However, big trees in these areas have been observed to be occupied mostly by birds of prey such as *Milvus migrans lineatus* and *Circus aeruginosus.*

The peripheral shallow water areas have been lost forever due to the damming of the lake. Birds such as storks, pelicans and cranes have also disappeared. *Ephippiorhynchus asiaticus*, *Ciconia ciconia*, *Anastomus oscitans*, *Leptoptilos dubius*, *Grus monachus*, *Grus antigone* and *Pelecanus javanicus* were found abundantly in the study site before damming[2]. During our survey of the Takmu subdivision and its adjoining areas of the Loktak lake conducted from January 2000 to December 2002, none of the birds mentioned above were recorded. Only 41 individuals of *Pelecanus phillipensis* (which used to occur in thousands at the lake)[2] were recorded in the three years survey. The ecological changes due to damming have resulted in the disappearance of over 16 indigenous species of fish and 20 species of economically important aquatic plants[4].

Peripheral dyke fish-farming areas are newly developed ones. The most important feature of this habitat patch is its potential to replace the lost shallow water habitat patch. With suitable spots being developed, many of the lost birds are expected to revisit the lake. However, unlike the lost shallow-water habitat areas, these newly developed areas are not natural but are man-managed. Thus new conflicts between man and the birds for possession of resources (i.e. fishes in the ponds in this case) cannot be ruled out.

Thus the Loktak lake has varied habitat patches (habitat heterogeneity) supporting a rich biodiversity. However, much work is to be done on the distribution and taxonomy of flora and fauna of this relatively unexplored geographical area.

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NEWS

Borlaug award for Dr S. Nagarajan

Dr Subrahmaniam Nagarajan, Director, Indian Agricultural Research Institute, New Delhi has been selected for this year's Borlaug award (2004–2005). The award was instituted by Coromandel Fertilizers Ltd in honour of Dr Norman E. Borlaug, a well-known agricultural scientist, responsible for initiating the Green Revolution in India.

Nagarajan (born November 1945) is a distinguished scientist in the field of wheat pathology and wheat improvement.

He is currently the acting Chairperson of the Agriculture Biotechnology Committee; and Monitoring and Evaluation Committee (MEC) of the Department of Biotechnology on transgenic crops; Co-Chairman of RCGM and Member SAO(O) of the Department of Biotechnology; Member of the Indo-US working group on Biotechnology and Indo-French working group on Agriculture; Board of Management Member, National Dairy Research Institute and Indian Veterinary Research Institute. As Director of IARI, he developed the vision document and re-set the research agenda making a shift from production-oriented research to quality improvement, value addition and market-oriented research.

MEETING REPORTS

Recent advances in mycology*

Basic and applied aspects of mycological research are the major concerns in many universities and institutes of India. The National Seminar on Recent Advances in Mycology (NSRAM) conducted in collaboration with the 31st annual meeting of the Mycological Society of India (MSI) provided a forum to discuss the rapidly expanding areas of mycology. About 175 delegates belonging to 20 universities and 10 national institutions participated in the seminar.

Topics on eight broad areas covered in the seminar were: Fungal systematics and biodiversity; Fungi as food, fuel and fertilizer; Fungal interactions with plants and animals; Fungal pathogens of plants and animals; Fungal pesticides and biological control; Fungal bioactive metabolites, and biotechnology; Environmental mycology and Novel techniques and ideas in mycology.

The two-day deliberations consisted of three invited talks, 14 lead lectures, 29 oral and 47 poster presentations.

M. Abdul Rahiman (former Vice-Chancellor, Kannur University, Kerala), in his inaugural address, stressed on the importance of basic research in mycology that is paving the way for endless biotechnological applications in future. K. R. Sridhar (Organizing Secretary, NSRAM) and D. J. Bhat (Secretary, MSI) highlighted the origin, necessity and importance of NSRAM at the national and international level.

The president of MSI, B. P. R. Vittal, (Madras University), spoke on the 'progress and status of marine mycology in India'. He mentioned the investigations and contri-

*A report on the National Seminar on Recent Advances in Mycology, jointly organized by Mangalore University and Mycological Society of India and held at the Department of Biosciences, Mangalore University, Mangalagangotri, during 2–3 December 2004.