

NGO, Pune forest department to start biodiversity walks in urban forest of Kondhwa

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PUNE: Environmental NGO Anandvan Foundation, in association with the Pune forest department, will conduct biodiversity walks in the urban forest of Anandvan 1, off NIBM Road in Kondhwa, from this month.

The NGO is building a track through the 33-acre urban forest to allow visitors go on a walk during rain.

BEAUTY OF THE WILD

Pic courtesy: Anandvan Foundation



This is just a glimpse of the variety of indigenous flora and fauna one can see at the Biodiversity Eco Trail at Anandvan 1, the 33-acre urban forest in Kondhwa



Praveen NR, the chief conservator of forest, along with Rahul Patil, deputy conservator of forest, and other officials from the Pune forest department, representatives from Anandvan Foundation, volunteers, local residents and corporate sponsors, were present for the launch the project Biodiversity Sensory Eco Trail on March 21.

Praveen Kumar, founder, Anandvan Foundation, said, "Participants can walk along the trail and see various types of indigenous rocks, stones, soil, and so on. We will also conduct environment training workshops (ETW) on the premises. Attendees will be provided information about how to care for saplings, building pits with coconut coir, using organic alternatives for pesticides, rainwater harvesting etc. So, more and more people can be involved in creating urban forests or help in preserving the environment in some way."

The walking track will include viewing about 500 varieties of native plants. Kumar said, "Currently, about 60 different types of birds and 30 species of butterflies have been recorded on the premises. We have planted trees such as jamun, hibiscus, rui,

lemon, wild jujube, etc., to attract more birds and bees. People can also see a variety of medicinal plants such as arjun, adulsa, gulwel, and others."

While the NGO has received funding for this project from corporate sponsors, the Pune forest department is providing assistance in terms of expertise for the setup, and other activities.

Rahul Patil, deputy conservator of forests, said, "The biodiversity sensory eco trail is a good example of public involvement in government projects. The Pune Forest Department will provide the services of biodiversity experts and any other assistance required for setting up the trail and hosting the walks."

Anandvan Foundation, with the help of local residents, students and volunteers, has developed two urban forests in the city and is currently working on developing a third one in Kondhwa.