



## **Role of Currency Bank Notes and Postage Stamps in Eco-conservation: An Important Tool for Mass Sensitization**

**R. Rohitashwa<sup>1</sup> and D.N.Choudhary<sup>2</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>Nature Activist, Eco-Philatelist and Numismatist, Laheri Tola, Bhagalpur,  
Bihar –: 812002,

E-mail: [mnc\\_rahul2007@rediffmail.com](mailto:mnc_rahul2007@rediffmail.com)

<sup>2</sup>Associate Professor, Birder and Wildlife Activist

University Dept. of Zoology, TMBU, Bhagalpur, Bihar – 812007, India

E-mail: [dncgopal08@gmail.com](mailto:dncgopal08@gmail.com)

\*Corresponding author: Dr.D.N.Choudhary; E-mail: [dncgopal08@gmail.com](mailto:dncgopal08@gmail.com)

### **Abstract**

Conservation of our environment, wildlife and forest is vital for ecological sustainability. The massive growth in the world's human population and their demands is rapidly diminishing our wildlife, nature and natural resources. It has created a very serious crisis for the natural environment and all the wild species of plant and animals which depend on it for their survival. Conservation of wildlife, nature and natural resources has now become the motto of every country. In this context the most important and prominent tools for spreading eco-literacy and bio-literacy are the postage stamps and currencies (bank notes and coins) containing the pictures depicting important as well as threatened flora and fauna of the world. In the present work, the study materials like currency bank notes and postage stamps related to nature and wildlife issued in different years in India and other countries were exhibited in different schools, colleges, seminars, exhibitions, bird festivals, public meetings and workshops in different places of Bihar. The main objective of the present study or displaying these materials was to create mass awareness among the students and general community towards the conservation of our environment, magnificent wildlife and biodiversity and also to give valuable information about these. Students and people were responding well. They were receiving information about the important and threatened flora and fauna and their present status by observing these exhibited materials and also by receiving information from our team members as well. Their positive response showed that this method may be an important and successful tool in the direction of mass sensitization for protecting our nature, environment and threatened wildlife. This investigation will certainly be useful for the researchers, academicians and social activists who are working in the field of conservation.

**Keywords:** Currency, coins, bank notes, postage stamps, wildlife, conservation, awareness.

## Introduction

Each and every species of plants and animals living on this planet are equally important. They play a major role to maintain the ecological balance being an important member of food chain and food web (Shyam and Joshi, 2006). Conservation of forest, wildlife, nature and natural resources is vital for ecological sustainability. Forests are the habitat for the wildlife and are an important constituent of the various ecosystems (Mukharjee, 2006).

The massive growth in the world's human population and their continuous demand is rapidly diminishing the natural resources which have created a very serious crisis of the natural environment and also for the wild species of flora and fauna which depend on it for their survival. Habitat destruction is the leading cause of biodiversity loss (Mandol and Rastogi, 2004; Narayan, 2006). Activities such as harvesting natural resources, uncontrolled industrial productions and urbanizations are causing deforestation in an alarming rate. Human activity is by far the biggest cause of habitat loss. The loss of wetlands, plains, lakes and other natural environments, all destroy or degrade habitat as do other human activities such as introducing invasive species, polluting and trading in wildlife. (Sharma, 2019).

In the name of progress and modernization human have brutally harmed our mother nature and its delicate ecosystems. Rampant killing, poaching, habitat destruction, trophy hunting activities etc. totally mismatches with the nature of humans which are considered as the most intelligent and powerful species on this planet Earth (Rohitashwa, 2022 a). With an eye to the above stated facts a number of countries have developed effective conservation strategies since 1980s. IUCN (International Union for the conservation of Nature or World Conservation Union) has also developed scientific and strategic elements in which prime importance is given to the conservation of biological diversity (Basu and Cetzal, 2015). Thus sixth extinction or more

specifically known as manmade extinction will be very drastic and life threatening event for us. Perhaps this is the reason that today every country is very vigilant and trying by every possible means to spread public awareness about these looming threats. Conservation of environment, wildlife and biodiversity has now become the adage of every country (Annon, 2011; Rohitashwa, 2022 b).

In this context the two most important and prominent tools for spreading eco-literacy and bio-literacy are the postage stamps and bank currencies (bank notes and coins) related to wildlife, nature and natural resources depicting important as well as threatened flora and fauna (Rohitashwa and Choudhary, 2022 ; Rao, 2022). These underestimated and unadmired vehicles of conservation has not gain enough importance in mass, nevertheless these two constitute an important national heritage of a nation and also as a hallmark carrying hidden messages identifying the national prestige (Calver *et al.*, 2011; Baidur, 2011; Rajashekhar, 2002; Rohitashwa, 2020 & Pakrashi, 2014).

The aim of the present study is to create mass awareness towards the conservation of our environment, wildlife and biodiversity by displaying these important teaching materials like postage stamps and bank notes of India and other countries containing the various aspects of nature and wildlife and also to give valuable information about them as it may be an important and successful tool for spreading the global importance of protecting our magnificent and vulnerable wildlife.

## Materials and Methods

Postage stamps and currencies (bank notes and coins) of various sovereign states, island nations, and overseas territories have been collected from various sources. These were arranged and segregated by keeping in mind the following perspectives like country of origin, date of issue, year of issue, face value or denomination, categorization of flora and fauna as endangered,

vulnerable, data deficient, extinct, resident, migratory etc (Rohitashwa and Choudhary, 2022). After segregation the detailed information about of each and every currency bank notes and postage stamps were collected from various authentic sources like internet, concerned books, related journals, published papers and eventually exhibits were made according to the existing rules and regulations (Eriksen *et al.*, 1988; Phillips and Waddell, 2003; Ramanujam, 2016; Zagkotas and Niaoustas, 2020; Rohitashwa, 2020). These exhibits carrying valuable and essential source of information about the concerning subject were displayed in the different occasions to create mass awareness and also to educate students and people.

## Results and Discussion

### Role of Philately and Numismatics:

Numismatics is the study or collection of currencies, including coins, tokens, paper money, models and related objects but the discipline also includes the broader study of money and other means of payment used to resolve debts and exchange goods whereas philately is the systematic collection and study of postage stamps, envelopes, postmarks, postcards and other materials related to postal delivery (Calver, 2011; Chatterjea, 1984 & 1990).

From time immemorial, countries of the world have been releasing currency bank notes and philatelic postage stamps depicting various aspects of environment, wildlife and biodiversity conservation like important flora and fauna of the country, natural landscapes and tribal wealth thus spreading the global importance of protecting our magnificent and vulnerable wildlife. As a matter of fact every country of the world has its particular species which defines its culture and national identity (Rohitashwa, 2020). Currency bank notes and postage stamps containing the various aspects of wildlife and biodiversity of the following countries were exhibited for public awareness as well as mass sensitization.

1. Countries like Fizi, Madagascar, New Zealand, Sri Lanka, Philippines, Brazil and South Africa has portrayed some of the most beautiful depictions of wildlife like Red throated Lorikeet (*Charmocyna amabilis*), Kiwi (*Apteryx hassti*), Honey eater (*Prothemadera novaeseelandiae*), Scops Owl (*Otus scopus*), Dull moth (*Lepidoptera*), Crab (*Crustacean*), Purple Sandpiper (*Calidris maritime*), Lion (*Panthera leo*), African Elephant (*Loxodonta africana*), Rhinoceros (*Diceros*), Leopard (*Panthera pardus*), Water Buffalo (*Syncerus caffer*), Palm Civet (*Paradoxurus hermaphrodites*), Hawksbill Turtle (*Eretmochelys imbricate*) respectively on their currencies and stamps (**Photo plate 4 & 5**).

2. Countries like Bangladesh, Nepal, Senegal, Venezuela, The Cook island, Aruba, French Polynesia, Costa Rica, etc. have also depicted various forms of wildlife diversity on their bank notes and coins like Oriental magpie Robin (*Copsychus saularis*) on two taka note of Bangladesh, Whale Shark (*Rhyncodon typus*), the largest fish of the world is depicted on the currency of Djibouti, Monarch Butterfly (*Danaus plexipus*) on the peso of Mexico and Silverback Gorilla (*Gorilla beringei*) on the currency of Zaire (**Photo plate 4 & 5**).

3. According to the British news paper, banknotes issued from Nepal have been chosen as the world's most beautiful banknotes portraying wildlife. The most unique quality of Nepalese currency is that it represents a wide range of wild animals that are found in Nepal. For example Nepalese one rupee depicts Musk deer (*Moschus sp.*), two rupees portrays Leopard (*Panthera pardus*), five, ten, hundred and thousand rupees portray Yak (*Bos grunniens*), Blackbuck (*Antelope cervicapra*), One horned Indian Rhinoceros (*Rhinoceros unicornis*), Royal Bengal Tiger (*Panthera tigris*) and Asian Elephant (*Elephas maximus*) respectively (**Photo plate 4 & 5**).

4. Countries of Senegal and Venezuela portray many species of birds and animals like Spider Monkey (*Ateles fusciceps*), Giant Anteater (*Myrmecophaga tridactyla*), Harpy Eagle (*Harpia harpyza*) and Amazon river Dolphin (*Iniageof francis*) etc.

5. Quetzal which is the national currency of South American country, Guatemala is named after the national bird of the country, the resplendent Quetzal (*Euptilotis neoxenus*) which is an endangered bird as well as a linking species (**Photo plate 4**).

6. Our own country India is also very vigilant in this respect and has also portrayed its diverse and vulnerable wildlife on its currencies and postage stamps. For example the world famous Royal Bengal Tiger, our national animal is featured on our INR two rupees bank note. The herbivores such as the Blackbuck (*Antelope cervicapra*) and the Spotted Deer or Chital (*Axis axis*) adorn bank note of INR five rupees. Some of the Indian currency note also depict Indian Peafowl (*Pavo*

*cristatus*) our national bird and Asian Elephant, *Elephas maximus* (Chatterjea, 1990; Anon, 2005; Calver et al, 2011; Rohitashwa, 2020 & 2022) (**Photo plate 4 & 5**).

There are many countries in the world which have printed some fabulous and eye catching illustrations of several aspects of wildlife on their currency bank notes and postage stamps which are an important tool for attracting people and also to educate them (Baindur, 2011 and Wright, 2014). Postage stamps may be used as teaching aids particularly in Biology and in other subjects too (Calver et al., 2011). Conservation of our biodiversity through currency, coins and postage stamps depicting the various aspects of nature and wildlife is a very informative program and may play major role to create mass awareness (Basu and Cetzal, 2015 ; Rohitashwa, 2022 ). According to Forsman et al (2012) postage stamps and currencies are the interactive exhibits as a tool in getting the public involved in awareness activities (**Photo plate 1, 2& 3**).

**Table 1(A): List of Countries depicting Raptor birds on Currencies**

SI	Name of Country	Currency Name	Name of Bird	Year of Issue	Conservational Status
1.	New Zealand	20 New Zealand Dollar	New Zealand Falcon ( <i>Falco novaeseelandiae</i> )	-	Least Concern
2.	Oman	Omanese Half Rial	Sooty Falcon ( <i>Falco concolor</i> )	2021	Vulnerable
3.	Oman	100 Baisa	Steppe Eagle ( <i>Aquila nipalensis</i> )	1995	Endangered
4.	Colombia	1 Peso	Andean Condor ( <i>Vultur gryphus</i> )	1959	Vulnerable
5.	Gambia	50 Dalasis	Beaudouin's snake Eagle ( <i>Circaetus beaudouini</i> )	-	Vulnerable
6.	Zambia	10 Kwacha	African Fish Eagle ( <i>Haliaeetus vocifer</i> )	-	Least Concern

7.	UAE	10 Dirham	Eurasian sparrow Hawk ( <i>Accipiter nisus</i> )	-	Least Concern
8.	Venezuela	2000 Venezuelan Bolivares	Harpy Eagle ( <i>Harpia harpyza</i> )		Vulnerable
9.	Argentina	50 Argentina Peso	Andean Condor ( <i>Vultur gryphus</i> )	-	Vulnerable
10.	Canada	Canadian 10 Dollar	Osprey ( <i>Pandion haliaetus</i> )	1989	Least Concern
11.	Sudan	200 Sudanese Pound	Secretary Bird ( <i>Sagittarius serpentarius</i> )		Highly Endangered
12.	Philippines	1000 Philippine Peso	Philippines Eagle ( <i>Pitheophaga jefferyi</i> )	2022	Critically Endangered
13.	Albania	100 Albanian Lek	Golden Eagle ( <i>Aquila chrysaetos</i> )	-	Least Concern
14.	Mexico	Mexico 200 Pesos	Golden Eagle ( <i>Aquila chrysaetos</i> )	2004	Least Concern
15.	Suriname	10000 Guldon	Ornate hawk Eagle ( <i>Spizaetus ornatus</i> )		Near Threatened
16.	Suriname	25000 Guldon	Spot-bellied eagle-Owl ( <i>Bubo nipalensis</i> )	-	Least Concern
17.	Canada	50 Canadian Dollar	Snowy Owl ( <i>Bubo scandiacus</i> )	-	Vulnerable
18.	Suriname	10000 Surinamese Dollar	Ornate hawk-Eagle ( <i>Spizaetus ornatus</i> )	2000	Near Threatened
19.	Seychelles	500 Rupees	Seychelles Kestrel ( <i>Falco araeus</i> )	2016	Vulnerable

Table 1(B): List of Countries depicting Wild Animals on Currencies

SI	Name of Country	Currency Name	Name of Animal	Year of Issue	Conservational Status
1.	Maldives	1000 Rufiyaa	Whale Shark ( <i>Rhyncodon typus</i> )	2015	Endangered
2.	Maldives	1000 Rufiyaa	Green Sea Turtle ( <i>Chelonia mydas</i> )	2015	Endangered
3.	Nepal	100 Rupees	One horned Rhinoceros ( <i>Rhinoceros unicornis</i> )	-	Vulnerable
4.	Congo	50 c	Okapi ( <i>Okapia johnstoni</i> )	-	Endangered
5.	Rwanda	100 Cent Francs	Zebra ( <i>Equus quagga</i> )	1989	Near Threatened
6.	Venezuela	1000 Bolivares	Giant Armadillo ( <i>Priodontes maximus</i> )	-	Vulnerable
7.	Ecuador	5000 Cinco Mil Suces	Galapagos Giant Tortoise ( <i>Chelonoidis niger</i> )	-	Threatened
8.	Tanzania	500 Shillingi	African water Buffalo ( <i>Bubalus arnee</i> )	-	Endangered
9.	Brasil	20 Reais	Golden Lion Tamarin Monkey ( <i>Leontopithecus rosalia</i> )	-	Endangered
10.	Namibia	10 Namibian Dollars	Springbok ( <i>Antidorcas marsupialis</i> )	-	Least Concern
11.	Bangladesh	1 Rupee	Spotted Dear ( <i>Axis axis</i> )	-	Least Concern
12.	Aruba	100 Florin	Green Iguana ( <i>Iguana iguana</i> )	2019	Least Concern
13.	Aruba	100 Florin	Striped Anole ( <i>Anolis lineatus</i> )	2019	
14.	Indonesia	500 Rupiah	Orangutan ( <i>Pongo pygmaeus</i> )	1992	Critically Endangered
15.	Seychelles	25 Rupees	Seychelles Killifish ( <i>Gourzon pachypanchax</i> )	-	Least Concern
16.	Venezuela	2 Bolivares	Amazon river Dolphin ( <i>Inia geoffrensis</i> )	-	Endangered
17.	Zaire	50000	Silverback Gorilla ( <i>Gorilla gorilla</i> )	-	Critically Endangered

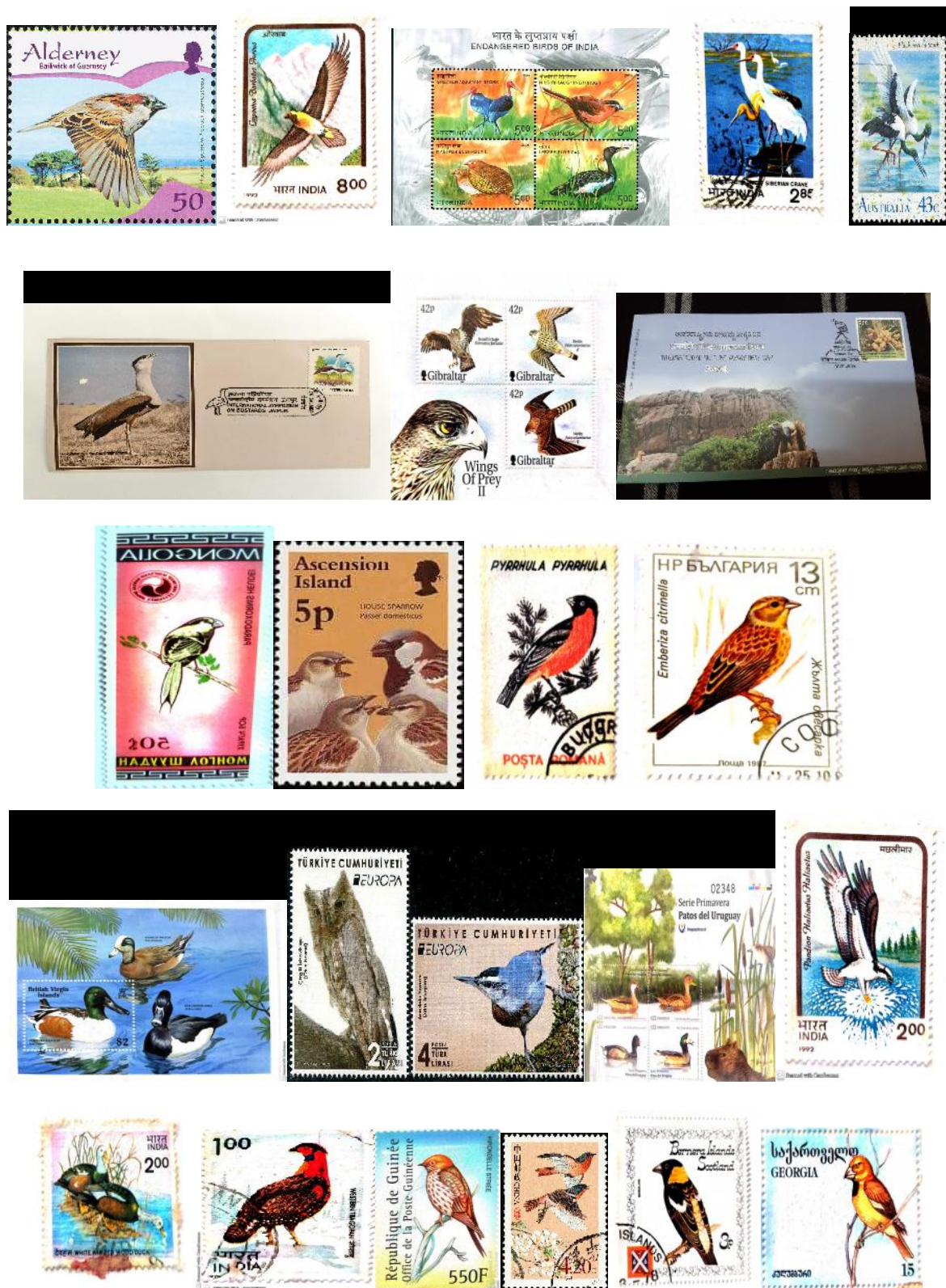


18.	Laos	5 Kip	Asian Elephant ( <i>Elephas maximus</i> )	-	Endangered
19.	Nepal	500 Rupees	Royal Bengal Tiger ( <i>Panthera tigris</i> )	2016	Endangered
20.	South Sudan	1 Sudanese Pound	Giraffe ( <i>Giraffa camelopardalis</i> )	-	Vulnerable
21.	Mexico	100 Pesos	Monarch Butterfly ( <i>Danaus plexippus</i> )	-	Endangered
22.	Oman	Half Rial	Asiatic Cheetah ( <i>Acinonyx jubatus venaticus</i> )	2020	Critically Endangered

**Table 1(C): List of Countries depicting Wild Animals on Postage Stamps**

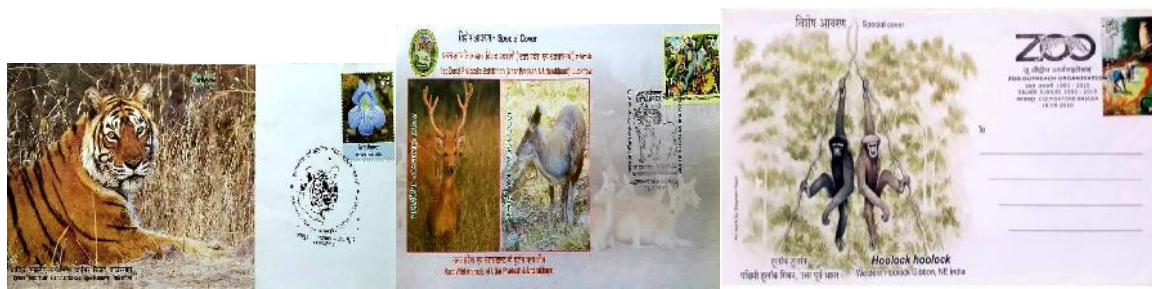
SI	Name of Country	Name of Animal	Year of Issue	Conservational Status
1.	India	Gangetic Dolphin (Platinista gangetica)	1991	Endangered
2.	India	Gangetic Dolphin ( <i>Platinista gangetica</i> ), Whale Shark ( <i>Rhyncodon typus</i> )	2009	Endangered
3.	India	Bengal Tiger ( <i>Panthera tigris</i> )	2022	Endangered
4.	India	Garganey ( <i>Anas querquedula</i> )	2000	Least Concern
5.	Tanzania	Nile Crocodile ( <i>Crocodylus niloticus</i> )	1996	Near Threatened
6.	India, Nepal	King Cobra ( <i>Ophiophagus hannah</i> )	2010, 1998	Threatened
7.	Nepal	Four horned Antelope ( <i>Tetracerus quadricornis</i> )	1989	Threatened
8.	United Arab Emirates	Arabian Oryx ( <i>Oryx leucoryx</i> )	2013	Threatened
9.	India	Sambar ( <i>Rusa unicolor</i> )	-	Threatened
10.	Spain	Iberian Lynx ( <i>Lynx pardinus</i> )	1997	Threatened
11.	Burkina Faso	Caracal ( <i>Caracal caracal</i> )	1996	Threatened
12.	Malaysia	Clouded Leopard ( <i>Neofelis nebulosa</i> )	2013	Endangered
13.	Nepal , India	Asiatic Lion ( <i>Panthera leo</i> )	1979, 1976	Endangered
14.	Malaysia	Malayan Tiger ( <i>Panthera tigris</i> )	1984,2009	Critically Endangered
15.	Zimbabwe, Tanzania	Black Rhinoceros ( <i>Diceros bicornis</i> )	-	Critically Endangered
16.	India	Greater Adjutant Stork ( <i>Leptoptilos jubatus</i> )	2006	Endangered
17.	India	Indian wild Ass ( <i>Equus hemionus khur</i> )	2013	Critically Endangered
18.	India	Great Indian Bustard ( <i>Ardeotis nigriceps</i> )	1980	Critically Endangered

Photoplate 1: Postage stamps depicting various Birds issued by countries of the world

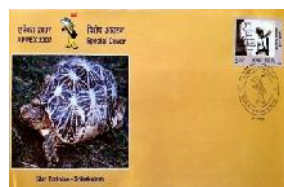
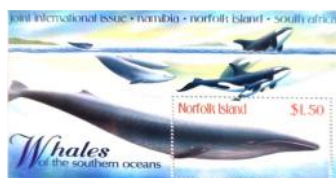




Photoplate 2: Postage stamps depicting various Animals issued by countries of the world



**Photoplate 3: Postage stamps depicting various Marine life issued by countries of the world**





### Photoplate 4: Currency notes depicting various Birds issued by countries of the world



**Photoplate 5: Currency notes depicting various Animals issued by countries of the world**





**Photoplate 6: Some Photographs of Philatelic Activities done by the authors in Promoting Mass Awareness towards Eco-conservation on various occasions in different districts of Bihar**

A view of Exhibition conducted at Sundarvan, Bhagalpur Forest Division, Bhagalpur, Bihar during a workshop at the occasion of Wildlife week celebration in October, 2020.



A view of exhibition of Postage stamps conducted by the authors at First Bird Festival of Bihar held at Nagi Bird Sanctuary, Jamui, Bihar in January, 2021, organized by the Department of Env. Forest and Climate change, Govt of Bihar.



Dr. A.R. Rahmani, Former Director of Bombay Natural History Society, Mumbai observing the exhibits related to nature, birds and wildlife issued by different countries during his visit to Bhagalpur in December, 2021- A view



Mr. Deepak Kumar Singh, Principal Secretary, Govt. of Bihar and other officials observing the exhibits at Patna, Bihar during a seminar, held at Sanjay Gandhi Zoological Park, Patna in June, 2022. – A view



## Conclusion

The present study focuses on the mass awareness as well as public sensitization with respect to the conservation of environment and wildlife. At present our planet is facing a lot of problems concerning the survival of the species including human beings. We have forgotten that this earth does not belong to only human beings and we are not only its inhabitants. The day to day destruction of forests has affected our wildlife to such an extent that many species which once roamed freely on this earth are now on the brink of extinction. Therefore, it becomes a crying need to protect and preserve our marvelous biodiversity which have been destroyed in the name of unmanned progress.

Many countries of the world has realized this convention and accordingly issued currency notes and postage stamps which are one of the potent vehicles for educative purposes carrying hidden message about the global importance of protecting our magnificent and vulnerable wildlife.

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## Authors contribution

First author designed the work and collected the materials systematically. Second author prepared the manuscript accordingly. Both the authors conducted different activities together in different places of Bihar.

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