



NIZHAL ANNUAL REPORT...2010 -2011

Another wonderful year has gone by and it is time for the Nizhal family to come

together for a reunion and a sharing! We thank our Advisors, Experts and Resource

Persons, Member Volunteers and friends from the media, for all their support.

Each of them have played truly special roles in all of Nizhal's work!

At the PWD- Corporation Tree Park, Kotturpuram

With the PWD Tree Park taken over by the Chennai Corporation in August 2010, Nizhal continues to take care of the young saplings and provide inputs for the long-term objective of making this special Tree Park, an education and resource centre for students and the community. Every Sunday evening, shram-daan sessions are conducted at the Park by volunteers across age groups.

Our volunteers :

- Students from various schools and colleges like KRMM, Anna University and Nandanam College of Arts and Science,
- From the NGO, Bhumi
- employees from Scope International
- Technip, India
- the US consulate
- Tata Teleservices

Of course, our own members pitch in regularly, at various times!



A nursery of indigenous species has been initiated by Nizhal at the Tree Park, and also in a green space in Panayur (thanks to the support of our member, Gayathree Krishna). All saplings are watered and weeded, panchakavyam sprayed and manure added to them. With such unfailing care, the biodiversity in the Tree Park has grown in leaps in bounds- with a variety of birds, bees, and butterflies! Mangrove species have also been planted along the bank, as existed not too long back. The Park has been one of the Nizhal's projects for almost 4 years now and will no doubt blossom into the habitat it once was, thanks to the support of our experts and volunteers. We plan to continue and bring students from across Chennai to this Tree Park as an awareness outreach site, in the years ahead!

Greening minds in prisons across Tamil Nadu – Nizhal's Green Prisons Program!

With continuous encouraging feedback, the program that was initiated in Puzhal last year has spread to other prisons across the State - Cuddalore, Pudukottai, Trichy, Palayamkottai, Thirunelveli, Salem, Coimbatore and Madurai.

The participants are being trained in gardening, composting, planting and vegetable raising, with demonstrations for panchakavyam production and its applications by our organic farming experts - Mr. Venkatesan (Cuddalore), Mr Parthasarathy, Mr Sekar, Mr Balasubramaniam (Madurai) and Mr Vishwanathan, , Dr. Purushothaman (Vellore), Smt. Krishnaveni (Coimbatore) and Dr Jayanthi, Shri. Shekar (Trichy), Shri. Gomathinayagam (Palayamkottai), Shri. Geethai Kannan (Pudukottai), under the guidance of Dr. N. Dayanandam and with Dr Babu's support.



There are heartening reports from across each prison. In Madurai, the participants have already prepared 15 bags of compost. Over 100 kg of lady's finger and 200 kg of spinach was the yield at Palayamkottai prison some months ago, while participants in the Puzhal campus have cultivated vegetables worth about 3 lakh rupees. Taking this lead, similar programs are being planned in the Central prisons for women too!

Planting Projects:

Through the State Trading Corporation

- **At Guindy...120 saplings....in the barren industrial estate area, with monitoring through community volunteers including the SIDCO Lorry Drivers Association and members.**
- **In Madhavaram, TANUVAS area...200 saplings – of Magizham, Iluppai, Sarakonnai and Mandharai...networking with veterinary college student volunteers, and linking up with Forest Department and TANUVAS.**
- **At the Institute of Mental Health, Kilpauk....300 saplings...with the able support of Dr Sharadha Menon, and networking with members and student community like NSS volunteers in Pachiyappas and DG Vaishnava College.**

Reaching out

This year too, Nizhal has conducted many outreach activities, engaging the youth and the community through talks, walks, workshops and much more.

Talks covered a range of topics such as 'post-planting care' and 'green networking in urban areas').

Workshops were diverse too, with art workshops, sketching, story-telling, quizzes and 'fun in the garden' activities for children and students including a



singing/dancing competition with our music CD. Documentaries such as 'Queen of Trees' were screened, followed by interactions with the audience.

A **Photo Exhibition** on 'Trees of Chennai' invited entries from enthusiasts across the city.

Talks and training on post-planting care and how to set up a nursery were conducted with inputs from our experts Dr. Dayanandam, Mr. Ramakrishnan, Mr. Raghavendra Rao and Mr. Harish.

Nizhal's first international intern, Ms. Vernece from Malaysia, helped with presentations and inputs at the Ananya school.

The various institutions that Nizhal has linked up with are listed below.

Educational institutions

- WCC Enviro Club
- Sakthi Engineering College
- Rajalakshmi Engineering College
- Mythri Arts Academy
- Youth Red Cross coordinators from engineering colleges across the city
- MCC International Department of Social Work
- Padikuppam school,
- Ramakrishna Mission school (T. Nagar),
- Government Girls' Higher Secondary school (Chinna Porur),
- Lady Andal School
- Anna University
- IIT Madras
- CSI Newbiggin College of Education (Mylapore)
- Jeppiar Engineering College
- Ananya school
- Tamil Nadu Veterinary and Animal Sciences University

Others:



- Lioness Club of Tambaram East
- International Women's Association
- Rotary Club of Chennai Towers
- Institute of Mental Health
- Science City Fest organized by Department of Higher Education-Govt. of Tamil Nadu, Lakshmipuram Children's Club (Royapettah)
- Tata Consultancy Services
- 'Live to Lead' symposium conducted by Green Wealth Foundation and Science City
- Green Awareness Day in LV Prasad Studio
- Sharan (senior citizens group in Indira Nagar)
- And children's groups in various parts of the city.

Free the Tree Campaigns (FTCs)

For about 5 years now, this campaign is being conducted across the city. Volunteers walk alongside avenue trees, removing nails that mostly hold advertisement boards and with a more decentralised framework to work within, each area organizes FTCs at their own time, harnessing support from the community of that area.

FTCs have also been conducted for

- SRM Eswari Engineering College,
- Anna University
- SSN Engineering College
- for Scope International
- residents in different areas across the city.

They are often led by our enthusiastic volunteers including Tejas, Mohan Ram, Dhamodaran, Mr. Babu, Chithra, Ambika, Usha, Madhuri, Sreevardini and Deephika and areas such as Indira Nagar, Mandaveli, LB Road, Bazullah



Road, New Beach Road, Sardar Patel Road, Venkatnarayana Road, KK Nagar, Anna Nagar, West Mambalam, Guindy and Royapettah have been covered regularly.

Tree Walks

It has been 6 years now, and Nizhal is getting the city to keep walking and looking at trees! At least 2 walks every month on request from schools, colleges and corporates, apart from the monthly Nizhal walk for citizens, have been keeping us on our toes.

Last year alone, walks have been conducted in the following places:

- Jeeva Park (T. Nagar),
- Guindy National Park and Children's Park
- Perambur Sembium-Huzur Gardens
- Adyar Poonga
- Anna University
- Adambakkam
- Nanmangalam
- Panagal Park, T Nagar
- Thiru Vi Ka Park (Shenoy Nagar)
- IIT Madras, Adyar
- May Day Park, Chintadripet
- Nageswara Rao Park, T Nagar
- New Beach Road, Tiruvanmiyur
- Independence Day Park (Valluvar Kottam),
- Defence Colony
- Corporation Park (Indira Nagar)
- North Boag Road, T Nagar
- Boat Club area



- Sivan Park, KK Nagar

Forest Walks are conducted for children in the Nanmangalam Reserve Forest too!

Tireless participants ranging from children to senior citizens accompany one of our many knowledgeable resource persons, learning names, natural history and develop a relationship with their surrounds!

A workshop on 'How to lead tree walks' was also conducted by Mr. Harish.

Apart from citizen groups, walks were also conducted for members of

- Youth Red Cross, Anna University
- Mythri Arts Academy
- residents of SBI officers Colony (Adambakkam)
- Saraswathi Venkatraman School
- Priya Matriculation School
- for Prakriti Foundation
- Hindustan College of Engineering
- Lakshmipuram Children's Club
- IIT Madras' Saarang Fest
- for a senior citizens group, Sharan
- employees of TCS
- employees of Technip.

Tree walks have always had overwhelming responses from participants. These walks are highly interactive and hence, a lot of awareness is generated about trees, their importance particularly in urban areas, the problems that bring them down and how to overcome them. Nizhal is privileged to have Resource Persons like Arun, Chithra, Ambika Chandrasekhar and Latha Nathan to inspire walkers!



Advocacy

Moving forward with the proposed Tree Act and amendments to help protect trees in urban areas on both private and public lands, Nizhal has been pursuing the issue with the CM's Cell and also met with the PCCF to discuss the same. This Act if passed, will provide the much-needed legislative support particularly against indiscriminate felling of trees in urban areas, on public and private lands. We hope it will be a reality soon!

Inputs from Nizhal for Metro Rail

Nizhal's expert team provided scientific inputs on the ways of transplanting mature trees as part of the TVK Park CMRL take over for a station. Nizhal has also initiated a citizens group taking up active responsibility to monitor and participate in the tree watch process, near the Park.

Nizhal Office

An exclusive office for Nizhal was opened in Indira Nagar that provides an informal space for tree lovers, with a small library and net access, functional currently between 10am and 1pm. Our grateful thanks to Mrs. Padma Sivaramakrishnan, who has offered us this space.

Nizhal T Shirts : Special Free the Tree Campaign T-shirts were printed and the entire process was coordinated by our young members - thanks to Sai Dhamodaran, Yuvaraja, Sreevardhini, Madhuri, Tejas and Mohan Ram.

Nizhal Membership Enrolment Drive : Strategies for **membership IDs – for Annual / Life Members** and a detailed database are being drawn up. Nizhal is grateful to Managing Committee Member, Kasiraman, for taking charge of this process.



A BIG THANK YOU, TO EVERY MEMBER OF THE NIZHAL FAMILY.....and in the years to come, Nizhal looks forward to welcoming more and more members in this extended family which cares for trees and the environment!