

Project Update: November 2017

Bengal slow loris (*Nycticebus bengalensis*) is a nocturnal, small and cryptic primate. In Bangladesh it occurs in Sylhet division in northeast Bangladesh and Chittagong division in southeast Bangladesh. Lorises are important seed dispersers and pollinators and they take floral nectar as a large part of their total diet. So they work as a pollinator and play an important role in forest system. But the population of this nocturnal primate is decreasing day by day. All Asian lorises are threatened due to loss of their habitat, use in pet industry, and traditional medicine. Because of these threats and declining population Bengal slow loris, listed as Vulnerable on the IUCN Red List. This project was begun to estimate the population of slow loris in northeast Bangladesh, identify their threats and finally conduct some awareness programme to conserve this species in their natural habitat. We already started and completed half of our survey work and some of the awareness programme.

Population Survey: To conduct the survey of Bengal slow loris, we are using direct survey method. We are using the sport light eye-shine method to find loris. By using headlamp we randomly search orange light to find out loris because lorises possess a reflective layer on the eye called the tapetum lucidum which produce a brilliant orange light. Study is conducting along established human trails, roads and dry streams. When we find a loris, we use a range finder to determine the distance of the individual from the observer and a GPS to take coordinates. We also record the age, sex, and the tree species on which it was found. We already finished the survey work in Lawachara and Satchari National.



Our "Loris Team" is conducting population survey in the forest.



Left: A cute female Slow loris found during our survey. Right: We are collecting habitat data.

Habitat Assessment: Though in the proposal we mentioned the quadrat sampling method to assess the habitat but now we are using the point quarter method because this method is suitable for our forest and previously successfully used. We measure the DBH, height of plants and identify the plant species of all points. We are measuring the DBH by a measuring tape and the distance of each plant from point by a laser distance meter.

Identifying Threats: We have prepared a close and open ended questioners and conducting a survey within the tribal people, local people, and forest staffs to identify threats of Bengal slow loris. We are also gathering information about hunting and use of this species by tribal and local people, their attitude towards the conservation of Bengal slow loris and their opinion and suggestions regarding the conservation of this species. We are also collecting the threat signs (e.g. logging, forest fire etc.) during our regular survey through the trails.

Awareness Programme: As a part of public awareness campaign and to celebrate the 'Loris Week 2017', the project organized a drawing competition among students of Pogose Laboratory High School, A discussion seminar also held after the competition. Honorable teachers of department of Zoology, Jagannath University and Pogose School gave speech in the seminar along with principal researcher of the project. Main focus of the competition and seminar was to make students familiar with Bengal slow loris and enlighten them about ecology. Crests, certificates and stickers were given at the end of programme among the winners and participants.



Principal investigator is collecting information on Bengal Slow Loris from a forest guard.



Our team with participants and teacher during the drawing competition.