

Editorial Note:

Zoological Garden: An essential tool for Education and Research

Zoology is the science of biology that deals with basic and applied aspects of life related to animals and human. The journey of zoological education in Bangladesh started at the University of Dhaka in 1939 as Biology department. After 1954, a unique and most deserved Zoology education was launched in the country for the first time. The need of an animal museum and a field-based facilities were created at the beginning of the biology department. And so, on the beginning of the zoological education all over the country explored ecosystem-based field facilities.

The scope of zoological garden is versatile. The facilities being developed along with the zoological education established at Rajshahi, Chittagong and Jahangirnagar Universities. In addition, major colleges like Chittagong College; Dhaka College; Jagannath College-Dhaka; Rajshahi College; Eden Mohila College-Dhaka; Kabi Nazrul Govt. College-Dhaka; Murari Chand (M.C) College-Sylhet; Govt. Edward College-Pabna; Brojomohun (B.M) College-Barishal; Govt. Brajalal (B.L) College-Khulna; Carmichael College- Rangpur; Govt. Prafulla Chandra (P.C) College-Bagerhat; Govt. Shaheed Suaheed Suhrawardy College-Dhaka; Dinajpur Govt. College; Tolaram College-Narayanganj; Chandpur Govt. College; Begum Badrunnessa Govt. Girl's College, Dhaka; Notre Dame College-Dhaka; Rajbari Govt. College, etc., initiated local based educational facilities for the students. Gradually the subject spread among the other educational institutions in the county. It facilitates the higher education in Zoology in many reputed colleges of the country.

Visioning the value of zoological garden facilities following areas of research being conducted in Bangladesh.

Historically, zoological garden engaged in *ex situ* and *in situ* conservation of plants and animals. The Zoological Garden of the University of Dhaka has a collection of more than 140 species of rare plants from different ecosystems of the country. The interactions of the indigenous- plants with local fauna, like butterflies, insects, spiders and birds been studied under urban biodiversity initiatives. Several animal rearing facilities been developed for *Drosophila*, Mosquitoes (*Aedes* and *Culex*), plankton, earthworms, mussels, fishes, snake, domestic birds and experimental animals. An insect toxicology testing room, fish hatchery, mini-ponds, aquarium-based fish feed/toxicology trial facilities,

animal rescue/rest room, fish-culture cubicles, been developed for MS, MPhil and PhD students.

Living collections been recognized for preserving genetic materials besides research, education and display purpose. Under similar facilities, the zoology departments of Rajshahi, Chittagong and Jahangirnagar University several unique initiatives been taken. A Wildlife Rescue Center (WRC) is in place at the Jahangirnagar University. Halda River Research Laboratory was established at Chittagong University. A silkworm-based sericulture research laboratory was developed at the Rajshahi University.

The graduates from these alma-matter at present serving at the wide range of educational institutions, field-based research, zoological parks, zoos, government and research institutions in Bangladesh and abroad.

What can be further added to the facilities? Animal theme park, public aquarium, conservation awareness facilities, laboratory-animal breeding services can be introduced for the community services and sustainability of the facilities. Several out campus field-based facilities need to be established for ecosystem targeted research.

Though some critics of the zoological garden exists. However, the hands on practical based experiences have a long-term impact that can augment the benefits of conservation biology of the country we anticipate.

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©2022 Zoological Society of Bangladesh DOI: <https://doi.org/10.3329/bjz.v50i3.65536>