits - Hatton National Bank PLC A/c. No. 002031154042	750,000.00	750,000
c) Fixed Deposits - Hatton National Bank PLC A/c. No. 002031168445	-	700,000
d) Fixed Deposits - Nations Trust Bank PLC A/c. No. 31790	700,000.00	-
Total Life Membership Fund Investments	1,450,000.00	1,482,956
8.2. Scientific Research Fund Investment No.1		
a) Fixed Deposits- Bank of Ceylon - A/c.No. 368088	479,817.60	438,357
b) Fixed Deposits - National Savings Bank - A/C No.200801074334	1,585,842.09	1,442,041
c) Fixed Deposits - Hatton National Bank PLC - A/C No.002031168735	-	1,523,959
d) Savings Account - Hatton National Bank PLC - A/c No.002020228737	-	3,570
e) Current Account - Hatton National Bank PLC - A/c No. 002010014493	-	100,375
f) Treasury Bills	180,000.73	1,651,188
g) Fixed Deposits - Sampath Bank PLC - A/C No.30541	2,800,474.88	2,562,534
h) Fixed Deposit - Nations Trust Bank PLC - A/c No. 31769	310,111.64	
i) Fixed Deposit - Nations Trust Bank PLC - A/c No. 31783	517,875.00	
j) Fixed Deposit - Nations Trust Bank PLC - A/c No. 31776	202,663.25	
k) Fixed Deposit - Nations Trust Bank PLC - A/c No. 31837	1,550,558.23	
l) Current Account - Nations Trust Bank PLC - A/c No. 100100007337	244,398.60	
m) Savings Account - Nations Trust Bank PLC - A/c No. 200100060618	26,315.73	
Total Scientific Research Fund Investment	7,898,057.75	7,722,025
8.3. Educational and Propaganda Trust Fund Investment	452,438.66	417,328
8.4. Patron's Fund Investment		
a) Fixed Deposits - Sampath Bank of - A/c. No 643694	337,244.90	309,132
Total Patron's Fund Investment	337,244.90	309,132
Total Investment Value	10,137,741.31	9,931,440

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

For the Year Ended 31st December,

	2019 Rs. Cts.	2018 Rs.
9. Stock		
Books and Magazines	141,400.00	213,300
Car Stickers	38,170.00	40,550
Car Badges	1,155.00	43,505
Tote Bags	24,190.00	-
Greeting Cards	42,397.07	52,855
Green T-Shirts	91,507.50	87,491
White T-Shirts	26,718.06	
Ties	166,800.00	424,030
First Day Covers	19,890.00	
Glass Water Bottles	29,025.00	
Other Merchandise Items	85,909.11	
	667,161.74	861,731
10. Debtors, Deposits, Advance and Receivables		
Loans and Advances	65,000.00	
Interest Receivable (Life Membership FD'S)	54,497.75	
Other Receivable	4,844,584.55	428,631
	4,964,082.30	428,631
10.1. Other Receivables		
BMICH - Lecture Refund	8,826.54	
NTB - Wetland Walk	150,000.00	
125th Pendant Sales	25,000.00	
Donation receivable from Sampath Bank	83,935.00	
NDB Youth Wing Project 2020 - Phase I	1,500,000.00	
NDB Youth Wing Project 2020 - Phase II	1,500,000.00	
NDB Youth Wing Project 2020 - Phase III	1,500,000.00	
WHT Receivable	30,719.28	
Pre Payments	31,257.71	
Willpathu Bungalow Income Receivable	12,000.00	
Other Receivable	2,846.02	
	4,844,584.55	
11. Cash and Cash Equivalents	6,827,136.91	5,709,495

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

For the Year Ended 31st December,

	Notes	2019 Rs. Cts.	2018 Rs.
12. Creditors and Accrued Charges			
Sri Lanka Telecom		4,937.45	8,286
Accounting Charges		18,000.00	15,000
Ceylon Electricity Board		-	2,910
Unidentified Deposits (Subscription Fees)		89,000.00	74,200
Advance Received & Other Payable	12.1	5,367,970.00	2,485,896
Security Deposits for Bungalows		120,000.00	
Consignment Basis Payables		3,100.00	29,300
		5,603,007.45	2,615,592
12.1. Advance Received & Other Payables			
Advance Payment - Mannar Trip		462,000.00	200,000
Advance for future Field Trips		29,600.00	-
Advance Bookings - Bungalows		50,000.00	-
Loris Sponsorship		-	425,000
Warana Sponsorship		325,000.00	325,000
Lecture Fees for Wildcat Project		-	35,896
Payable to ROAR Project		-	1,500,000
Payable to Youth Wing Project 2020		4,500,000.00	-
Trade Payable		1,370.00	-
		5,367,970.00	2,485,896
13. Commissioner General of Inland Revenue - Income Tax		-	-
14. Retirement Benefit Obligation		289,300.00	306,975
15. Projects			
15.1. Bio - Diversity Project	N-1	-	72,810
15.2. Ehatuwewa Project	N-1	-	(28,560)
15.3. Koskulana Project	N-1	-	(118,370)
15.4. ROAR Project		531,925.72	131,175
15.5. Wild Cat Project		344,253.51	344,254
15.6. Wetland Walk	N-2	-	41,463
15.7. Youth Wing Project		443,876.30	71,181
15.8. Green Isle Project		71,325.61	-
15.9. HEC (LRS) Project		306,000.00	
15.10. Legal Fund		317,147.00	-
Total Project Balances		2,014,528.14	513,953

Note-1: These 3 entries were merged into the Legal Fund and reflected in 15.10

Note-2: Reflected into P&L a/c under Other Society Events

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Our sincere gratitude is extended to the following without whom many of the activities of the Society would not be possible:

- The Chair and the Board of Directors of Sampath Bank PLC for their continued financial support of the Society.
- The Chair and the Board of Directors of Nations Trust Bank PLC for their financial support for the Public Lectures, printing and distribution of the Society publications: Loris, Warana, Waranam; the Media Workshop and the Wetland Walk for children.
- The Chair and the Board of Directors of National Development Bank for their financial support for the Youth Wing.
- The Chair and the Board of Directors of Abans Group for the financial support extended to implement the Green Isle Project in the Bellanwila – Attidiya Wetland.
- The Chair and the Board of Directors of M/s Brandix Lanka Limited for their continued financial support of the Society.
- Mr. Ajita de Costa for coming on board as the main sponsor of the ROAR project.
- The Chair and Board of Directors of M/s Teejay Lanka PLC, for their financial support of the Society.
- Bureau Veritas, for their continued financial contribution in support of the Reforestation of a Rain Forest (ROAR) Project at Diyakothakanda.
- Dilmah Teas for providing refreshments for the attendees at the Society's Monthly Series of Lectures.
- The Chair and the Board of Directors of the Commercial Bank of Ceylon PLC for their annual bulk purchase of the society's greeting cards.
- Pro Image for the video coverage of the monthly Lecture Series.
- Sarva Integrated for their creative support.
- Ceylon Printers Limited for the printing of Loris and other stationery items for the Society.
- Nelun Harasgama Nadaraja and K Raghavan Premkumar for their expertise with the design and formatting of Loris.
- Tudor V. Perera & Co. for its continued services as the Honorary Annual Auditors of the Society.
- The talented photographers who contributed to this Annual Report.
- Last, but not least, to the Executives and Staff of the Society who are responsible for the day-to-day administration of the Head Office and the bungalows.

MINUTES OF THE 125TH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING: 26TH MAY 2019

By notice dated March 10th, 2019, the 125th Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Wildlife and Nature Protection Society (WNPS) was summoned at 5.00 pm on May 26, 2019 at the Sri Lanka Foundation, No. 100, Sri Lanka Padanama Mw, Independence Square, Colombo 7.

The meeting commenced at 5.05 pm.

The following members were present: A. de S. Wijeyeratne, A.M.D.G. Abeywardene, A.R.J. Gunaratne, Aindra Ratwatte, Aitts K. Perumal, Alberta Parveen Herath, Anoja Fernando, Ashley de Vos, Avijja Fonseka, Ayanthi Samarajeewa, B.W. Udaya Jinadasa, Bandula Jayawardena, Caryll Tozer, D. Hettiaratchi, D.B. Ranasinghe, David Bolling, Derick Ratnajeewa, G. Marshall, G.M.R. Perera, A. Gooneratne, Gun Pieris, Hemantha Perera, J. Dias Bandaranayake, J.M. Chendredaz, J.T.S. Motha, Jayantha Wickramasinghe, Jehan CanagaRetna, Jehan Pieris, Kamaya de Soysa, Kamini de Soysa, L. Bennet Perera, L.R. Abeysekera, Lakdas Fernando, Lyndon Fernando, M.P.W. Wijeratne, Malik Fernando, Manori Gunawardena, N. Bandara, N. Dias Bandaranayake, N. Kamalgoda, N.W. de Alwis, Nandalal Ranasinghe, Nihal Samaranayake, Ninel Fernando, Nirmali De Silva, P. Ratwatta, P.J. Williams, Puthrika Moonesinghe, R.A. Jayewardene, Rajin de Costa, Ranjan Josiah, Ranjith Hulugalle, Ravi De Silva, Ravi Deraniyagala, Rex de Silva, Rohan Wijesinha, Rukshan A. Jayewardene, S. Bandara, S.C. Edussuriya, Sampath Seneviratne, Sarasi Wijeratne, Shanaka Wijesinghe, Shanik de Silva, Spencer Manuelpillai, Sriyan de Silva Wijeyeratne, Suresh Ganeshan, T. Abidally, T. Flamer-Caldera, T.R.N. de Zoysa, Tahire Ratwatte, Tina Jayaratnam, V. Rajendra, V.K. Jayasooriya, Vijitha Wettimuni, Wije Dahanayake, Zaineb Akbarally

ITEM 1 – LEST WE FORGET

Two minutes silence was observed in memory of the members who had passed away during the course of the year. The names presented at the meeting were as follows:

Mr. B.S. Gunasekara, Mr. R.T. Molligoda, Mr. D.N. Pestonjee, Mr. B.S.C. Ratwatte, Mr. S.K. Rodrigo, Mr. J.G.C.De.S. Wijeratne, Mr. Col E.J. Divitotawela, Mr. C.S. Ratwatte, Mr. W. De Alwis, Dr. Z.M.A. Cader, Mr. R. Chandrasena, Mr. I. T. Canagaretnam, Mr. Ranjan Ratwatte, Mr. J.G.G. Colombage, Mr. A.L. Raymond, Mr. A. Basnayake, Mr. Maya R. Ratwatte, Mr. P.M.A. De Niese, Dr. Vernon L.B. Mendis

ITEM 2 – EXCUSES

The Hon. General Secretary read the names of the members who had excused themselves from attending the meeting. They are as follows:

Mr. Mohan Samarakoon, Mr. Rahula Dassenaieke, Hon. Karu Jayasuriya, Dr. Asha de Vos

ITEM 3 – CORRECTIONS

Mr. Darrel Bartholomeusz's name was inadvertently omitted from the 2018 report of the Youth Wing Subcommittee published in the 2018 Annual Report. We apologise for this omission.

ITEM 4 – ADOPTION OF THE MINUTES OF THE 124TH AGM

The Minutes of the 124th AGM held on May 26th, 2018 was taken as read.

Proposed by Dr. Malik Fernando

Seconded by Mr. Rohan Wijesinha

ITEM 5 – MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

Dr. Malik Fernando's proposal on the fund: A proposal was made to move funding from investments from the Education and Propaganda trust to the Youth Wing. The Hon. Treasurer expressed that this was not possible to consider, as the Youth Wing had not yet been adopted. He informed the house that regardless of the shift, the financial impact would be very small, as the interest rate is very low.

ITEM 6 – ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE HON. GENERAL SECRETARY FOR 2018

The Hon. General Secretary tabled the Annual Report for 2018. Highlights of the year were also presented for information of the house.

The report was unanimously accepted by the house.

Proposed by Ms. Caryll Tozer

Seconded by Ms. Tina Jayaratnam

ITEM 7 – ADOPTION OF THE STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS FOR 2018

The accounts, too, were accepted by the House.

Proposed by Mr. Graham Marshall

Seconded by Dr. Hemantha Perera

ITEM 8 – TABLING OF THE ACCOUNTS

OF THE WNPS EDUCATION & PROPAGANDA TRUST

The accounts of Education and Propaganda Trust were tabled.

Proposed by Mr. Jehan CanagaRetna

Seconded by Mr. Ranjan Josiah

ITEM 9 - THE PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS

The President, Mr. Sriyan de Silva Wijeyeratne, delivered his Address which is appended at the end of this report.

The Immediate Past President, Mr. Rukshan Jayewardene, delivered his Address which is appended at the end of this report.

ITEM 10 - ELECTION OF MEMBERS TO THE GENERAL COMMITTEE

Dr. Malik Fernando was appointed as the Pro-Temp Chair for this election.

A small error on the list of nominations circulated amongst the members on 6th May 2019 indicated there were eight (8) vacancies. However, there are only six (6) vacancies. Six (6) nominations were received for these posts and all six nominees were appointed to the General Committee. Two names had been co-opted to the committee because they had not yet completed two years as members of the society.

Nominee	Proposer	Second
Prof. Lakdas D. Fernando [6472]	Mr. Spencer Manuelpillai [11229]	Ms. Zaineb Akbarally [12529]
Mr. Jehan CanagaRetna [10810]	Mr. Spencer Manuelpillai [11229]	Ms. Zaineb Akbarally [12529]
Mr. Sriyan de Silva Wijeyeratne [8223]	Mr. Jehan CanagaRetna [10810]	Mr. Ranjan Josiah [12563]
Dr. Hemantha Perera [8254]	Prof. Lakdas D. Fernando [6472]	Mr. Spencer Manuelpillai [11229]
Ms. Zaineb Akbarally [12529]	Prof. Lakdas D. Fernando [6472]	Mr. Spencer Manuelpillai [11229]
Mr. Graham Marshall [12067]	Mr. Jehan CanagaRetna [10810]	Mr. Spencer Manuelpillai [11229]
Ms. Sarasi Wijeratne (12618)	Mr. Jehan CanagaRetna [10810]	Mr. Dilshan Hettiaratchi [10709]
Mr. Ranjan Josiah (12563)	Mr. Sriyan de Silva Wijeyeratne [8223]	Mr. Jehan CanagaRetna [10810]

ITEM 11 - ELECTION OF

OFFICE BEARERS

The list of nominations had been submitted to the members on April 15th, 2019. As there were no other nominations received, the following were elected, unopposed, as Office Bearers for 2019 / 20:

Nominee	Post	Proposer	Second
Mr. Sriyan de Silva Wijeyeratne [8223]	President	Mr. Rukshan Jayewardene [11076]	Prof. Lakdas D. Fernando [6472]
Ms. Tami Flamer-Caldera [9038]	Vice President	Mr. Rukshan Jayewardene [11076]	Prof. Lakdas D. Fernando [6472]
Mr. Spencer Manuelpillai [11229]	Vice President	Mr. Rukshan Jayewardene [11076]	Mr. Jehan CanagaRetna [10810]
Mr. Jehan CanagaRetna [10810]	Hon. General Secretary	Prof. Lakdas D. Fernando [6472]	Mr. Rahula Dassenaieke [11625]
Mr. Dilshan Hettiaratchi [10709]	Hon. Treasurer	Ms. Tami Flamer-Caldera [9038]	Prof. Lakdas D. Fernando [6472]

ITEM 12 - RESOLUTIONS FOR WHICH DUE NOTICE HAVE BEEN GIVEN

There was one resolution, and a notice of intent that has been circulated.

PROPOSED RESOLUTIONS

Proposed Constitution for the functioning of the Youth Wing of the Wildlife and Nature Protection Society.

Whereas, the EXCO and the General Committee previously proposed the establishment of a Youth Wing, which was operationalised. We are encouraged by the progress of the same, as it has clearly been of great relevance to younger generations and encouraged greater participation in our activities.

We wish to structure the operations of the Youth Wing, in accordance with the proposed Constitution which will formally establish the Youth Wing as a Permanent Subcommittee of the main society and cater to youth under thirty (30) years of age. This will be subject to the rules and governance of the WNPS at all times.

Proposer: Mr. Rohan Wijesinha [10100]

Second: Mr. Jehan CanagaRetna [10810]

A brief summary of the Youth Wing, which was initiated as a subcommittee. However, the society is working to give it more structure, so it can be something bigger, allowing it greater reach, and in line with the importance placed upon this by the society going forward. The society has been working very hard to put up the structure and constitution. A draft of the

constitution will be presented to the membership, for observation and comment.

Proposed: Mr. Rukshan Jayewardene [11076]
Seconded: Mr. Avijja Fonseka

Above proposal was unanimously adopted by the House.

Proposal to work towards establishing a Trust under the WNPS, termed the Preserving Land and Nature Trust (PLANT)

Whereas, The EXCO and the General Committee propose to establish a Trust termed PLANT to operate under the auspices of the WNPS specifically to own, conserve and preserve land for the future, in a manner which enhances all forms of wildlife and nature.

PLANT through its efforts, hopes to protect lands in their existing natural states, extend protected areas by converting more private land to conservation areas where possible, and focusing scientific rehabilitation efforts on any degraded land brought into trust. The Trust would encourage individuals and entities to donate tracts of land to PLANT (either via direct land gifts or through funds which enable the trust to make appropriate purchases), which in turn will hold them into perpetuity. The Trust will also:

Encourage research and increase public engagement in conservation and sustainable management of land brought into trust as appropriate. Sustainably manage the land trust in perpetuity by reforestation and adding waterholes where necessary. The Trust would only be formally established upon presentation of the draft Trust Constitution to the WNPS Membership for approval at the next AGM.

It is proposed that the General Committee be empowered to pursue this overall direction and put in motion the process to structure the Constitution and operating mechanism for this Trust and embark on any preliminary activities. The Trust will be required to provide a summary report and summary set of Accounts, annually, to the WNPS, at future AGM's, once it commences operations.

Proposer: by Caryll Tozer [12090]
Seconder: Sriyan de Silva Wijeyeratne [8223]

Other countries have seen the land trust model work very successfully. People have gifted, bought, and entrusted land that they would like to see green for generations, or as long as can be envisioned, beyond their lifetime. Beyond control of the next of kin or politicians. Land trusts are a way of protecting what we have as we know how much it costs to carry out reforestation. It is better if we can protect in the first place and not lose the resources we have. That's the intent.

We have a lot of work to do as this is an important piece of legislation. Lawyers are very involved in getting the legislation right to prevent future disputes. We didn't want to rush anything, but we want to start work. We want to approach partners and start engaging prospective people who may want to donate some land to us.

We are seeking your permission as a committee.

Proposed: Dr. [Ms.] Nirmali De Silva
Seconded: Mr. Shanaka Wijesinghe

The resolution was proposed in the notice that went out. Therefore it would be automatically proposed and seconded.

ITEM 13 - CONFERMENT OF HONORARY MEMBERSHIP

There were no nominations submitted by the General Committee.

ITEM 14 - ANY OTHER MATTERS

As there were no other matters of which due notice had been given, the President declared the Annual General Meeting closed.

The floor was opened for house comments as the meeting was closed.

9. ADDRESS OF MR. SRIYAN DE SILVA WIJEYERATNE, PRESIDENT OF THE WILDLIFE AND NATURE PROTECTION SOCIETY OF SRI LANKA



Pictured here: Leaf-nosed lizard (Ceratophora tennentii) captured by Sriyan de Silva Wijeyeratne in the Knuckles mountain range. A species endemic to Sri Lanka, this lizard is listed as endangered on the IUCN Red List, with significant population decrease due to habitat destruction.

My dear fellow Members of the Wildlife and Nature Protection Society.

I am deeply humbled and honoured to join a long list of society Presidents who, aided by their committees and concerned membership, have committed themselves towards protecting our depleting wilderness. I had not planned to play this role, and as such it was certainly a challenge to take over midstream and deliver the high expectation which accompany a 125th year, while dealing with all else we do. Looking back, I feel quite proud at what we all achieved together and delivered, although we were exceptionally saddened by both the state of affairs in our country, and the fact that all our hard work for the 125th had to be pulled back at the very last minute. Let me ask Rukshan Jayewardene to later also say just a few words as this was a joint year of ours, and I want to thank him sincerely for his tenure, hard work and leadership which was pivotal in the transformation of WNPS to what you see today. I am also so happy that the society and I have his continual engagement and guidance.

These are indeed troubled times, where the boundaries of right and wrong are easily blurred, technology is creating transformational impacts, and environmental destruction due to man's greed and lack of consciousness, is wreaking havoc on Sri Lanka, our planet, and natural ecosystems. Unfortunately, in Sri Lanka, the lack of planned development is causing stress and a significantly negative impacts on what we value. The lack of political will, corruption, and greed on all sides, and the failure of the Rule of Law, also become major contributors.

This year has been a strong continuation of a recent multi-year transformational journey that the past Presidents have begun. Looking back at the Annual Reports of some years ago, I feel several key challenges faced have now been addressed, and we have a solid platform to build on. The WNPS needs to become much more of an activist and agitator on issues but needs to have a position of strength to do so. The Society is now financially stronger. We had a good year and were able to write off many old unreconciled balances, clean up accounts, and still deliver good profits and cash flows. We are fortunate to have a great treasurer in Dilshan Hettiaratchi, who is always on top of things and runs a tight ship.

The regained Partner confidence is evident in the many donors and partners who now support us. I am so grateful to all of them, and to our fundraising team led by Jehan. Our bungalow operations no longer drain the society and through Rahula's dedication and oversight, two were renovated to stay abreast with the times. The journals are published regularly, and we did this beautiful 125th Anniversary Commemorate issue which you have before you. I am very thankful to our three very dedicated editors, Ayanthi, Vidya, and Rohan for their passion and commitment, and our sponsor-partner NTB.

Our monthly public lectures always have a full house and have become a sought-after conservation forum in Colombo. Our General Secretary Spencer Manuelpillai has put in wonderful tireless work over the years on this and indeed toward helping the society grow on this aggressive journey. Much of the media exposure you see is thanks to Spencer. Today, Youth work actively

within the WNPS thanks to our very energetic Youth Wing under Jehan's Leadership and I look forward to Zaineb leading it to even greater heights. We currently undertake a lot more activities across more fronts with new committees, subcommittees, initiatives, and projects. It is encouraging to note that several hundred new members now join WNPS each year. We are encouraged and inspired to have them. Our aspiration is to facilitate a dynamic and youthful WNPS and ensure that youth are better represented amongst our office bearers, committees and in our thinking.

We have already begun embracing more technology through eNewsletters, Twitter feeds, crowd funding and the likes. The mind boggling hundred million reach and 330,000 likes on our FB page for the reposted SLRC video on the impact of Plastic on Elephants, tells us that we are now talking to audience's way beyond anything we could have ever imagined and in ways we may not fully understand. The Society needs to use this respect and power responsibly as we push harder for conservation. We have been using media extensively to heighten awareness on issues, and many individual small group meetings are used for policy lobbying that goes beyond pictures. Several conversations take place with influential people, leveraging the voice we have.

The Annual Report covers all the work we did, and I simply want to mention a few things of interest. The Diyakothakanda Reforestation, led by Prof. Lakdas' abundance of energy, has expanded to become a powerful community initiative, which is more relevant to people around it, and more sustainable all round. The Bellanwila - Attidiya marsh used to be a heaven for birds and creatures, and I am proud that the society has just launched the Green Isle initiative to take out invasive species, protect the last remnants of marshland, and restore the ecosystem through a multi-million, multi-year programme funded by Abans and LG, in partnership with the DWC. We widened our work this year and conducted the novel Art Auction, a different Conservation Photography Competition, working on experimental light-based technology to prevent elephant intrusion, commencing our 'Cat Chat' meetings, the Wildcat team facilitating the new Youth Ambassador initiative, stepped into the Marine world, did health camps for DWC Field Staff, had eNewsletters, Media workshops, and we investing heavily to repair and improve our Head Office infrastructure. We are also investing in our Staff, with the knowledge that our high aspirations require a broader set of modern

skills, and skills at the head office need to be upgraded and leveraged on behalf of WNPS. I also want to thank George and Ivan and the team for all the work they have done.

Our thinking is also strategic and long-term, and PLANT is our new ambitious initiative to create a land trust, with a hope that one day the WNPS may become one of the largest trustees of natural ecosystems in Sri Lanka. This will be a multi-year journey, but we are taking the crucial first steps. These are but glimpses of the work being done by your society on different fronts at present. But at the core, this is all part of a journey to strengthen our focus on conservation and influencing policy.

We had to face off in court, when it came to several contentious actions of different parties, in the broader interest of the wild and the free. Sadly, our dialogue with policymakers has met with limited success, partially due to the frequent changing of faces when it comes to key officials and influencers. We do not believe that conservation success can be achieved without active partnership with Government, and its statutory bodies such as the DWC and the Forestry Department. We remain very committed towards supporting and working closely with them, always, but we will have to try harder to overcome these barriers. Amidst the sad events of the past weeks in Sri Lanka, possibly one glimmer of hope maybe that we can turn back the tide on some of the pressures and recent destructive actions which impacted Wildlife. Civic conscious Sri Lankans seem to be the last bastion and we need to unite to protect this bountiful land.

But all is not lost for Sri Lanka, and we have many reasons to approach the future with optimism. The Country still has much intact to conserve, enough to make us excited, and we must find ways in which to do this better. Sri Lankans have a unique opportunity to plan out development in post-conflict areas, and find a better balance between nature, wildlife and our human needs. Unfortunately, greed, politically driven agendas, and short-term benefit, seem to dominate all actions. Demarcated Reservations, Parks and protected areas, and even the coast and beaches are being illegally occupied and annexed at an aggressive rate. Even precious places such as Sinharaja and Wilpattu are under siege. Conservation work is a long-term effort and requires patience and time. Sadly, we the protectors seem to have too much patience and



too little time for conservation, while the destructive forces seem to have too little patience and too much time on their hands to go about it. This is why we value the alliances and partnerships we have with entities like EFL, FEO and others, and it is critical that we seek broader partnerships with more like-minded conservation-oriented groups to stem the tide.

I am a strong believer that Technology will become one of the most powerful assets for Conservation in the times ahead. Indeed, we will need to revisit our entire approach, considering the new tools available for us to deliver more effective outcomes. I hope a more youthful WNPS of the future will lead the charge. We are currently in discussion to try and partner with Microsoft to use Artificial Intelligence and satellite technology to map out forest cover and corridors and leverage vast algorithms and big data for conservation. I hope we can deliver many more such initiatives through the WNPS as Sri Lanka must embrace these advances for conservation.

Celebrating 125 years is a milestone which few entities survive to enjoy. I am proud to have had a passionate General Committee and in fact, the 125th anniversary has galvanised us to work at a much higher intensity than before. The steps taken, when it came to conservation-based initiatives, and the arrangements linked with these anniversary activities, demonstrate the true potential of the WNPS. We have the capacity to operate at that intensity and magnitude. It has shown us the true potential WNPS is capable of. If not for the country situation, we would have conducted nine major activities in May alone. I know we would have made our membership proud. I believe our society can operate at this momentum and I encourage more members to actively contribute towards our work through the subcommittees. As I often say, we want people to be “net contributors towards wildlife and nature, rather than net consumers of wildlife and nature” since the vast majority of folks simply want to enjoy, brag about their pictures, and get back to their routines in life without doing anything to save nature.

Conservation requires action islandwide, and we need to do much more on that front. Strengthening our District Representative structure will be key to our future success. Setting up of the office team will also help us in this regard. Our donor partners, sponsors, and membership have engaged our Committee in an amazing manner and deserves much praise and

thanks. As a result, we should be optimistic about our ability to influence the future. I want to thank each and everyone one in the Committee for all their hard work, without which none of these outcomes would be possible, including in a special way, key office bearers and some subcommittee heads who took the brunt of the workload. I received a lot of words of wisdom about the society’s rich traditions and practices from Lal Anthonis, and inputs from Ranil Peiris, who both leave the General Committee after long years of tenure and their contributions towards WNPS is greatly appreciated. My thanks to George and the head office team for all their support and dedication, and our Accountants, Corporate Doctors, and the Auditors, Tudor V. Perera, for their unfailing cooperation and assistance.

I warmly welcome Kamaya de Soysa our new Manager and Administrative Secretary, who will be our key head office pillar in the years ahead. Many general members and former office bearers have been very supportive to me personally, and to us as a Committee, and we are truly in your debt. Please do continue to engage the future teams as well. Times have changed and to be effective in the future, I believe the WNPS committees need a broader composition covering the angles of Conservation, Legal, Technology, Management, Finance, Youth, Female, Marketing, PR and Media, Regional presence and Government engagement, just to name a few. Therefore, I would encourage people with diverse skills to step forward and become more engaged within WNPS.

It is my fervent hope that our actions of today will inspire the youth and leaders of tomorrow to continue with this battle. There is no end game, no winning line, and no glory for the victors. Ours is only destined to be a series of soon to be forgotten actions and building blocks upon which future generations will continue to construct. We should embark on them in the hope that what is left is the beauty of all that is wild and free, and the knowledge that future generations know that they inherited it due to our actions. After all, ‘having tried’ may be all that truly matters in this great journey of life. Thank you once again for the opportunity to serve and lead this wonderful society.

Thank you.

Sriyan de Silva Wijeyeratne
President

ADDRESS OF MR. RUKSHAN JAYEWARDENE, IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT OF THE WILDLIFE AND NATURE PROTECTION SOCIETY OF SRI LANKA

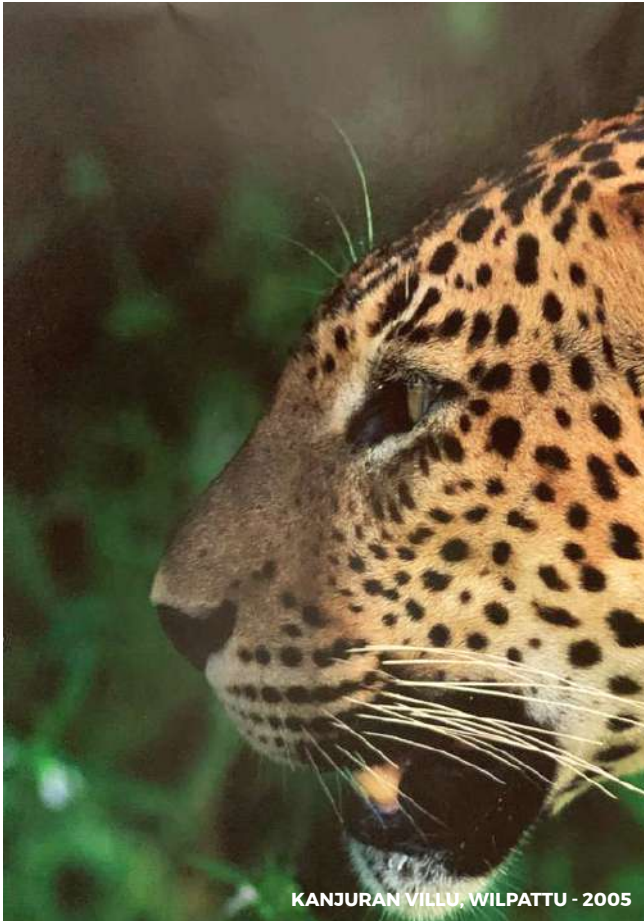


Pictured here: Rukshan Jayewardene's first leopard photograph taken in April 2004 on the main road in Wilpattu, just 2km from Mardanmaduwa. This was captured immediately after the park opening since its closure for 18 years due to the civil war.

Good evening ladies and gentleman, I initially hadn't thought of saying anything, then I told Sriyan that maybe I should speak a few words, and he agreed, since five months of this year (the 125th year), I was the President of this Society. Then I stepped down quite suddenly. I'll just say that it was not really possible for me to be President. It was a difficult year for me personally, and then on top of it, I had a lot to deal with at the WNPS because it was also the 125th anniversary and we had a lot going on. This is an evolving, growing organisation, so it was time. Leadership, I believe, is not just about leading or hanging on to a position, but it is also knowing when to quit.

Just a little note about unity in this Country, and unity in a committee, both are important. On the day of these suicide bombings I was inside Wilpattu. We came out on that day and in that last kilometer all our phones started receiving a barrage of messages, of a country we barely recognised. They named the three hotels and three churches. All of were just looking at each other, and I actually asked "is this Sri Lanka?" It was a shocking day for all of us. Wherever we were we would always remember that day. I think the need of the hour in this Country is unity: across religious lines, across ethnic lines, across political lines. It's hard to imagine how that unity would be posed, and that's really where the stumbling block is.

In a smaller sense, the larger backdrop of this Country also creates the backdrop of what happens within the organisation. In our organisation, I think unity in this GC is very important. I want to thank all the Committee members. Basically I didn't pick a committee. I was elected president when Prof. Lakdas Fernando's term was over. He nominated me and was very keen that I take over. I actually came into this role reluctantly, but I didn't take it lightly. Many people came into the Committee because they had some belief in me. So I had to say that though I hoped to run the three years, it was not to be. I do thank this team; it's a dynamic team. As you can see, where we started; I would say in the last year of Prof. Lakdas' term to where we are today: this is another organisation. The way I would describe it is: WNPS was like a mill pond (whether you agree with me or not). What a mill pond is, where there is an old wooden windmill that has a paddle wheel, and it generates electricity. They are all but extinct now in Europe. But occasionally these mill ponds too might have some kind of turbulence or something more going on. Like that WNPS occasionally had highlights and high points. I think the organisation had a great high point which was fighting to save Sinharaja. But, now, the way I see it as a flowing river. It's a completely transformed organisation, and unfortunately not everyone can swim in a river, but everyone can swim in a millpond. Like Sriyan mentioned, we need a multi-disciplinary Committee going forward. Without multiple disciplines that society has; professionals with different skill-sets, any organisation is going to become stagnant and moribund.



Just leading off what he said. I don't want to repeat what he said, because neither of us had any idea what the other was going to say. I'm sure he's wondering whether I have any surprises for him. The only surprise I have is to tell you how he came into this Committee. Prof. Lakdas had requested he come in to make our accounts a little more professional and polished, but he had refused. I said I know him, so said I would try. So I asked him and pestered him, so he finally said "if I can attend a few meetings a year, is that ok?" But once he started coming in, he attended more meetings than he actually wanted to initially. Also, there was some opposition to him attending a few meetings so he joined us by phone from abroad because he was travelling a lot at that time. He was the CEO of Textured Jersey. He's also a professional: if you see his CV, he has turned a few companies around. Thorough professional is the way I would describe him. As it happened we did get our accounts polished. There were teething pains, and there always are. Today we have a thorough finance professional who is our treasurer. I don't think we need to worry about the accounts; this is a piece of cake for him.

Sriyan happily (I don't know if he was happy), but was in the right place at the right time to take over as President of this organisation. Since I was dropping out of it, he was there in the right place. There was no pre-planning, there was nothing in my mind about Sriyan taking over the organisation, but at that point in time, he was absolutely the logical choice. Because it was our 125th year, and I don't know anyone else in this Committee, and I hardly know anyone else out there who could have done the job he did. I watched what he did (mostly watched because I didn't participate that much). He formed teams, nominated leaders, gave instructions, gave impetus, and unfortunately what happened on that Easter Sunday, happened.

I think Sriyan is the best person to steer this ship in the 125th year. I think it's going to be an unenviable job. Like he said, there are some opportunities out there: The National parks are finally not overcrowded. It's a very special opportunity. Most people would go on that day and think nothing has changed, but everything actually has changed. From my understanding, I have not been out there yet, animal behavior has changed (especially leopard behaviour). It has changed back to the way it was. They are behaving naturally. Not pressured by vehicles or people, and not overcrowded by humanity. In a place where it's really reserved for them first. So I think we have to somehow stem the tide from turning back to what it was. I don't think this Country is going to be in a dark place for that long and I think once politically this place is stable, economically it will grow. We have to have hope for the future. Nothing lasts forever. The thirty year long war, was thirty years long. People say this will never end, but it's a human problem: Humans created it; humans will end it. With this situation as well, as long as ecosystems and young people are involved, conservation will take place and wildlife will thrive. But we have to deal with all those other things we talked about.

I want to take this opportunity to thank the entire Committee who served during my time, and are still there (and those who are not here). I would like to say something from here. A special thank you to someone who is not here: Renuka Fernando, the CEO of Nations Trust Bank. She came on board on a personal belief in me because she's a friend, and I hear if NTB is wondering whether they should partner us going forward. They're our first big partner. They made a huge difference, and I request that they stay engaged.

Thank you.

Rukshan Jayewardene

10. Annual General Notice - Notice under Rule 10.1.3

As already intimated to you, in a notice dated March 23rd, 2020, The Annual General Meeting of the Wildlife and Nature Protection Society of Sri Lanka (Ceylon) will be held on Sunday May 17th, 2020 at the Society's head office #86 Rajamalwatta Mawatha, Battaramulla, Rajagiriya commencing at 5.00 pm.

In terms of Rule 10.1.3

The Annual Report for 2019 and the Minutes of the Last Annual General Meeting will be available at the Head Office from May 10th, 2020. It will be e-mailed to those members who have provided their e-mail address to the office. Any member requiring a hard copy of the Annual Report may send their request, in writing, to the Administrative Secretary, or call over at the Office and collect a copy. In terms of Rule 6.3, the following Committee Members are retiring as follows:

1. Spencer Manuelpillai
2. Tami Flamer-Caldera
3. Nirmali de Silva
4. Rahula Dassenaieke
5. Ranjan Josiah
6. Sarasi Wijeyeratne
7. Dr. Hemantha Perera
8. Vidya Abhayagunawardena

There are eight [08] vacancies in the General Committee and the retiring members are eligible for re-election. The Hon. General Secretary will receive nominations to the General Committee, duly proposed and seconded by any two [02] members entitled to vote at the AGM, provided such candidate has the required qualifications, together with the candidate's written consent.

The Hon. General Secretary will also receive nominations for the honorary posts of President, two Vice Presidents, General Secretary, and Treasurer, duly proposed and seconded by any two [02] members entitled to vote at the AGM. Candidates must have the required qualifications, at the time of election, and should express their consent, in writing, to be so nominated.

Any members wishing to move a Resolution at the AGM may submit such resolution duly proposed and seconded by any two [02] members entitled to vote at the AGM.

All nominations and resolutions should reach the Society's Head Office, by post or by hand or by email on or before 10.00 a.m. on April 28, 2020.

If there are any queries related to the accounts, please convey it in writing, to the Hon. General Secretary by post or by hand on or before 10.00 a.m. on April 28, 2020 so that all necessary responses, with relevant documentation, can be made available at the AGM.



Jehan CanagaRetna
Hon. General Secretary
April 17th, 2020

Annual General Notice - Notice under Rules 10.1.5 to 10.1.9

Dear Member,

As per the WNPS constitution, please find the 3rd notice under rule 10.1.5 to 10.1.9 constituting the election for the General Committee, the appointment of the Office bearers and duly proposed and seconded Resolutions to be presented at the AGM on the 17th of May, at 5pm at the Society's head office.

The following nominations were received for the vacancies of the General Committee and for the posts of Office Bearers by the current General Committee. These names were ratified by the present General Committee of the Society at its last Committee Meeting.

There were no other nominations received from the general membership for any of the notified vacancies on the General Committee or for those of Office Bearers. Neither were there any other duly proposed and seconded, Resolutions submitted by the general membership within the constitutionally approved time frame of 20 days prior to the date of the AGM.

NOTICE UNDER RULES 10.1.5 TO 10.1.9 OF THE OBJECTS & RULES

NOMINATIONS TO THE GENERAL COMMITTEE

Nominee	Proposer	Seconder
Mr. Spencer Manuelpillai (11229)	Mr. Dilshan Hettiaratchi (10709)	Mr. Rahula Dassenaieke (11625)
Ms. Tami Flamer-Caldera (9038)	Mr. Sriyan de Silva Wijeyeratne (8223)	Ms. Caryll Tozer (12090)
Mr. Rahula Dassenaieke (11625)	Prof. Lakdas Fernando (6472)	Mr. Avijja Fonseka (11909)
Dr. Nirmali de Silva (11428)	Mr. Spencer Manuelpillai (11229)	Ms. Devika Wijesinghe Rohana (12848)
Mr. Chanaka Kulatunga (10317)	Mr. Jehan CanagaRetna (10810)	Mr. Dilshan Hettiaratchi (10709)
Ms. Devika Wijesinghe Rohana (12848)	Mr. Sriyan de Silva Wijeyeratne (8223)	Mr. Jehan CanagaRetna (10810)
Dr. Sampath Seneviratne (12900)	Mr. Sriyan de Silva Wijeyeratne (8223)	Mr. Spencer Manuelpillai (11229)
Mr. Dav Wijewardane (12804)	Mr. Dilshan Hettiaratchi (10709)	Mr. Jehan CanagaRetna (10810)

Kindly note that eight valid nomination were received for the eight vacancies.

NOMINATIONS AS OFFICE BEARERS

Nominee	Post	Proposer	Seconder
Mr. Sriyan de Silva Wijeyeratne (8223)	Hon. President	Mr. Rukshan Jayewardene (11076)	Mr. Spencer Manuelpillai (11229)
Ms. Tami Flamer-Caldera (9038)	Hon. Vice President	Mr. Sriyan de Silva Wijeyeratne (8223)	Ms. Caryll Tozer (12090)
Mr. Spencer Manuelpillai (11229)	Hon. Vice President	Mr. Dilshan Hettiaratchi (10709)	Mr. Rahula Dassenaieke (11625)
Mr. Jehan CanagaRetna (10810)	Hon. General Secretary	Ms. Tami Flamer-Caldera (9038)	Mr. Graham Marshall (12067)
Mr. Dilshan Hettiaratchi (10709)	Hon. Treasurer	Mr. Jehan CanagaRetna (10810)	Mr. Sriyan de Silva Wijeyeratne (8223)

Kindly note that five valid nomination were received for the five vacancies.

PROPOSED RESOLUTIONS

PROPOSAL TO WORK TOWARDS ESTABLISHING A TRUST UNDER THE WNPS, TERMED THE PRESERVING LAND AND NATURE TRUST (PLANT)

PREAMBLE

Whereas, The EXCO and the General Committee proposed last year to further action seeking to establish a Trust termed PLANT (Preserving Land And Nature (Guarantee) LTD) to operate under the auspices of the WNPS specifically to own, conserve and preserve land for the future, in a manner which enhances all forms of wildlife and nature. PLANT through its efforts, hopes to protect lands in their existing natural states, extend protected areas by converting more private land to conservation areas where possible, and focusing scientific rehabilitation efforts on any degraded land brought into trust. The entity would encourage individuals and entities to donate tracts of land to PLANT (either via direct land gifts or through funds which enable the trust to make appropriate purchases), which in turn will hold them into perpetuity. The Committee would only be formally establishing this entity following presentation of the draft Constitution of PLANT to the WNPS Membership for approval at the next AGM.

This direction was approved at the last AGM by the membership. Pursuant to this, the General Committee is sharing this RESOLUTION requesting approval of the proposed ARTICLES OF ASSOCIATION OF PRESERVING LAND AND NATURE (GUARANTEE) LIMITED for the functioning of the said Guarantee Company, in pursuant of the above objectives. Legal opinion was obtained that these objectives would be best served and operationalized through a Guarantee Company structure. Many aspects of this entity will be under the oversight of the WNPS, as seen within the Constitution, including the appointment of Board Members and dealing with assets etc. This has been discussed extensively within the General Committee as well prior to circulation.

The Membership is hereby requested to approve the proposed Articles, to enable the operationalization of the said PLANT. Further, the membership is also requested to approve the proposed Board member nominations, to commence operations.

RESOLUTION

1. Resolved - that the ARTICLES OF ASSOCIATION OF PRESERVING LAND AND NATURE (GUARANTEE) LIMITED be adopted in all its parts. The complete document of the articles of association of PLANT is attached to this email in all its part.
2. Resolved - that the following persons be elected as the first Board Members of the company named in Resolution (1), point #25 & 26:
 - i. Mr. Sriyan Joseph de Silva Wijeyeratne
President of WNPS, Number 8223
 - ii. Mr. Pradeep Dilshan Rajeeva Hettiaratchi
Treasurer of WNPS, Number 10709
 - iii. Ms. Inez Caryll Tozer
Committee Member, WNPS, Number 12090
 - iv. Dr. Cyril Malik Fernando
Member of WNPS, Number 2816
 - v. Mr. Ajita de Costa
Member of WNPS, Number 7843
 - vi. Mr. Shevon Charles Perera Gooneratne
Non Member, Attorney at Law, NIC # 683092649V
 - vii. Mr. M.P. Sarath Fernando
Non Member, Former Conservator General of Forests, NIC # 510170316V

Proposer: Caryll Tozer (12090)

Seconded: Sriyan de Silva Wijeyeratne (8223)

As already announced, the Annual General Meeting will be held on Sunday May 17th, 2020 at the Society's Head Office #86 Rajamalwatta Mawatha, Battaramulla, Rajagiriya commencing at 5.00 pm. Due to the Corvid 19 pandemic and current lockdown, we will be conducting a virtual AGM and details will be provided to the membership. Whilst we strongly urge the membership to join the AGM virtually, the option of coming to the head office physically can be an option if there is no curfew. Government stipulated social distancing will have to be adhered too.



Jehan CanagaRetna
Hon. General Secretary
April 28th, 2020

125TH EVENT PARTNERS



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