

President – Mr. GLS Perera

Secretary – Ms. Manoja Weerakkody

Treasurer – Mr. Ranjan Gunawardana

Our tag line - A CONSERVATION JOURNEY THROUGH GENERATIONS

Website - <https://lnclk.org>

This year marks a significant year for LNC as it celebrates a milestone, a decade of efforts in the conservation of biodiversity of Sri Lanka.

Over the years, we have created awareness, inspired action, to protect the environment through a collective effort.

A dedicated team with commitment has taken small steps for greater impact in the future, beach cleaning, tree planting, forest restoration, turtle conservation and habitat restoration are some of them.

We continue to engage in advocacy role to educate and create awareness among the public, and other interest groups for the protection and conservation of biodiversity in Sri Lanka.

In this Issue

- LNC News
- Colombo Diyasaru Park
- Members' Annual Trip to Laya Beach, Wadduwa
- 'World Elephant Day'

LNC Public Relations Committee -

Professor Emeritus Indira D. Silva
Ms. Neelanganie Hidellarachchi

Ms. Iyanthi Gunawardana
Mr. Amitha Munasinghe

Donation of publications to the YZA

The President of LNC Mr G L S Perera, a founding member of YZA donated valuable publications to the Young Zoologists Association (YZA) on 26th June 2026. The publications were highly appreciated by the members of the YZA, stating that the publications will serve as important educational resources, supporting the learning, research, and a deeper understanding of wildlife, biodiversity and conservation.



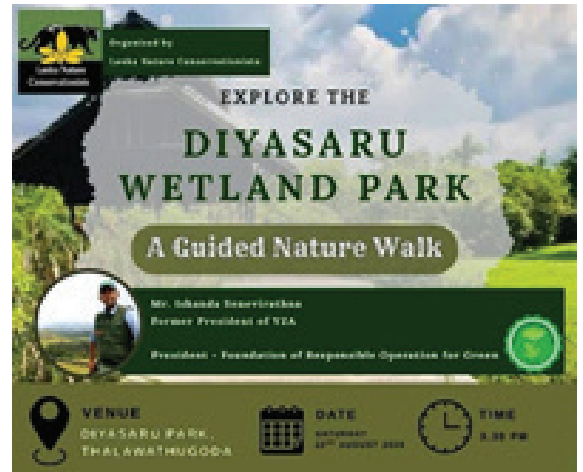
4th International Conference on Mangroves for Sustainability – ICMS 2026 held from 22-25 July 2026 at Waters Edge Hotel, Colombo

The International Conference on Mangroves for Sustainability (ICMS-2026) serves as a global platform to promote the conservation and sustainable management of mangrove ecosystems. It unites researchers, policymakers, conservationists, and industry leaders to exchange knowledge, address challenges, and explore innovative solutions in areas such as biodiversity, climate resilience, and coastal protection. This was a valuable opportunity to share experiences and insights among both local and international scientists.

The EXCO member Mr Dilup Chandranimal Perera, an Independent Ecologist and an Environmental Consultant on Biodiversity Conservation and Natural Resource Management, represented the LNC at this conference.



Visit to world's first #RamsarWetlandCity



We had an enjoyable and an Educational/Awareness Guided field tour to “Diyasaru Uyana” Wetland Park at Thalawathugoda on 22 August (Saturday). Diyasaru Uyana is one of the wetland parks in the city of Colombo, which is named a Global Ramsar Wetland City, making it the only Capital City in the World to hold this distinction.





Mr Ishanda Seneviratne (President YZA 2023) joined us on invitation to provide the members about its fauna and flora and wetland habitats. About 40 participants took advantage of this field visit including a few children and youth.



Colombo, is a member of the #RamsarSites network, and made history by becoming the world's first #RamsarWetlandCity. This remarkable achievement showcases the city's commitment to preserving its remaining freshwater wetlands as a precious protected asset.

The wetlands in Colombo offer a unique 'wilderness' experience within the urban landscape, serving as havens for a diverse range of flora and fauna. From flooded woodlands to grassy marshes, these wetlands are home to rare bird species like the colorful blue coot and elusive fishing cats. However, until recent years, these natural treasures faced threats from urban development and pollution.

Recognizing the critical importance of these wetlands, the Metropolitan Colombo Urban Development Project (MCUDP) highlighted the urgent need to safeguard these ecosystems. The preservation of wetlands not only supports biodiversity but also provides essential services such as flood control, water filtration, and biodiversity conservation.

(<https://www.inside.lk/news/environment/colombo-the-worlds-first-ramsar-wet-land-city/>)

Sri Lanka – Colombo Wetland Complex

Colombo's urban wetlands contain unique biodiversity that provide flood protection and numerous livelihood services to the residents of Colombo. However, despite the widespread benefits and unique biodiversity, Colombo's wetlands were being destroyed and degraded. Since the 1980s, 60% of the wetlands have been lost, largely through infilling. The wetlands currently provide flood protection for up to a 1 in 50 year flood. If all wetlands are lost, Colombo would experience a catastrophic flood, like that experienced in 2010 with flood damages equal to 1% of Colombo's GDP, on average every year. Wetlands are also being degraded through water and solid waste pollution.

The Metro Colombo Catchment Wetland Management Strategy was developed in 2016 as a comprehensive management approach to conserving wetlands across the city and integrating them into city development planning. The strategy identified Colombo's wetlands as biodiversity rich with >250 plant and >280 animal species. This included 9 nationally threatened and 11 near threatened flora, such as the tree climber *Aganope heptaphylla*, and 18 threatened and 18 near threatened fauna, such as the Fishing Cat (*Prionailurus viverrinus*). The strategy also determined that wetlands are fundamental to the well-being of the 2.3 million people of Colombo, particularly the urban poor, with 60% of households directly benefiting from wetland livelihoods and products, such as fish and rice, and 100% receiving indirect benefits from flood protection, climate cooling and pest regulation. As a result of the strategy and increased awareness about the importance of the wetlands as blue / green space within the city a moratorium to prevent wetland infilling was passed in 2018 and a programme of defining wetlands as protected area sanctuaries was commenced. Colombo was also the first capital city to be recognized as a Convention on Wetlands' Wetland City in 2018 because of the comprehensive approach adopted to integrate wetland protection into urban planning and management.

Ramsar Technical Report 12 (2024). Scaling up wetland conservation and restoration to deliver the KunmingMontreal Global Biodiversity Framework. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.69556/strp.tr12.24>.

Lead author- Matthew Simpson, 35percent, Stroud, UK; Cobra Collective, Egham, UK; and Society of Wetland Scientists.

Contributing author(s) - Megan Eldred, BirdLife International, Cambridge, UK; Sevvandi Jayakody, Wayamba University of Sri Lanka, Sri Lanka; & Laura Mackenzie, Wetlands International, ageningen, The Netherlands.

LNC Members Annual Trip to Laya Beach, Wadduwa in July 2026



12th August was 'World Elephant Day'

Did you Know.....?

- Elephants have the the longest gestation (pregnancy period) of any land mammal - 22 months
- Many mammals are born with brains close to adult weight and rely heavily on instinct. Elephants, like humans and great apes, must acquire much of what they need to survive through years of learning.
- Calves typically nurse for three to five years, remain closely bonded to their mothers for eight to ten years, and continue learning social behavior, communication, and environmental knowledge within the family group for ten to fifteen years.
- Calves that lose their mothers early often show lasting behavioral and social deficits, evidence that the developing brain needs guidance.



Elephants are 'Born to Learn'. By comparing the elephant brain to that of humans, we can gain a deeper understanding of the complexities of brain development and cognitive abilities in the two species.

- It is larger than any other land animal
- It is located in the back of the skull away from the forehead.
- The elephant brain is larger than the human brain, weighing around 11 pounds (5 kg) compared to the average human brain weight of 3 pounds (1.4 kg).
- Brain Structure: Both the elephant and human brains have similar structures, including the frontal lobes, temporal lobes, parietal lobes, and occipital lobes, although the proportions differ.
- The growth and development is similar to humans. Both are born with small brain masses. The mass of the new born baby elephant is 35% of that of an adult brain, while the mass of a human new born is 26% of an adult human brain. Thus there is considerable growth and development as the young ones grow up.
- Function: The elephant brain is specialized for complex social interactions, communication, and memory, while the human brain is known for its advanced problem-solving abilities and language skills.
- Memory: Elephants are known for their exceptional memory, which allows them to remember complex social structures, migration routes, and the locations of water sources over long periods of time. This ability to retain and recall information is comparable to the cognitive abilities of humans.
- Problem-solving: Elephants find food and water in their natural habitats. Their ability to use tools and exhibit innovative behaviors in response to challenges showcases their advanced cognitive capabilities.
- Emotional intelligence: Elephants display a high level of emotional intelligence, forming deep social bonds and exhibiting empathy towards other members of their herd. Their ability to express emotions and form complex relationships suggests a level of cognitive complexity similar to that of humans.
- Evolutionary advantages - ability to process and retain a vast amount of information, allowing them to navigate their complex social structures and environments. They have exceptional memory, enabling them to remember important locations, individuals, and migration routes over long periods of time.