

Project Update: November 2018

1. Education and Outreach; on 24th October 2018, five schools were visited, and on the 25th October, one school was visited (Table 1). Distances of schools to the nearest water body (the Vettar River, a tributary of the Cauvery River) ranged between 500 m and 6 km. Duration of talks to students varied between 11 and 53 minutes. Following talks, which comprised of a Powerpoint tailored to local situations (i.e. position with respect to the Cauvery River), school children were asked to address any questions they had. Questions on how long crocodiles could stay underwater, whether they laid eggs on land/in water, and how many eggs they produced featured prominently. A poster translated into 'Tamil, was given to each of the schools to feature on the main notice board. In summary, students appeared to not have much input/knowledge on crocodile biology, this highlights the secretive nature of these animals.
2. Permit No. 69/2018, was received in mid-November 2018 from the Tamil Nadu Forest Department to:
 - Capture a select five mugger crocodiles and affix transmitters on them. The five transmitters, a single receiver, and two Yagi antennae have been purchased from the Rufford Grant. Capture is estimated to be in February-March 2019, when water levels recede after the north-east monsoon.
 - Night surveys to enumerate crocodile populations.
 - Collection of non-viable eggs for assessing them for pesticide contaminants.

The permit is valid for a period of 2 years, and also mentions the importance of village level based education programmes, in addition to the ongoing school visits.

3. An intern, Jason Dominique, has been hired for 10,000/- rupees (110 pounds/month), starting September 2018. Jason's primary responsibilities are to assist with education and outreach, and once crocodiles are captured, to keep track of them with the telemetry receiver/antennae. This is in place of the £1,500 allocated for vehicle hire, as the Madras Crocodile Bank has kindly provided a driver and vehicle free of cost. Wellwishers in Thanjavur have also provided free accommodation.

S.No	Date	Name of The School	Place	No.of students	GPS Coordinates
1	24.10.18	Our Lady Of Health Matriculation School	Budalur	140 (70+70)	10.787591 78.977062
2	24.10.18	Govt Boys School	Budalur	65	10.788568 78.975574
3	24.10.18	Govt Girls Higher secondary school	Budalur	75	10.795418 78.979191

S.No	Date	Name of The School	Place	No.of students	GPS Coordinates
4	24.10.18	Shri Sivaswami Balavidhyalaya Higher secondary school	Thirukaatupalli	100	10.848535 78.956149
5	24.10.18	Sivaswami Ayyar Higher secondary school	Thirukaatupalli	85	10.849333 78.955475
6	25.10.18	Govt Higher secondary school	Thirumanur	120	10.93290 79.10312



Top left: One of 6 schools visited in October 2018. Top right: An unwary dog comes down to the water at Anaikarai. Bottom left: Fishing with a cast net at Anaikarai in crocodile habitat using a makeshift boat. Bottom right: Head of a mugger emerges from one of the remnant water bodies at Anaikarai.