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Students take part in Guindy park census



EAGERNESS: Students along with forest rangers at the annual census of the Guindy National Park in Chennai on Sunday. —

Staff Reporter

The results will be announced in a couple of days

CHENNAI: A rugged looking group makes its way through thorny shrubs and uneven terrain. Suddenly one of its members shouts “a spotted deer there”.

A quick turn of heads, some gasps, followed by an entry in a registry.

They weren't trained trackers. Most of them were college students or wildlife enthusiasts who took part in the annual census of black bucks and deer at the Guindy National Park Reserve Forest here on Sunday.

Students followed transects, imaginary lines on the ground, that demarcate sections of territory. Groups of six to eight observers followed a trail of coloured ribbons, stopping at regular intervals to look around and make entries in their data sheets if they were lucky enough to spot a deer or a black buck.

“I spotted deer and also three-star tortoises. It was amazing,” said Shreya Yadav, a Stella Marris student.

The 270.57-hectare Guindy National Park has 135 species of birds, apart from deer, tortoises, ant eaters and jackals. During last year's census, it was estimated that the Park is home to 1,280 spotted deer and 382 black bucks.

V.Bharath, a final year Mechanical Engineering student, said “We are sick and tired of everyone terming engineers as polluters. We have an eco club in our college and we are here just to get some exposure. Engineering can produce sustainable solutions if we were taught a bit about the environment.”

Ramesh Rajesh, a first time visitor to the Park, said “I never knew about this vast expanse of greenery right in the middle of the city. To go into a stretch of forest in the middle of a metropolis was exciting.”

The results of the census will be announced within a couple of days.