

## **Wild Life Sanctuary Visit**

The final year students of UG – Zoology had an opportunity to explore various habitat types in Kodaikanal through a field tour. It was a three-day field trip (28-30 August 2019). The students visited the Botanical Garden and the Lake on the first day of the trip. Kodaikanal lake is an artificial, roughly star-shaped 45 ha (60 acres) lake built in 1863. It is Kodaikanal's most popular geographic landmark and tourist attraction. Rowboats and pedalos are provided by the Kodaikanal Boat Club for tourists. Besides, horses and bicycles can be hired beside the lake for short periods. The 5 kilometres (3.1 mi) path that skirts the periphery of this lake is a favourite walk for locals and tourists alike. Just east of the lake and 500 metres (1,600 ft) from the bus stand is a well maintained 20.5 acres (8.3 ha) botanical garden. The park was planned and built in 1908 by a forest officer from Madurai, H.D. Bryant, and named after him. With 325 species of trees, shrubs, and cacti, the park is a rainbow of flowers during the peak season. A large section is dedicated to nearly 740 varieties of roses. There is an 1857 eucalyptus tree and a Bodhi tree which adds a religious significance to the park. Ornamental plants are cultivated in a nursery for sale. The park organizes horticultural exhibits and flower shows every summer, to coincide with the peak season. The entrance fee to the park is nominal, and it is open all year. Students also visited Kodaikanal Wildlife Sanctuary to study the fauna, flora and their habitats. Dry deciduous forest to moist deciduous forest habitats, plantations like pine and eucalyptus were visited.