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Biodiversity in the area declined by 35 pc, says a study

BIA cost Devanahalli its fauna

Bangalore, December 23, DHNS:

The rapid commercial growth in the Devanahalli area after the commissioning of the Bengaluru International Airport (BIAL), has led to the decline of the biodiversity in the area by 35 per cent, a University of Agricultural Sciences (UAS) study has revealed.



The study, anchored by a senior MSc student, showed that the most affected were the nocturnal birds. Besides, the count of butterflies and mammals has also gone down drastically.

A M Mayur, a Forestry student of the UAS spent nearly a year in getting data on the displacement of the precious biodiversity of Devanahalli.

Mayur's study has found that the Devanahalli population dropped rapidly after the growth of real estate in the region.

Birds displaced

"Subsequently, the light and noise pollution on account of the BIAL displaced even the birds and mammals resulting in a huge loss for the environment," he observes.



Mayur, who worked under S Hattappa, professor of Forestry and Environment studies, presented his paper, recording the drop in the flora and fauna at Devanahalli, at the symposium on "Lake Lake 2010: Wetlands, Biodiversity and Climate Change" here on Thursday.

"The prime reason for the migration of the nocturnal species of birds from the Devanahalli region has been due to light pollution. With lights on through the night, it has become quite hard for these species of birds to breed, leading to their migration," observes Mayur.

Some of the well known raptors and owls that used to be spotted regularly in the days of yore included the Hawk Wood Owl, Scoops Owl, Mottled wood owls, Barn owls, Eurasian Eagle Owl, Marsh Harrier, Indian Spotted Eagle and the Short Toed Snake Eagle.

The population of butterflies in the area has reduced by nearly 26 percent and the spotting of mammals by nearly 75 per cent due to the dense forests of Betttekote being converted into plantations in the late 80s.

It has also been noted that the horticulture production has reduced to just over 30 per cent on account of the massive migration by the Devanahalli population to cities. "Of the 40 families which lived in the Devanahalli area, near the BIAL, only 15 remain. Most of the large land owners have given up agriculture activities and moved to Chikkaballapur or Bangalore," says Mayur.

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