

Proceedings of the seventh monthly seminar for research scholars

The seventh monthly seminar for research scholars held on 11.04.2019 and was presided over by the Director, IFGTB, Dr. Mohit Gera, IFS, in presence of Dr. S. Murugesan, GCR and the co-ordinators of the programme.

At the start of the programme, Mr. Rajesh Gopalan, Head, Extension thanked the student volunteers (JRFs/SRFs) for their support in the celebration of International Day of Forests (IDF). As a token of appreciation, the Director felicitated the five volunteers with a memento.



Volunteers being felicitated by the Director

Mrs. Divya, G., JRF, Bioprospecting Division, presented her work on the taxonomic study of orthoptera. She gave a detailed account of the Order Orthoptera, the role of the insects in the food chain and nutrient cycling by way of foraging and how they contribute to the functional equilibrium of ecosystems. She explained how insects groups act as ecological indicators to understand landscape and climate changes. Describing her experiences during the faunal exploration, she elaborated on the methodology and the difficulties encountered, which encouraged the team to develop a Mobile Application for identification of Orthoptera.



Ms. Divya explaining her work on Orthopterans

Mr. Amaladas talks on spatial mapping

Mr. Amaladas, P., SRF, Forest Ecology and Climate Change Division explained spatial mapping and modelling of wattle invasion in shola grassland ecosystem. He introduced the audience to the basic principles of satellite imagery and methods of collection, interpretation of data and its use in the management of different ecosystems. Highlighting the need to understand the functioning of the fragile Tropical Montane (Shola) Grassland ecosystem, he stated that conversion of this unique forest ecosystem into monocultures of wattle, pine and eucalyptus has resulted in decline of native flora and fauna. The study taken up by IFGTB looks into mapping the extent of wattle invasion employing remote sensing and GIS tools on satellite images obtained from NRSC, Hyderabad along with field surveys.

Mr. G. Gopal, JRF, Genetics and Tree Improvement Division talked about developing DUS descriptors in *Ailanthus excelsa*. Describing the species as an important tree for the arid and semi-arid regions of India, he explained how he could identify 39 morphological characters from 15 *A. excelsa* IFGTB clones and assess their stability across different locations in Tamil Nadu. He also demonstrated to the audience, how, using herbarium sheets, the unique characters have been preserved as a ready reckoner.



Mr. Gopal explains his research on descriptors



Display of herbarium sheets to explain the concept of descriptors

The Director encouraged the scholars to involve themselves in different activities of the Institute. He explained to the scholars a need for holistic development which would enable them to express their capabilities to the fullest. He also mentioned about the cultural evening to be held in the first fortnight of May, and encouraged scholars to participate actively in it. The meeting ended with the selection of three speakers for the next meet.



Director interacts with the participants