

#HEATWAVE-ALERT

Avoid eye stroke, dry eye syndrome or allergies in summer

As temperatures soar and days lengthen, your eyes may feel gritty, sore, and tired. Blurry vision, burning, and watering can indicate eye strain from heatwaves. The intense heat affects your eyes as well as your skin.



Heatwaves can harm eye health, causing dryness, irritation, and blurred vision. Intense heat and UV exposure can lead to sunburn of the eye and worsen dry eye syndrome. Dehydration reduces tear production, increasing dryness and discomfort. High pollen counts can trigger allergic reactions, making eyes red, itchy, and watery.

Extreme temperatures and UV radiation during heatwaves can lead to several eye conditions, including:

• Dry eye syndrome: High temperatures and dehydration reduce tear production, leading to dryness, irritation, and a gritty sensation.

• Eye allergies: Heatwaves often coincide with higher pollen counts, which can trigger allergic reactions, causing red, itchy, and watery eyes.

• Sty: A common issue, arising from heat exposure is the development of a sty, a small, painful, red lump, that typically emerges from the base of the eyelash or under the eyelid. This condition can cause discomfort and requires attention to reduce symptoms and prevent further complications.

Here are some effective tips to protect your eyes from the harsh rays and the above eye conditions:

Wear UV blocking sunglasses: Just like you protect your skin with sunscreen, shielding your eyes from harmful ultraviolet (UV) rays is also important. Prolonged exposure to UV rays can increase the risk of cataracts and macular degeneration. Invest in high-quality sunglasses that block 99-100 percent of both UVA and UVB rays. Polarised lenses are a bonus as they reduce glare, making it easier to see on bright days.

Practice eye hygiene: Wash your hands frequently. With increased outdoor activities during heatwaves, sweat and environmental pollutants can easily irritate your eyes. It can introduce bacteria and cause infections like conjunctivitis or styes. Wearing a hat or cap with a brim can also provide additional protection against the sun and reduce the amount of sweat and debris that reaches your eyes.

Take a screen-break: Staring at digital screens for extended periods can exacerbate eye strain, especially in the heat. Follow the 20-20-20 rule: 'every 20 minutes, look at something 20 feet away for at least 20 seconds.' This practice helps reduce eye strain and gives your eyes a chance to rest and recover.

Limit exposure to AC: While air conditioning provides much-needed relief



from the heat, it can also dry out the air and your eyes. Taking breaks from air-conditioned environments can also help maintain your eyes' natural moisture balance.

Watch what you eat: Your diet plays a significant role in eye health. Foods, rich in omega-3 fatty acids, vitamins C and E, and zinc can help reduce the risk of age-related vision problems and keep your eyes healthy. Include plenty of leafy greens, fish, nuts, and fruits into your meals to give your eyes the nutrients they need, to combat heatwave-induced stress.

The 'mudflats' of Rann of Kutch is a unique habitat home to some endemic species of India. Nowhere else in South Asia, bar greater and lesser flamingoes aggregate for breeding. The road plan though, could have directly killed the entire fragile ecosystem, in turn harming the flamingoes, wild ass and many other flora and fauna of the area. Conservationists were shocked and alarmed with the project. At another site, Nalsarovar in Gujarat, which for many avians around the world is a home away from home, where they spend the cold winter months. Designated as a 'wetland' of international importance, the lake, however, is turning into a living hell. Reason being the nets, sprawling across the wide lake, and cast to bring the carefree flight of the bird to an abrupt end. Forest department officials say that the number of nets, seized by them in the past few months, has reached an all-time high. Shockingly, almost 600 nets a month are left here to capture birds like the flamingo visiting the lake.

Practice eye hygiene: Wash your hands frequently. With increased outdoor activities during heatwaves, sweat and environmental pollutants can easily irritate your eyes. It can introduce bacteria and cause infections like conjunctivitis or styes. Wearing a hat or cap with a brim can also provide additional protection against the sun and reduce the amount of sweat and debris that reaches your eyes.

Take a screen-break: Staring at digital screens for extended periods can exacerbate eye strain, especially in the heat. Follow the 20-20-20 rule: 'every 20 minutes, look at something 20 feet away for at least 20 seconds.' This practice helps reduce eye strain and gives your eyes a chance to rest and recover.

Limit exposure to AC: While air conditioning provides much-needed relief

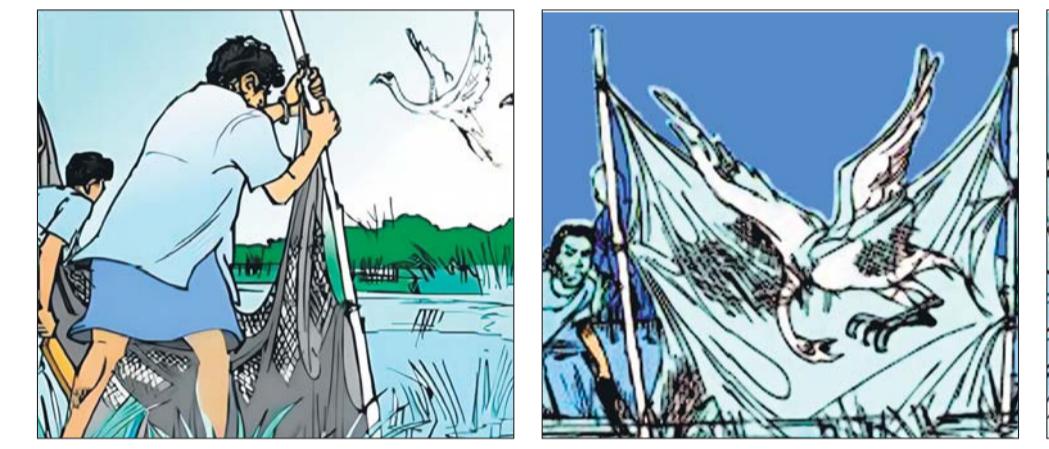


Either We Or Flamingoes

Time and again, environmental problems are neglected and avoided stating lack of infrastructure, facilities, dedicated workforce, etc. What we believe is that a problem, minor and easily resolvable at one point, only aggravates and becomes a big challenge, when it is not dealt with at the budding stage. It is high time that forest administration and deputation of work is done in a way that it actually puts an end to troubles and punishes the troublemakers. If, Nalsarovar, a site of national and international importance turns into a 'mortuary' instead of a haven for the birds, who will be answerable for the devastation?



Anjali Sharma
Senior journalist & wildlife enthusiast



Killer Webs

ing the winter months between September and February, when birds flying from Siberia and Central Europe flock the water body. Greater flamingoes are, undoubtedly, the most attractive of these winter visitors.

Sadly, the birds, that fly thousands of miles to get respite

from the chilly winter of their home country, face untimely and a brutal death on arrival to this sanctuary. Fishing nets, that seem harmless, stuck on two bamboo poles erected on the water body, are actually the death traps for the flying avian. Birds, swooping on the lake

accidentally get caught in them. Once the birds are caught, they are either killed or their wings and legs are broken. The officials say that they have sometimes caught local villagers in the process of tying the nets, but most of them get away saying that the nets are for fishing purposes only. The birds are most commonly caught for food. Admitting that there is staff crisis, a senior forest department official said that Nal Sarovar is so large, it is spread over two districts of Gujarat, Ahmedabad and Surendranagar. There is nothing that the forest guards can do against the villagers who poach with impunity.

1. The path of the fresh water has been restricted.

2. Because of the drought, the Government made a policy to stop the low water by making checked dams and anicutus for agriculture or to improve water table for water harvesting. Because of this, the water flow to the lake was completely stopped from the catchment area.

3. With the low rainfall, percolation became lesser and sub-soil became arid 18 to 24%.

4. When the lake is filled with rainwater, the fresh water percolation in the subsoil resulted in salinity gradient and conversion of rainwater into high-density brine takes place.

rajeshsharma1049@gmail.com



Flamingo Birds, Bishnoi village, near Jodhpur, Rajasthan, India.

A Mortuary

Time and again, environmental problems are neglected and avoided stating lack of infrastructure, facilities, dedicated workforce, etc. What we believe is that a problem, minor and easily resolvable at one point, only aggravates and becomes a big challenge,

when it is not dealt with at the budding stage. It is high time that forest administration and deputation of work is done in a way that it actually puts an end to troubles and punishes the troublemakers.

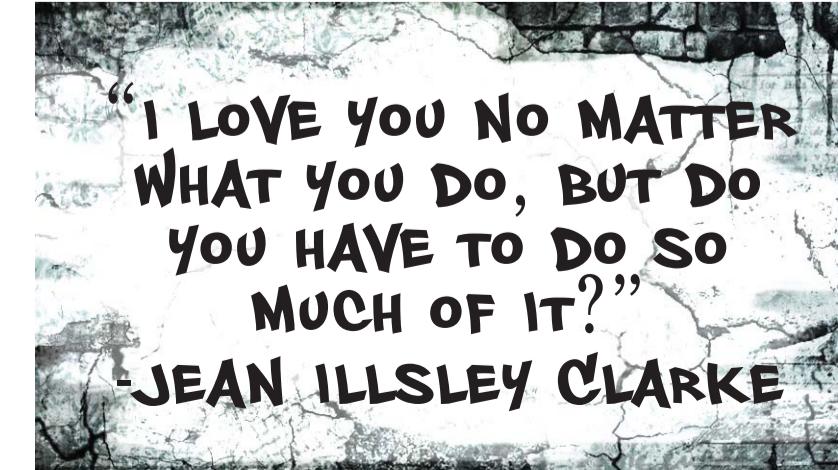
If, Nalsarovar, a site of national and international importance

turns into a 'mortuary' instead of a haven for the birds, who will be answerable for the devastation?

Coming back to our state and the problems at our end, the following factors have been attributed for the threatening of wetland eco-system of Sambhar lake,



THE WALL



BABY BLUES



Rick Kirkman & Jerry Scott

ZITS



Garden Wildlife Week

Garden Wildlife Week, observed in the first week of June, is a lively celebration of the natural world found in our gardens. This week encourages people to appreciate and protect the birds, insects, and plants in their backyards. The celebration highlights the vital role that these creatures play in keeping our environment healthy. The week promotes awareness about the importance of fostering wildlife-friendly habitats. Gardens can be havens for a variety of creatures. People are encouraged to create safe spaces by planting native flowers and installing bird feeders. This helps animals thrive in urban settings.



#AROUND-D-WORLD

World's Most Beautiful Castles

Romantic and somewhat mystical, places that spark our imagination and conjure visions of long-ago knights...

What is it about castles that fascinates so many people around the globe? A lot of the allure derives from the history and human drama, that played out within the walls, as well as the astonishing architecture that features on so many castles. But they're also romantic and somewhat mysterious places that spark our imagination and conjure visions of long-ago knights in shining armour and powerful war queens.



Pena Palace, Portugal

Another offspring of the Romantic Movement that swept 19th-century Europe, Pena crowns a hilltop near Sintra, Portugal. Commissioned by King Ferdinand II on the site of a ruined monastery, dedicated to the Virgin of Pena, the castle is a flamboyant blend of various historic styles including Gothic, Moorish and Renaissance details. The castle's vivid red-and-yellow colour pattern, and its flashy clock tower endow Pena with a much more playful air than the somber castles found elsewhere in Europe.

Palace of the Grand Master of the Knights of Rhodes, Greece

It's classic medieval castle towers above the island of Rhodes in the Aegean Sea. Originally built as a Byzantine citadel, it was reworked into its present Gothic form by the crusading Knights of St. John, when Rhodes served as the headquarters of their grandmaster. During the brief Italian occupation of the Dodecanese Islands, Benito Mussolini used the castle as a holiday home. Its permanent archaeological exhibitions feature relics from ancient Greece and the early Christian period.

Ksar of Ait-Ben-Haddou, Morocco

It's massive mudbrick structure, on the edge of the Sahara, has starred in more than a dozen movies and television shows, including 'Game of Thrones,' 'Gladiator' and 'The Man Who Would Be King.' The complex features a fortified lower town along the Asif Ounila river, where people still reside, and a partially ruined hilltop citadel. Berber-style guest houses provide accommodation for visitors to a kasbah, originally built in the 17th century as an overnight stop for caravans, travelling

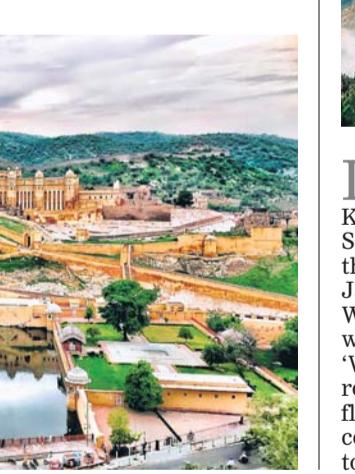
Kalmar Castle, Sweden

Founded in the waning years of the Viking Age, Kalmar Castle traces its roots to a 12th-century defensive tower, overlooking the Kalmar Strait on the Baltic Sea. Four centuries later, King Gustaf and his sons transformed Kalmar into a splendid royal residence that (with the help of renovation) looks much the same today as it did in 1592.

Amber Fortress, India

Erected in the early 17th century by the Mughal Emperor Shah Jahan, the Amber Fortress crowns a hilltop near Jaipur. Its stout walls reflected in the waters of Maota Lake. The palace complex, inside the walls, revolves around courtyards flanked by

examples of Rajput architecture like the 'Maharaja's Apartments, Suhk Niwas (Hall of Pleasure) and Diwan-i-Aam (Royal Audience Hall). Although it was once fashionable to ride an elephant up the steep entrance road, visitors are now advised to walk or take a 4x4 taxi.



Himeji Castle, Japan

Located about 30 minutes by bullet train, west of Osaka and Kobe, Himeji rises above the Inland Sea and is considered the epitome of the Japanese feudal castle. Both, a Japanese national treasure and World Heritage Site, the elegant whitewashed structure is also called 'White Heron Castle' because of its resemblance to a great bird taking flight. Completed in the early 17th century, Himeji offers daily guided tours in Japanese and English.