

Nilgiri Tahr Day celebration by Tamil Nadu Forest Department propagates role of wild goat species as saviour of grasslands

Updated - October 08, 2025 02:31 am IST - COIMBATORE

THE HINDU BUREAU



Students displayed paintings at Government Arts College in Coimbatore to mark 'Nilgiri Tahr Day' organised by Project Nilgiri Tahr division of the Forest Department on October 7, 2025. | Photo Credit: M. Periasamy

The Forest Department on Tuesday apprised the student community in Coimbatore of the significance of Nilgiri Tahr Day by elaborating on the pivotal role played by the

species of wild goat in formation of rivers that feed reservoirs to store water for drinking purposes and agriculture.

The animals inhabiting the grasslands high above the shola forests strengthens the roots system by foraging, and, thereby, enables percolation of rainwater for formation of streams, rivulets and rivers from which water is harnessed in the reservoirs, K. Ganeshram, Assistant Director, Project Nilgiri Tahr, elucidated to the students of Government Arts College, Coimbatore, where an awareness programme encompassing a rally, signature campaign and display of drawings were conducted.

Named as the State Animal during 2023, the Nilgiri Tahr, mentioned in Sangam Literature, also maintains the pristine nature of grassland in high elevations by safeguarding it from invasive weeds, Mr. Ganeshram explained.

While interventions are possible for rejuvenation of Shola forests, conservation of Nilgiri Tahr is the only way out for safeguarding the grasslands, the lifeline for water availability to mankind, he pointed out.

Of the 1,303 Nilgiri Tahr enumerated at 177 locations across Tamil Nadu, the highest population of 334 was in the grasslands above Valparai Shola forests, the students were told.

The rally was taken out by about 100 NCC Cadets around the Race Course. A display of over 600 drawings on the wild goat species by students from across the State also figured among the highlights of Nilgiri Tahr Day. From only about 100 drawings last year, there has been a quantum jump in the number of drawings this time around, Mr. Ganeshram said.

Published - October 07, 2025 08:34 pm IST

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