

## **Project Update: March 2010**

I have completed field-work on primate community of Gibbon Wildlife Sanctuary. During this period following major activities were undertaken:

1. Intensive behavioural observations on three species of macaques (rhesus, pig-tailed and stump-tailed macaque) and opportunistic observations on other primate species were conducted during this period. Overall, 1200 hours of behavioural observation data on three species of macaque were collected and around 36,000 individuals were scanned during this period.
2. Data on ranging behaviour of three macaque species were collected on the selected and habituated troops of each of them from morning to evening whenever the troops are followed for behavioural observations in order to estimate the daily range and seasonal and annual home range.
3. More than 200 inter-specific observations involving two or more species of primates were recorded opportunistically during the study period.
4. More than 500 food plants of studied troops were collected and deposited in Botanical Survey of India, Shillong for identification.
5. 350 individual trees of 35 species (10 individuals of each species) which constitute the major food plants of primates were monitored once a month for 12 months in order to estimate variation in resource availability to the primate community in the sanctuary.
6. In order to understand the quality of the habitat, sampling of vegetation was carried out within the home range of all primate species. The home ranges of all species were arbitrarily divided into 300 x 300 m grids and belt transects of 200 m (n=63) or 100 m (n=44) were laid within these grids randomly. Various vegetation parameters such as tree, shrub, liana and herb density, canopy cover, etc., were measured in 2740 10 x 10 m plots within the belt transects.
7. In order to evaluate the threat on this habitat due to various anthropogenic pressures a 'footpath survey' was conducted on the key entry paths. In this technique, data were obtained from direct observations of outgoing forest produce or NTFP from the key entry paths of the forests. A total of 15 entry paths into the forest were identified. These entry paths were observed for a period of one month with a fixed schedule of two days per entry points.
8. Series of popular talks on important conservation issues were delivered to school and college students during their visit in the sanctuary. These talks were organized in collaboration with the Assam Forest Department.