

Forest dept proposes 2nd butterfly park at Mollem

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Panaji: At present, Goa has a lone state-run butterfly park at its Cotigao wildlife sanctuary. The state forest department has now proposed a second government-run butterfly park at Mollem with central funds provided under the compensatory afforestation fund management and planning authority (Campa).

Along with the butterfly park, development of a biodiversity park at Mollem has also been proposed, both of which will cost Rs 50 lakh.

These will serve as eco-tourism projects to create awareness and sensitise citizens on the importance of butterflies and other biodiversity to the ecosystem.

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Butterfly parks are carefully curated spaces by studying the host and nectar plants that attract each type of butterfly. If done right, one can spot 30 to 40 species of butterflies fluttering in a park within a couple of hours.

Usually rearing chambers for butterflies are also maintained at the park by staffers. The Cotigao butterfly park at Hatipawl in Canacona was established by the state in 2011 and covers an area of around 2,000sqm. More than 180 species have been recorded to be sighted here but the park has only around 3,500 visitors till date.



Mollem being a more central location can expect better footfalls.

With the Western Ghats running through Goa, the state sees a good butterfly diversity. The world's largest moth the Atlas moth, Asia's largest butterfly the Southern Birdwing are among some winged wonders that can be spotted in Goa and visitors will be treated to such sights at the Mollen butterfly park.

Besides the project at Mollem, the forest department has also proposed under CAMPA to upgrade the nursery at Campal into a 'hi-tech' one for production of quality planting material with components like sprinkler water supply system, vermi-composting, green house, inspection paths, etc.

An interpretation and briefing centre is also expected to come up at Campal for 'promotion, conservation, documentation of biological diversity and its display'. The centre will mostly help in conducting educational camps for the school students and other stakeholders.

Funds from Campa will also be invested in maintaining the mudflats at Goa's only bird sanctuary Dr Salim Ali Bird Sanctuary at Chorao.