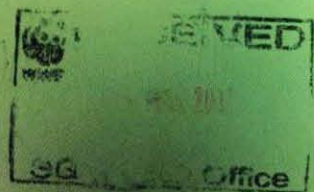
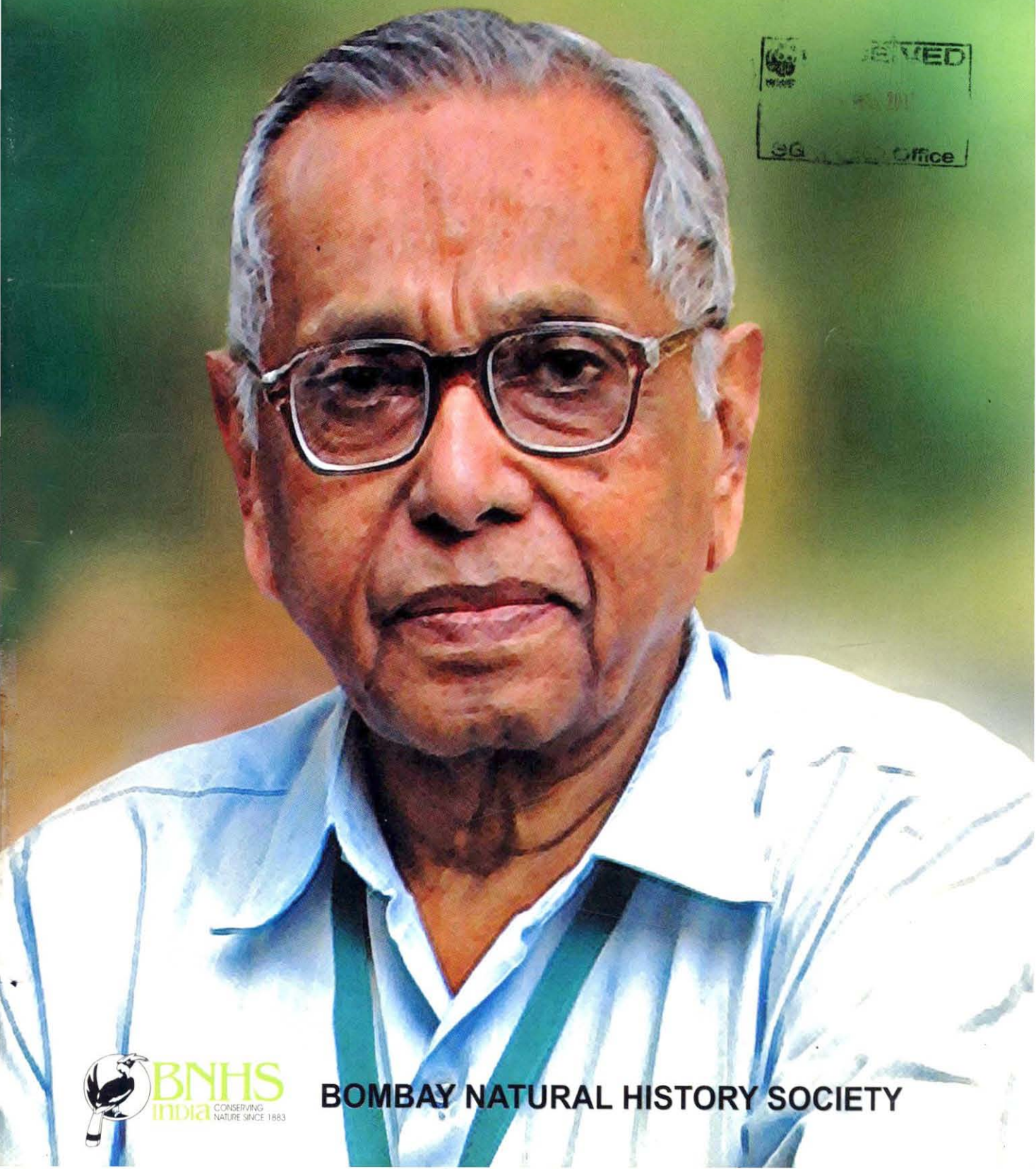


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Cover: J.C. Daniel

Photo: V. Gopi Naidu

Published and printed quarterly
by Dr. Ashok Kothari for the
Bombay Natural History Society,
Printed at Stusa Mudra Pvt. Ltd.,
Lower Parel, Mumbai.

Reg. No. RN 35749/79, ISSN 0441-2370

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Paying homage to a mentor

Not many people are lucky to have an uninterrupted career of almost 60 years in a country as dynamic as India, starting the career when the country had just emerged from 200 years of slavery. Mr. J.C. Daniel joined Bombay Natural History Society in 1950 as a Research Assistant and was witness to change, both in the BNHS and in India. He saw the horrendous early decades of poaching when hunting rules were openly flouted, once the British had left India, to the emergence of grave concern for wildlife protection in the late 1960s, culminating in the enactment of a strong Wildlife (Protection) Act in 1972. The 1970s also saw the emergence of Indian wildlife scientists, almost all of them patronized by Mr. Daniel, Dr. Salim Ali and the BNHS. By the end of the 1970s and early 1980s, wildlife research was well-established in India and fortunately many of those researchers are still around us, as you will see from this special issue of *Hornbill*. The apogee of Mr. Daniel's career was the international seminar on wildlife conservation in 1983, during the celebration of 100 years of BNHS. Many of us, now aging and a little more experienced, still remember the seminar where we met our wildlife heroes and got inspiration for developing our careers. The 1980s were a decade of change in BNHS – from a small membership organization with amateur researchers, it became a strong conservation organization, with professional and qualified researchers, still retaining its membership character, which is its unique quality. All these changes were spearheaded by the leadership of Mr. Daniel.

This special issue of *Hornbill* is our tribute to the man who changed our lives.

Asad R. Rahmani

We cordially thank all who have helped us collate information for this memorial issue on J.C. Daniel. We appreciate your support and co-operation.

Remembering Mr. J.C. Daniel

A.J.T. Johnsingh

Summer of 1971 in the dry plains of Tirunelveli district (Tamil Nadu) was extremely dry and hot, and with great enthusiasm we planned our usual summer trip to the nearby Western Ghats. The 'we' included my father, two of my brothers and two of my friends. Our planned destination was Chinna Manjolai Estate at 3,000 ft on the way to Neterikal forest bungalow (4,500 ft). Chinna Manjolai Estate in Thirukurugudi Range (now part of Kalakad-Mundanthurai Tiger Reserve) was a cardamom and coffee estate managed by a team of nearly ten people staying there. Since the manager of the estate was known to us we were confident that there would be sufficient place for our team of six people to stay along with the estate workers.

On the appointed day in May we travelled by bus from Nanguneri (panchayat town of Tirunelveli district), where we were living, to Thirukurugudi and then walked 10 km to Navval kidai (*navval* - *Syzygium cumini* (jamun) trees, *kidai* - cattle camp) carrying all our provisions for our five day trip in the forest. Navval kidai lay almost half-way between the forest boundary and the estate and we halted there for the night, making camp on a flat rock below a tamarind tree. There were no cattle in the camp, possibly having gone up the mountains to graze. On the path from the boundary to Navval kidai there were very few signs of Sambar (*Rusa unicolor*), Porcupine (*Hystrix indica*) and Mouse-deer (*Moschiola meminna*). We had built a roaring fire near the rock, by which we dried ourselves between the intermittent drizzles that came down all night. The heavily poached forest was ominously silent but for the calls of crickets, nightjar and owls.

The next morning we embarked on a leisurely, but rather stiff climb to the estate. Midway we were overtaken by two forest guards. They were hurrying under orders to reach the Neterikal bungalow in double quick time because two 'foreigners' were expected to arrive there by lunch time. From where they passed us, they still had a tough walk of nearly ten kilometres to the Neterikal bungalow. I remember encountering a group of Nilgiri Langur (*Trachypithecus (Kasi) johnii*), several Indian Giant Squirrel (*Ratufa indica*) and the common Grey Junglefowl (*Gallus sonneratii*) on the way to the estate.

After spending a night at the estate, the next day we made a day trip to Neteri to see the bungalow and the Neteri dam. On our way up to Neteri, we met the two forest guards we had met the previous day, this time on their way back. They said that the foreigners were just coming down behind them. A bit further, we finally met the 'foreigners' - Mr. J.C. Daniel and Mr. Romulus Whitaker. My first memory of Mr. Daniel is of a well-built person, short in stature and wearing thick spectacles.

He was in shorts, wearing a cap and a full-sleeve shirt. We stopped and chatted for sometime and I came to know that he was from the Bombay Natural History Society, where he was serving as the Curator. He said he had come looking for Lion-tailed Macaque (*Macaca silenus*) and Mr. Whitaker - Rom to those who know him - said his mission was to look for King Cobra (*Ophiophagus hannah*). They had trekked from Manjolai Estate to Sengaltheri (12 km) where they had spent a night in the forest bungalow and had trekked to Neteri (14 km) through one of the last remaining large patches of evergreen forest in the country.

Mr. Daniel said their night stay at the Neteri bungalow, then intact and with glass windows, easy-chairs and a fire place, had been a bit cold. I asked Rom whether he had any luck with King Cobra and he said although he was not lucky with King Cobra he did manage to catch a flying snake (*Chrysopelea ornata*), one of the beautiful snakes in the country, as its scientific name aptly indicates. He pulled out the snake from one of the cloth bags he was carrying and explained that the snake was capable of gliding. To quote Mr. Daniel's words from his book THE BOOK OF INDIAN REPTILES (1983) "in gliding, the snake after launching, straightens itself rigidly and hollows the belly between the ridges on the ventrals, thus producing a mechanical effect impeding the action of gravity, buoying up the body and retarding the speed of descent. The distance covered is often considerable". When Mr. Daniel learnt that I was an M.Sc. (Zoology) graduate from Madras Christian College, where he himself had studied, and was teaching in the Ayya Nadar Janaki Ammal College, Sivakasi, he said that I should convert my interest in the forests and mountains into studying plants and animals. Before leaving Mr. Daniel gave me his visiting card and suggested that I should be in touch with him and keep my interest in nature alive.

Soon after, we took our leave and walked rapidly to the Neteri bungalow, which was in the midst of a prosperous tea plantation managed by the staff of the Chinna Manjolai Estate. We then made our way to the dam. We went past a wallow on the path where ripples in the turbid water indicated that a large animal either a wild pig or a Sambar had just left. At the dam we were surprised to meet a group of girls with two foreign woman missionaries from Naraikadu a place for retreat managed by the missionaries of the Dhonavur Fellowship, founded by the famous Irish missionary Miss Amy Carmichael in the early 1900s. The 40 acre Naraikadu (*Narai* - grey, *kadu* - jungle) property was acquired by Amy Carmichael in 1918, and is located at an elevation of 2,500-3,300 feet in the Thirukurugudi Range. The people of the Fellowship

were extremely interested in nature and with the unfailing support of the Forest Department have protected Naraikadu for all these years. The group of girls and their matrons that day should have walked 20 km from Naraikadu to Neteri dam via Vengai Naickan anicut (built in 1060 AD by the Pandiya kings to prevent the flow of water into the Chera kingdom, the chieftain whose name is given to the anicut is called Vengai which in Tamil means tiger) and back to Naraikadu. In many stretches in this uninhabited habitat they, unaccompanied by an armed guard, should have walked through dense reed (*Ochlandra travancorica*) patches frequented by gaur (*Bos frontalis*) and Elephant (*Elephas maximus*). Other potentially dangerous animals in this stretch were King Cobra (*Ophiophagus hannah*), Sloth Bear (*Melursus ursinus*) and Tiger (*Panthera tigris*). Their courage and understanding of the wilderness were admirable.

Months passed and I remained in regular touch with Mr. Daniel through letters. His replies were always prompt, but I was struck by their brevity. Then one day towards the beginning of 1973, he wrote to me asking if I would be interested to work with American Professor Dr. Michael Fox, a canid behaviourist who wanted to study Dholes, i.e. Wild Dogs (*Cuon alpinus*) in the Mudumalai area. I wrote back saying I was willing provided my college gave me the required permission. Mr. Daniel wrote a letter to Professor S. Krishnaswamy at the Madurai Kamaraj University, the parent University of my college, and he in turn wrote to my college authorities to allow me the leave. That is how I eventually went on three months study leave, with loss of pay, to study dholes in the Sigur area of Mudumalai.

For the 3 months, Dr. Fox and I made our base at Cheetal Walk, the now well-known weekend jungle home of the late E.R.C. Davidar, now named as Jungle Trail, on the bank of the Sigur river. Davidar's *Cheetal Walk*, an extremely readable book, records the ecological changes in one of the most wildlife-rich areas of the Subcontinent, analyzes the impact of modernization on the inhabitants of the Nilgiris, both people and animals, and sheds light on the conservation efforts of one of the oldest Indian voluntary organizations, the Nilgiri Wildlife Association. Dr. Fox made another visit to Sigur for two months (January-February) in 1975 and Mr. Daniel again came to my help writing to Professor Krishnaswamy and getting me my permission and leave from the college.

Soon after this Mr. Daniel suggested that I should study dholes for my Ph.D. The study area he suggested was Bandipur Tiger Reserve and he was right in pointing out that the area around Bandipur is much more open than other areas in the Lower Nilgiri Plateau and therefore, would be a suitable site for studying a diurnal, coursing predator like the dhole. Another compelling reason for choosing Bandipur as the study site was the convenience of the field station maintained by

Dr. Madhav Gadgil of the Indian Institute of Science who was kind enough to provide me a place there. With the help of Mrs. Dilnavaz Variava, who was then in-charge of WWF-India field programs, Mr. Daniel arranged substantial amount of funding for my field work. Mr. Zafar Futehally, Mr. M.A. Parthasarathy and Mrs. Variava helped me to get permission for field work in Bandipur from the Karnataka Forest Department. Dr. M.K. Ranjitsinh also provided some funding to complete my field work and Dr. Gadgil provided necessary funding and a place at the Centre for Theoretical Studies, Indian Institute of Science where I could write my thesis. Mr. Daniel, Dr. Gadgil and Dr. Fox read through my thesis, chapter by chapter, hand-written.

I had gone to Sigur forests and Bandipur with practically no training in wildlife and I found THE DEER AND THE TIGER by Dr. George B. Schaller an extremely valuable tutor in teaching me the basics of wildlife studies. In Sigur forests, I learnt to walk alone in the elephant forests and this expertise became handy and was immensely valuable in carefully and safely walking hundreds of kilometres in the Bandipur forests, which as part of its large elephant population then had numerous massive tuskers.

In 1980, I had the opportunity, as arranged by late Dr. John F. Eisenberg whom I had taken around in Bandipur to see wildlife, to visit and spend 18 months at the Conservation Research Center, Front Royal – a facility owned by the Smithsonian Institution. My training there was under Dr. John Seidensticker, an authority on tigers, who continues to be my friend and mentor. When I returned to India in 1981, Mr. Daniel came to my help again. He gave me a job as Project Scientist on the BNHS Elephant Project, which provided me opportunity to understand the elephant habitat south of Coorg, visit Arunachal Pradesh, Rajaji National Park and Corbett Tiger Reserve. He also suggested that I should explore the possibility of joining the newly established Wildlife Institute of India at Dehradun. Eventually I joined the Institute in March 1985, where my interaction with Mr. Daniel continued in conservation field research, particularly in the elephant project I was conducting in Rajaji National Park.

Mr. Daniel was a man of few words and his English was flawless. His knowledge of amphibians, reptiles, birds, and mammals was immense. The admirable quality that Mr. Daniel had, one which every senior conservationist in the country should aspire to have, was his dedication to encourage and promote youngsters in the field of conservation. Many have benefited from his steadfast generosity and I would say without hesitation that I am one among them. ♣

Dr. A.J.T. Johnsingh is with Nature Conservation Foundation, Mysore and WWF-India.

Time spent learning from a Scientist, Naturalist, and Conservationist

Ajay A. Desai

When I first saw him it was at the interview for my job in Bombay Natural History Society; he looked serious but had a welcome smile when my answers were to his and the boards' liking. That was back in 1983, I do not remember much from that interview because I was terrified that Dr. Sálím Ali would be on the interview board. However, I came away with a nice feeling, as they were all very nice and encouraging, intent on knowing what I knew rather than what I did not know. It was, however, only in 1984 that I started interacting with him on a regular basis

when he took over the BNHS Elephant Project, when Dr. Johnsingh left to join the Wildlife Institute of India. During the initial phase it was clear to us (my colleagues Sivaganesan and Ramesh, and me) that he was very serious person, but was also a very just and nice person, completely committed to wildlife science and conservation. This was a phase when the wildlife scene was changing in India, where science and research were starting to make headway into the conservation field. Prior to this it was primarily the naturalists and ex-hunters who were the driving force behind the conservation

scene and they were the ones who actually laid the foundation for us to follow. BNHS was at the helm (so to say) of this shift, with major research projects on wildlife on diverse range of subjects and locations. I see all this in hindsight and did not fully appreciate it then or see how my seniors were making the transit. It is in this context that I learned to respect him even more; he spanned the two eras effortlessly and was proficient in both eras. He did have an advantage in that, he was always a scientist, but the transit was challenging to say the least.

On the funny side I remember watching from the sidelines the serious debates about getting a computer for BNHS (was it essential or not?). Yes for BNHS not for a project, not for an individual; and that too, a two floppy drive (8" disk!) desktop with memory and storage in KB (kilobyte) not MB (megabyte), GB (gigabyte) or TB (terabyte).

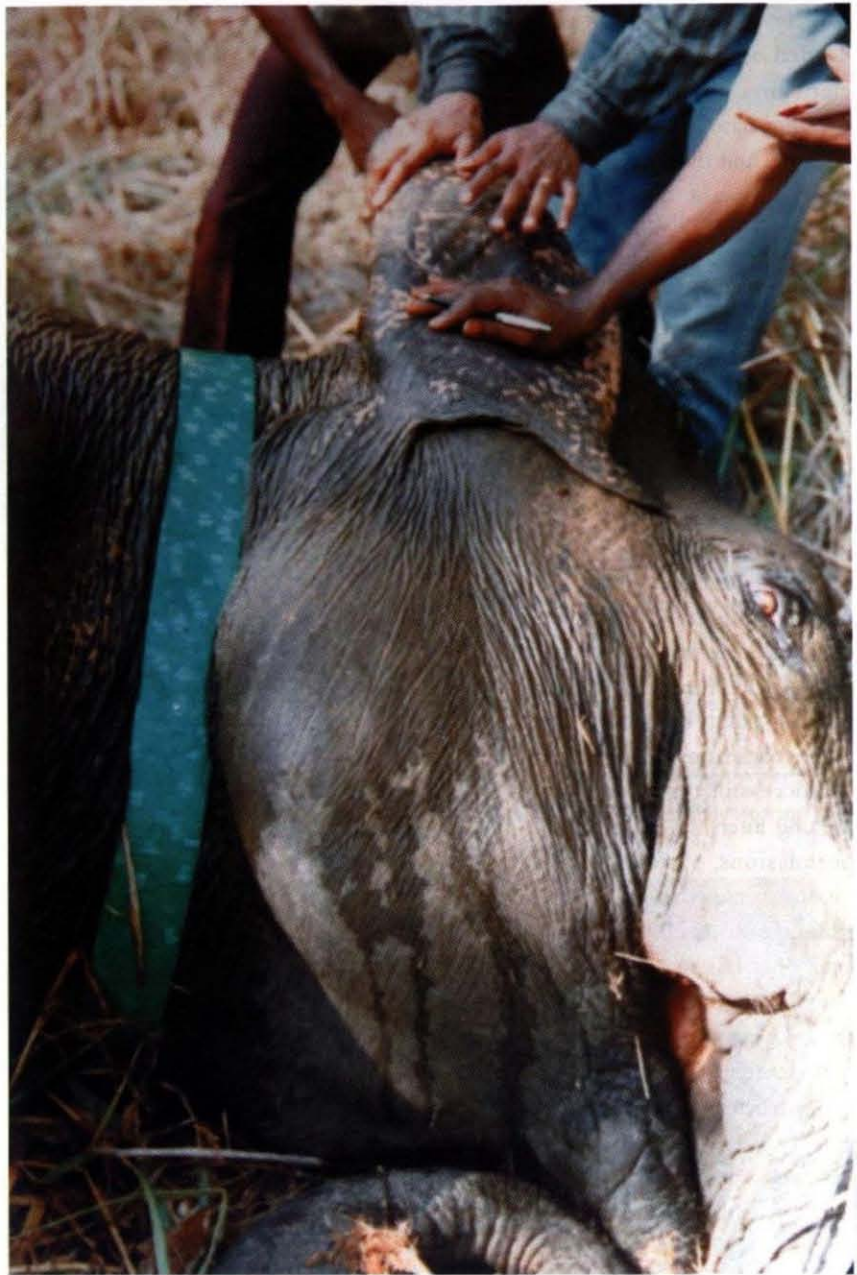


J.C. Daniel (centre) at Mudumalai Wildlife Sanctuary during radio collaring operations, 1987

Source: AJAYA, DESAI

But it is in the context of the elephant project that I learned much from him. His role in running the elephant project was critical to its success and he moulded us to a very practical way of thinking and working. As a scientist he was committed to scientific methods and quality data, there was no compromise on that. Although he kept a constant watch over us he was never overbearing or micro managing. Having realized that we were well-trained by Dr. Johnsingh in field methods and had clear plans for the achieving the goals of the elephant project he would leave it to us to deliver in the field. He recognized knowledge and skills and would ask us (including our trackers and drivers) to do assessments of various crisis situations (common in elephant conservation) in various parts of the country. This ability to trust and delegate work (where justified) without micro-managing showed his skills as a manager. I remember him saying that as a manager you need to be like the oil in the gearbox, you need not be part of the mechanism (the gears are), but you need to be the oil in the gearbox that allows the smooth functioning of different gears to achieve a common goal.

Regarding science I remember his involvement in various debates on estimating elephant populations. Back then in the 1980s it was a major and hotly debated issue both in Asia and Africa. He would often say, don't just tell me there are 158.3 (± 17.8) elephants; tell me what to do about it! He was frustrated with the obsession some people had with numbers and then not using them for any real purpose. He was clear that science was essential for conservation, but said that science was not an end in itself and it needs to provide pragmatic answers to problems where possible. It is in this context that as a young researcher I remember explaining to him the need to use some sort of marking (coloured collars) to identify individual elephants. Radio collars were not available to us then, but coloured collars would allow



Source: AJAY A. DESAI

Radio collaring the *makhna* nicknamed 'Admiral'

increase in data because others would be able to identify these animals and report their locations to us. The objective was to give wildlife managers a better understanding of elephant management requirements based on their ranging. He readily agreed once he saw how little data had been gathered on elephant ranging by earlier attempts. So in 1987, we embarked on immobilizing and collaring two elephants in Mudumalai Wildlife Sanctuary (now a Tiger Reserve) in Tamil Nadu. This was the first such operation

in India and the experiences learned from this experiment allowed Karnataka (they actively participated in the operation) to start using this technique to capture and translocate problem elephants. Further down the line data analysis showed that we still had gaps in our understanding about ranging behaviour and questions that could not be fully answered (with hard data). He saw the problem and readily agreed to use radio collars to upgrade the quality of data. This was not just a nod of the head, yes. I had to

specify exact questions that needed answers and list the elephants selected for the collaring, based on our past data on them and their suitability to answer specific questions we were posing. The outcome was the insights we got into elephant behaviour and the impact that are being felt even today as we try to implement the findings. Surprisingly 20 years on, the findings of that study still remain unique and have not been completely replicated elsewhere.

During the collaring operations he made sure he was present in the field for all the operations. He was there with us in the field from 05:30 in the morning till late afternoon when we got back from the operations (unsuccessful on many days). Getting interstate cooperation, permissions, various people involved, etc. was easy and I

realized how much he was respected by everyone. His name opened so many doors for us during that period. During those operations his support and understanding were very important to us. One particular elephant, a large 10 foot 4 inch tall *makhna*, which was known to have killed people and had also attacked us in the field, was our target. After three unsuccessful days of trying to immobilize it under very dangerous conditions, my trackers and I became stressed. On the fourth morning I realized my trackers nerves were shot and so were mine. We were bound to make a serious mistake if we continued. I walked up to him and told him our nerves were gone and we could not carry on under these conditions. His response was simple "I fully understand, I am surprised you all held on for three days, let's call off the operation". To him the right choice was critical, it did not matter who had come from where or how much was spent on the operation, to him it was the safety of his field team that came first. We did



Movements of this collared *makhna* were tracked during the survey

collar a female the same day; that operation was a cake walk for my trackers and me, in fact the Educational Media Research Centre team from Pune University got the whole operation on video in a virtual stage managed setup, which was broadcast on Doordarshan.

Months later the same *makhna* moved to the dry thorn forest, which was to our advantage and we again embarked on trying to collar it. Mr. Daniel, as usual was there with us, and it was an adventurous day with many curious events but ending with the eventual collaring of the *makhna*. He suggested we name it 'Admiral' in honour of Admiral Awati (who was there with us during that operation). However my trackers, other students and virtually everyone involved in the operation mistook it for another elephant from that area and I was the only one insisting that it was the same animal we had attempted to collar earlier. He never questioned me about this in public. But on the way back after collaring when we were alone, he

was riding one of the *koonkies* and I was walking alongside, he asked me "Are you sure it is the same elephant? All the others think it is different". I said I did and that the elephant would prove them wrong in six months by going to the very same places it was in during earlier operation and also doing exactly what it was doing then (raiding crops and feeding on specific bamboo patches). Right enough, the elephant did exactly that. On one of his later trips to Mudumalai, Dr. Krishnamurthy told me that during a meeting with Forest Department staff and some other people, someone told him that I was right about the *makhna* to which he apparently replied "I know, the elephants have shown me he is right".

His interactions with people at every level, from senior government officers to trackers, his faith and belief in them, his

ability to recognize and encourage talent, and his genuine love for field people and nature made him both loved and respected. I recently met a Range Officer who was present during the collaring operation, we were reminiscing about the old days and he remembered Mr. Daniel and said "... he was a real gentleman, he never interfered with your operation, but fully supported it and he interacted with all of us and recognized everyone's contribution, you don't see people like him anymore". I and my wife will always remember him trying to get our little two year old son interested in tortoises with hilarious results. He was curious about knowing nature and admired its endless beauty; he tried to instil that in others. He touched one and all and that is why I feel we will miss him and can only hope that others will learn from him and continue with the good work. 🍀

Mr. Ajay A. Desai is Co-Chair, IUCN/SSC Asian Elephant Specialist Group.

J.C. Daniel

Ashok S. Kothari

I met Mr. Daniel nearly 35 years ago at Kanchad forest near Wada in Thane district. It was here that I witnessed his leadership qualities for the first time. When my interview on mass burning of trees in Bhadra forest appeared in *The Indian Express* nearly three decades ago, the Mysore Forest Department complained against me. Dr. Nanavati, then Hon. Secretary, and Mr. Daniel called me to Hornbill House and told me that I had spoiled the Society's relations with the Mysore Forest Department, and Mr. Daniel had asked the Mysore Forest Department to take necessary steps against me. I was upset at that time. But ultimately when he realised that I had, to some extent, helped in preventing further damage to

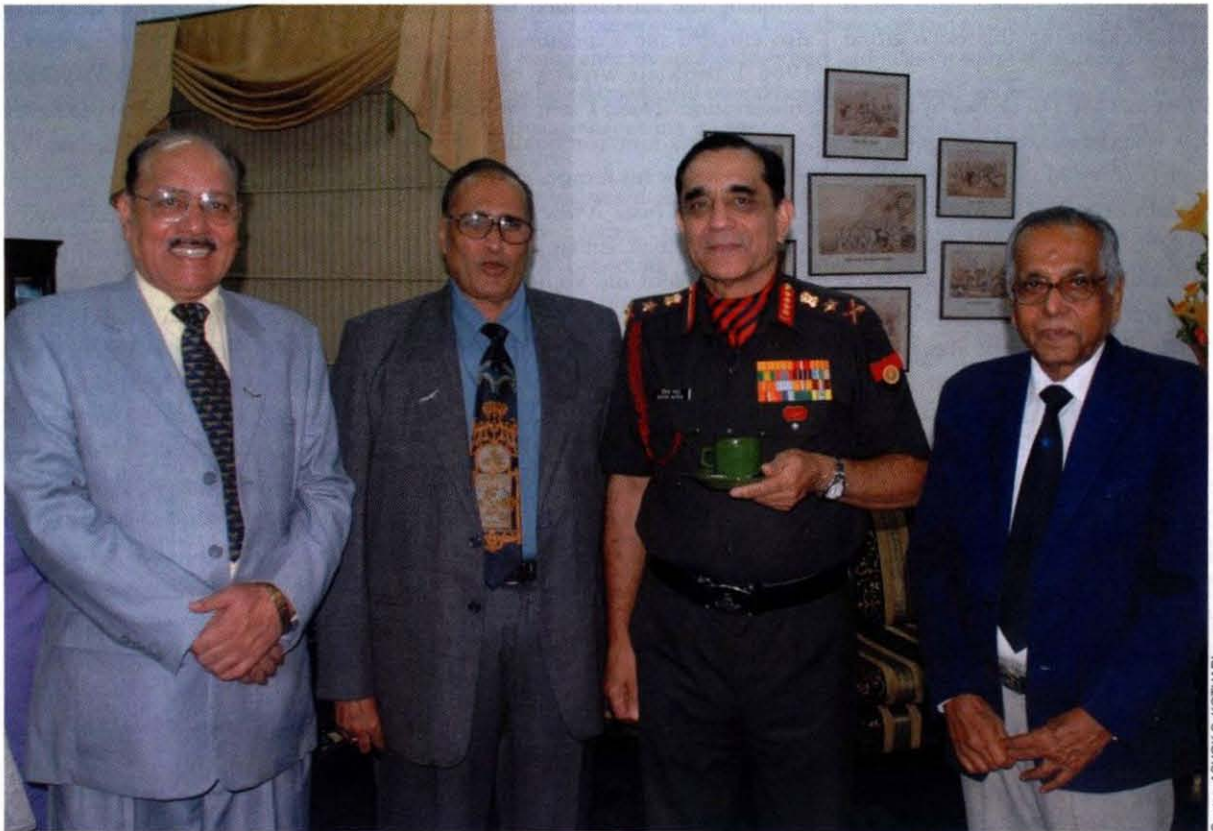
the forest he told me that I had done the correct thing. He believed in strict discipline and always strictly followed rules laid down in the Society's constitution.

He had a brave heart. Though he was in the terminal phase of cancer he did not allow his agony to appear on his face. He continued to enquire about the Society till the last day. On the evening when we met him in the hospital, hardly five hours before his death he welcomed us with his usual smile and enquired about my health, as he knew about my viral fever and also enquired about the backache of Mr. Mathews, the Administrative Officer.

He was a kind-hearted man, who helped many financially. Many young

scientists were groomed by him. The well-being of the staff members was always on his mind. When he resigned I was asked to become the Secretary in his place, it was a difficult decision and I sought his advice; he asked me to take up the post. Afterwards, he proved a good friend, philosopher and guide, and advised me on many issues and always came to meet me at the Society's office and always guided and advised me despite his delicate health. I shall always miss him and his guidance. BNHS will never get a dedicated person like Daniel *saab* again. ❀

Dr. Ashok S. Kothari is currently Honorary Secretary of the BNHS.



(L-R): with Dr. Asad R. Rahmani, Director, Dr. Ashok S. Kothari, Hon. Secretary, BNHS, and General Deepak Kapoor, Chief of the Army Staff – a happy moment captured just after the release of the *NATURAL HISTORY AND THE INDIAN ARMY*

Source: ASHOK S. KOTHARI

A Gentleman Naturalist

Lt. Gen. Baljit Singh (Retd.)

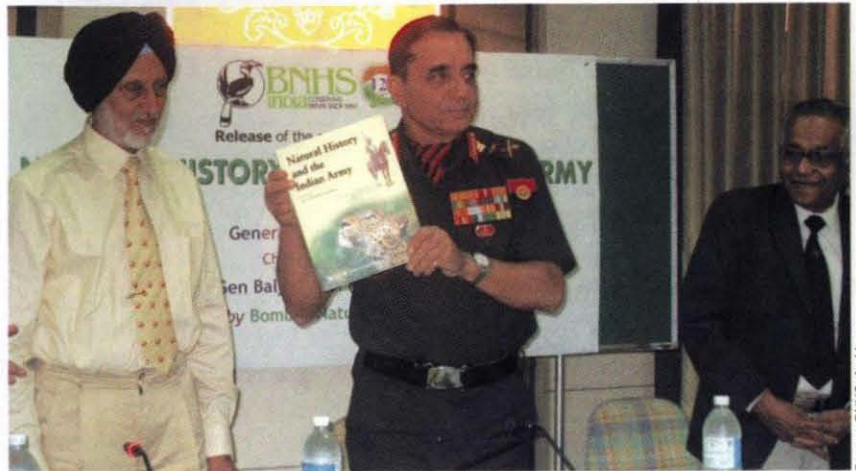
*"We all owe God a Death,
So let it go which way it will.
He who dies today,
Is quit for the morrow."*

— Ernest Hemingway

A good man has passed away, leaving a legacy of exceptional work ethic; unimpeachable integrity, humility unlimited and dogged perseverance. His life was a series of bench-marks of professional excellence, and his *raison d'être* lay in presenting complex environmental issues in a manner easily understood by laymen, which is best exemplified by his slim booklet on extinction. Little wonder that the Bombay University (*now* Mumbai University) should have chosen him as a Guide, for aspirants of Ph.D. in the Natural Sciences, even though he himself was not a doctorate-holder! Now that is the true measure of this born-gifted Naturalist.

I first met Mr. J.C. Daniel by chance in 1959, when he was the Curator of The Natural History Museum, Darjeeling. The Indian Army had chosen to expose young officers to mountaineering under Mr. Tenzing both for sport and as a possible professional tool for soldiering in the high Himalayas. The approach to the training area base camp at Zongri (13,000 ft), in west Sikkim, involved a trek of seven days through rich, sub-alpine forests teeming with birds and butterflies. And I thought that the museum might arm me with clues on field identification of flora and fauna. And the ever so gentle and unassuming Mr. Daniel promptly launched me on a new, life-long and fulfilling hobby.

My next encounter with him in 1964 was also by chance. I had read somewhere that of the dozen skins of the long extinct Pink-headed Duck (*Rhodonessa caryophyllacea*) scattered the world-over a few were in the Collection of the Bombay Natural History Society,



(From Left) With Lt. Gen. Baljit Singh (Retd.) and Chief of the Army Staff, General Deepak Kapoor at the release of the book titled *NATURAL HISTORY AND THE INDIAN ARMY* published by BNHS, at the United Service Institution, New Delhi, on October 5, 2009

Mumbai (BNHS). So I made a day trip from Deolali to the BNHS and, once again, the genial Mr. Daniel (now the Curator of the BNHS) showed me the entire collection (started in 1890), including the Pink-headed Duck, and also enrolled me a member! When in 1966 I took to writing on nature conservation issues, I sent the draft of an article to him for quality check. Encouraged by his response, I mailed it to *The Times of India*. A few months later it appeared in their Sunday Magazine and Mr. Daniel sent me a congratulatory letter!

Over time, when I stumbled upon and reported the colossal congregation of the migratory Demoiselle Cranes (*Grus virgo*) at Kheechan (Rajasthan), Mr. Daniel promptly sent a functionary of the BNHS to the site to make the first field report on what today counts among the Great Crane shows in the world. It was at this stage (1970s) that he and I talked aloud of institutionalizing the Indian Army – BNHS Nature Conservation partnership. The first positive manifestation of these exchanges led to the creation of the BNHS' Armed Forces Nature Conservation Cell. Axiomatically, what followed was an abiding partnership in the conservation efforts of the Black-necked Crane (*Grus nigricollis*) and the Snow

Leopard (*Uncia uncia*) in the Ladakh region. The Indian Army has since persevered with these initiatives, albeit proactively even though maintaining a low key profile, always. Concomitantly, the Environment Education and Awareness seminars were to become an annual fixture on the Army's training calendar, and in 1988 JC happily acceded to my request, dispatching the late Hussain Sahib, Dr. Meena Haribal and Dr. Vibhu Prakash for providing a week long exposure to my officers, jawans, and their families at Kota. And JC had moments of satisfaction that the seed did sprout, but both of us conceded that it is far from becoming a Banyan Tree, yet. This venture was to become the lynchpin of our friendship, which graduated to the first-name status only in 2004! So imagine my joy when in 2008 JC invited me to co-author the book *NATURAL HISTORY AND THE INDIAN ARMY*. And what a privilege to interact, on almost daily basis, with a man in whose presence I always emerged both humbled and every time invariably a more informed person.

When the *Sanctuary Asia* magazine instituted the 'Conservationist of the Year' award, it gave my wife and me immense pleasure on being informed by Mrs. Bittu Sehgal that our nominee (JC) unanimously emerged the inaugural winner! This news encouraged me to

respond to a subsequent notice in the newspapers to propose JC for the annual Priyadarshani Indira Gandhi Paryavaran Award, which too he won!! But JC would remain the quintessential man who would not allow recognition of any kind to wash over his inherent good manners and his inimical innocent charms.

Mr. Daniel was the most "complete" naturalist as he was totally at home with birds, mammals, reptiles, amphibians and the evolutionary science of the Universe. This becomes at once evident from the books he authored: A CENTURY OF NATURAL HISTORY (1983), A WEEK WITH ELEPHANTS (1995), THE BOOK OF INDIAN BIRDS (Revised & Enlarged) 1996, THE LEOPARD IN INDIA (1996), EXTINCTION (1997), THE TIGER IN INDIA (1999), THE BOOK OF INDIAN REPTILES AND AMPHIBIANS (2001), CASSANDRA OF CONSERVATION (2002), PETRONIA: FIFTY YEARS OF ORNITHOLOGY IN INDIA (2003) and BIRDS OF THE INDIAN SUBCONTINENT: A FIELD GUIDE (2011)!

As I hold the copy of his last book, a field guide to India's 1,251 species of birds, my thoughts go way back to 491 BC when Pheidippides ran non-stop 41 km to inform his anxiety-ridden countrymen of Sparta's victory over Greece; and mission accomplished, he collapsed and passed away. In much the same vein JC's last book was released just days before cancer laid him low. JC has left a subtle message through the text accompanying the painting of the Narcondam Hornbill on page 189 of the book, for all of us to stand up for India's birds (wildlife) before it is too late. To heed that plea in totality would be the true memorial to JC. The last surviving colleague of the late Sálím Ali, is also the last to join him in *Valhalla* (a place of abode in Norse mythology, for warriors who die in combat), for "One short sleep past, we awake eternally".

Lt. Gen. Baljit Singh (Retd.) is an active promoter of nature conservation, particularly within and by the Armed Forces, over the last 35 years.

R.I.P Jivanayakam Cyril Daniel

By Bittu Sahgal

As with most of the stalwarts of the Bombay Natural History Society (BNHS), when I approached J.C. Daniel with my hare-brained idea of starting a full-colour, wildlife magazine way back in 1980, he gave me a polite hearing, proffered advice about how difficult the task would be and then politely waited for me to finish the cup of sweet tea and biscuits he had ordered for me before suggesting that he needed to return to his pile of papers. "Just be sure you have enough cash available," he cautioned, adding that "popular wildlife writing was difficult enough to publish in black and white and colour might just be asking for too much." I left his room, quieter than when I entered, and on an impulse he walked me to the stairs, genuinely anxious that a young and inexperienced man's enthusiasm was getting ahead of him. "You must always feel free to seek my help," he called out to me as I looked up at him from half-a-floor down and nodded.

Assailed by doubt, I left Hornbill House, wondering what I had let myself in for and whether I would end up pauperizing myself for what everyone felt was a 'worthy' but lost cause (publishing a magazine, not protecting wildlife!). In the event, JC was among those such as Dr. Sálím Ali and R.E. Hawkins (Jim Corbett's editor), who generously gave of their time and knowledge, holding *Sanctuary's* hand through the decades.

The BNHS soon became my second home and one thing led to another until I began to serve on its Executive Committee. This brought me still closer to the greats who I held in such high esteem.

JC never ever mentioned it, but I am almost certain that he and the Old Man had spoken to each other about *Sanctuary* and had taken it upon themselves to help me navigate the initial quicksand of publication. Both were *always* at the end of the line, offering advice, suggesting stories, pointing to books I should refer to from the library.

As the years passed and *Sanctuary* became firmly established, JC and I would spend time discussing Darwin and evolution, or the rationale for *shikar* and the imperative of collecting skins for posterity. One constant refrain of his, and Dr. Sálím Ali's, Humayun Abdulali's and K.S. Dharmakumarsinhji's was the pathological need to stay accurate, something they all believed was at a discount where most Indian wildlife texts were concerned.

A life well lived: JC joined the BNHS as a research assistant in 1950 and within a year he found himself accompanying Dr. Sálím Ali on an ornithological trip in search of the White-bellied Treepie (*Dendrocitta leucogastra*) to Chikaldhara (now the Melghat Tiger Reserve). He never looked back. For six decades, it is doubtful that much transpired within the hallowed walls of the Society without JC's knowledge. It would be equally doubtful that anyone who passed through the Society, as a member, staff member, or researcher remained uninfluenced by this dignified, unbending man whose life was governed by the principles of altruism and service.

When someone like JC dies, he takes an entire library of knowledge and experience with him. Fortunately, a great deal of this he did put down for posterity in print and it lies there waiting to be discovered by those who have the inclination and the patience to pour over thousands of pages.

When I was little more than an enthusiastic, amateur-wildlifer in the mid-1970s, J.C. Daniel was already a robust pillar of the Bombay Natural History Society, where he rose to serve, first as Curator, then Director, between 1960 and 1991. He

was a Vice President of the Society when he succumbed to cancer in Mumbai at the age of 84.

My earliest recollections of JC were of a man with perfectly-combed, jet-black hair, bent over one or other of the priceless tomes in the BNHS library. Courteous to a fault, and quick to smile, he was anything but a daunting figure, particularly since his ready wit and helpful demeanour would put visitors young or old at ease within seconds of walking into his book-lined room.

True to his calling: Erudite, learned, meticulous to a fault, JC was a guide for as many as 11 PhDs and 7 MScs when I interviewed him for *Sanctuary* way back in 2000. Ironically he never wrote a Ph.D. thesis himself! This is what he said when I asked him why:

In my book a Ph.D. can only be earned if you dedicate 24 hours a day, seven days a week from start to finish. Considering as how it took me 23 years to finish my reptile book, I could not possibly have given it that kind of time priority. In more ways than one perhaps I consider myself to be a naturalist, rather than a scientist. I would say, for instance, that there are two or three elephants in a range, or one or two hatchlings in a clutch of five might survive. Modern scientists in search of elusive accuracy often suggest numbers like 2.39 elephants or an average of 1.65 hatchlings! Sometimes their reliance on sheer statistics is too literal for my liking.

That sums up the approach of the man whose attitudes and outlook were largely shaped by naturalists of yore such as ornithologist Dato Loke Wan Tho and Dr. Sálím Ali. In fact, even as he lauded science as the backbone of field biology, he remained critical of the blind adherence to it to the day he died.

He never tired of saying that the finest naturalists had what people might call 'doubtful basic qualifications'. In this list he included Charles McCann, botanist, mammalogist, herpetologist and entomologist, the legendary S.H. Prater and even Dr. Sálím Ali (who was eventually awarded an honorary doctorate). But such people had a fine scientific temper, JC hastened to add, and were the very backbone of the BNHS.

I don't think I ever knew a time that JC was not either writing, or editing a manuscript. With his thick horn-rimmed glasses and focused concentration, he was the quintessential academic, pouring over two or three books at a time, note pad on the ready, scribbling away. *NATURAL HISTORY AND THE INDIAN ARMY* was a recent book he edited (together with Lt. Gen. Baljit Singh), which he called a tribute to the Indian Army, which added much to the natural history knowledge of the Subcontinent and drew the attention of the government to the urgent need to protect vanishing species and their habitats. The very last book he 'midwived' was the BNHS *BIRDS OF THE INDIAN SUBCONTINENT – A FIELD GUIDE*, as recently as July 30, 2011.

I often wondered how JC managed to carve himself such an indelible niche in the BNHS, which in recent decades had been so dominated by 'birdmen'. In my head, JC was and will remain 'an elephant man' though there was no doubt at all that *everything* about nature interested him. Little wonder the books flowed thick and fast – *PETRONIA*, a commemorative collation of articles by Dr. Sálím Ali, which JC edited with Gayatri Ugra and which was published on the 'Old Man's 100th birth anniversary; *A WEEK WITH ELEPHANTS*, edited with Hemant Datye, from papers submitted for a seminar on elephants when Project Elephant came into being, his *THE BOOK OF INDIAN REPTILES AND AMPHIBIANS*, *A CENTURY OF NATURAL HISTORY*, *THE LEOPARD IN INDIA* and one, interestingly titled *CASSANDRA OF CONSERVATION* that was culled from his writings on conservation issues published in *Hornbill*.

As the Editor of the *JBNHS* for 38 long years from 1965-2003, JC became one of the world's best known experts on the natural history of the Subcontinent. Writers, fresh and established, wrote to him constantly seeking to be published in one of the world's most respected scientific journals. He was called upon to opine on all manner of issues concerning natural history. Little known to most, he also


played a key supporting role for both Dr. Sálím Ali and Zafar Futehally when they threw their considerable reputations behind the need to establish Project Tiger.

A rich legacy: One day someone will sit and document the prodigious output of J.C. Daniel; the field projects he helped start to study animals like the wild buffalo, elephant, blackbuck, tiger, Nilgiri tahr, saltwater crocodile and golden gecko, which he was credited with rediscovering after it had been presumed extinct for over a century.

For several decades JC headed some of the BNHS' most prestigious research projects, often with the support of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, one of the Society's key funding sources. These took JC from Point Calimere, to distant Kashmir and from the arid Thar desert to the evergreen forests of the Northeast.

He was not your dyed-in-the-wool conservationist of the loud and garrulous kind. Soft spoken, yet firm, he in fact always advocated a sort of middle path that sought to avoid confrontation, if possible. Not that he did not hold strong views. Consider his response when I asked him about the dams (then proposed, now underway) in the Northeast:

There cannot be a greater folly than the building of large dams in the Northeast. Quite apart from the impact on forests that are a treasure trove of biodiversity, the entire region is seismically active and the siltation rates would negate any imagined benefits in a few short years. The devastating Assam earthquake of 1952, which E.P. Gee then wrote about in the BNHS Journal, seems to have been conveniently forgotten.

To the day he died his thoughts and dreams revolved around the BNHS whose scientific temper he tried to consolidate all through his life. I have no doubt that future historians will record his contribution to India's wildlife as foundational. 

Mr. Bittu Sahgal is the Editor of *Sanctuary Asia* and a member of the National Board for Wildlife. He is also a former BNHS Honorary Treasurer and has served on its Executive Committee.

J.C. Daniel: Personal Memories

Bob Risebrough

On July 8, 1959, I took the narrow-gauge railway through the Himalayan foothills to Darjeeling. In Delhi, I had found a copy of Sálím Ali's *INDIAN HILL BIRDS*; Darjeeling appeared to be the most accessible site where I might have a chance of finding at least some of them. Shortly after arrival, I learned that there was a Natural History Museum in Darjeeling! The Curator, only a few years older than I, then 23, welcomed me with a cup of tea and suggested that I use two forest rest houses as bases for my excursions. I could not have imagined better luck. His name was Mr. J.C. Daniel.

On the next day he had made all of the arrangements. The first rest house was in an area to the east of Darjeeling. Memory does not retain any information about the locality names associated with the many 'life birds': Rangiroon, Ghoom, Lower Tiger Hill and Tiger Hill, but does retain vivid images of some of the birds, particularly of a Green Magpie (*Cissa chinensis*) and a Yellow-billed Blue Magpie (*Urocissa flaviviridis*). There was intermittent rain throughout the monsoon days, but at dawn the sky was clear; the five peaks of Kanchenjunga were a distant white wall above the green of the forest. Magical days ... Walking back to the rest house through the rain in the afternoons, I could think only of the daily wish fulfillment – drinking the tea that would be prepared after my return. Tea thereafter was never as good, even in India.

The second rest house was near Sukna at the base of the foothills. The first elephant ride was to see the Gaur (*Bos frontalis*), and many more new birds. An abundant supply of tea at the rest house; but pineapples were the only take-away food available in the nearby village. Delicious the first day, somewhat less so on the second, not at all on the third. But I left for Assam

and Kaziranga immensely grateful to JC for making possible these experiences of a lifetime.

In 1964, I was working on a cruise ship operated by a university in California; there was a 3-day stop in Bombay (*now* Mumbai). I looked up the address of Bombay Natural History Society to ask again where I might go to find some birds. The man behind the desk was J.C. Daniel! On his advice I went to Khandala, where I saw my first Small Green Barbet, now called the White-cheeked Barbet (*Megalaima viridis*).

By 1975, I had established a laboratory at the University of California for the analysis of pesticide residues in eggs and wildlife tissues. The suggestion was raised in India, I understand, by an officer of BNHS, to seek support from the Smithsonian Institution for the establishment of such a laboratory in India to monitor exposure of wildlife to the persistent pesticides. I arrived in Bombay in June of that year. J.C. Daniel was the gracious host, taking me to Karnala to see the colony of Long-billed Vultures (*Cyyps indicus*), now, alas, approaching extinction in the wild, and inviting me to dinner at his home.

But it was not the appropriate time to think of a collaborative project between BNHS and the Smithsonian Institution. Several of the existing or proposed Smithsonian projects on long-distance bird migration, the sterilization of mosquitoes, malaria, dengue fever, and yellow fever were perceived by many in India – and elsewhere – to be a camouflage for biological warfare. These concerns were the subject of an article in the Bombay magazine *Science Today* published at the time of my visit. Particularly at the height of the Cold War, a proposal to establish a laboratory devoted to the analysis of poisonous chemicals would be viewed – with a

certain level of justification – as a further attempt to camouflage a military program of the United States. It was quietly dropped.

And then, then Prime Minister of India, Mrs. Indira Gandhi declared the Emergency. Among its many consequences was the inability of Sálím Ali to send exposed film abroad for developing. I was invited, with JC, to his house to be asked whether I might include several rolls of his film among my own exposed film that I would be taking back to America. The export of undeveloped exposed film was in fact prohibited under the terms of The Emergency. The customs agent did say that while he was legally obliged to confiscate the film, he would let me take it since I appeared to be a good friend of India. I recall that there were several superb pictures of a tiger among his slides. I don't recall how and when I sent them to Sálím Ali, but I must have mailed them after the Emergency.

It was at that time that I became a Life Member of BNHS and also purchased the 10-volume set of Sálím Ali and S. Dillon Ripley's *HANDBOOK OF THE BIRDS OF INDIA AND PAKISTAN*. Sálím Ali autographed each one.

Over the next 30 plus years most of the communications from BNHS would be sent by J.C. Daniel as Honorary Secretary. My responses would frequently include a personal note.

In the mid-1990s, Dr. Vibhu Prakash submitted a proposal to the Division of International Conservation of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to survey Peregrine Falcons in India and to continue studies of other raptors. Included was an assessment of contaminant effects. Dave Ferguson invited me to participate in the contaminant aspects of the study, an invitation I enthusiastically accepted. I joined Vibhu at Bharatpur in May 1997,

at a time when White-backed Vultures, now White-rumped Vultures (*Gyps bengalensis*) were beginning to drop dead from trees. During a follow-up visit in December 1999, I recall meeting with JC and Dr. Asad Rahmani, in Mumbai, to discuss the cause of the vulture catastrophe. There was enough information at that time to eliminate the pesticide hypothesis. The food supply hypothesis never had any support. Only the disease hypothesis remained at that time – until a veterinarian came along three

years later to ask a question only a veterinarian would ask.

My last conversations with JC were at the Centenary celebrations; the last correspondence was about my contribution to the Centenary issue of *JBNHS*. A long way from knocking on the door of a small museum in Darjeeling 54 years earlier.

I never did find out what 'JC' stood for. I always assumed they were unpronounceable Indian names, the kind of question that is best not asked. Other

essays in this collection dedicated to his memory will surely document his major contributions to our knowledge of the natural history of India and to its conservation. It is my hope that this essay will document how he contributed to the enrichment of one's personal life, for which I shall remain grateful for the remainder of my own days on this earth. ♣

Dr. Bob Risebrough is a renowned ecologist, and has a long-standing association with the BNHS.

Tribute to J.C. Daniel

David Ferguson

After an original introduction in the late 1970s and the formalities passed, he became quickly known as 'JC' a working colleague and counterpart, a known scientist and teacher, a friend and fellow human being. Our paths crossed and then became linked because he represented the Bombay Natural History Society (BNHS) and I administered a program of international wildlife conservation assistance through the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), directed in part towards India.

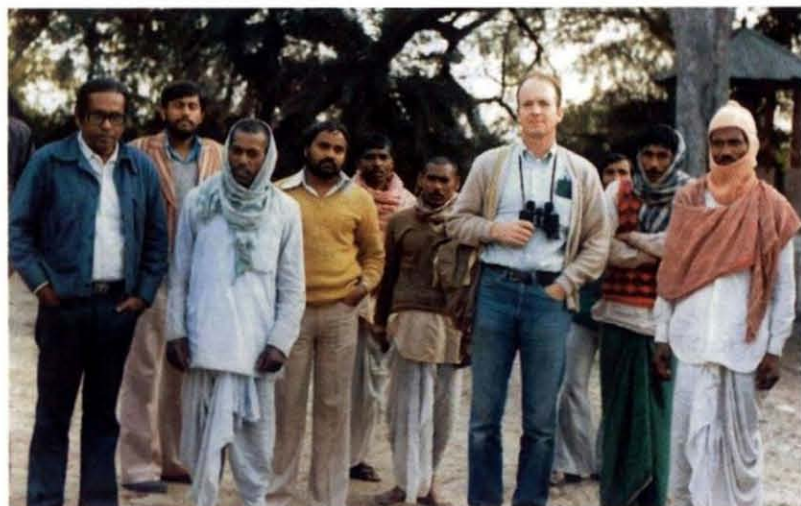
Starting in 1979, and continuing through my retirement in the fall of 2005, the BNHS and USFWS cooperated in a multitude of projects and activities covering a vast complex of biodiversity studies and environmental education. Although Dr. Salim Ali, as President of the BNHS, and through his strong presence was initially at the forefront of the dialogue and direction of the cooperative program

took, it was JC, whose behind-the-scenes work and support, supplied the spark and mechanics that made things go.

At first we had to rely upon written communications sent via airmail interspersed with short telex messages when time was of the essence. International phone service was so bad that it took all one's patience to even attempt such a thing. Besides the poor quality of the phone service, the 10-11 hour time difference between the two countries added to the difficulties of trying to communicate with each other. Despite these sometimes formidable problems, we slowly established a regular and subsequently, vibrant communication on matters large and small from filling requests for hearing aid batteries for the Old Man to planning a U.S. visit in commemoration of the BNHS Centennial.

When I came to India, at least once a year, often twice, the BNHS would be on my schedule and JC was always there to organize a seminar for reviewing the progress of the cooperative projects, accompanying me on a field trip, or to introduce a new idea or plan. He invited me into his house where I met and ate with his family. We suffered long air and road travel together to visit project sites and shared many a simple meal of chapattis and yogurt at rustic field camps.

With the passing of Dr. Salim Ali, JC continued and expanded his role in pursuing an aggressive frontal attack on important biodiversity issues. His quiet outward manner belied the energy and ideas that existed within. He was all business when it came to the BNHS and he was constantly looking for ways to help his beloved organization. Besides the multi-year research projects BNHS had



Source: DAVID FERGUSON

With David Ferguson (USFWS) at Keoladeo National Park, Bharatpur, India, February, 1982, and Ali Hussain, master bird trapper (extreme right) and others

with the USFWS, JC sought assistance on many short term, but important issues, such as the production of the first illustrated handbook on all 1200+ bird species known from India and an illustrated guide to the native flora of Keoladeo National Park.

Perhaps the most memorable quality in JC that I admired was his insatiable desire to get the younger staff members scientifically trained and then to have a place(s) for them to work. With the growing national recognition of the importance of biodiversity conservation, JC recognized the need for more trained biologists. In this regard, he was also championing a major concern of his mentor, Dr. Sálím Ali. Thus, each one of the long-term cooperative ecological projects had a major component in them that allowed young biologists to pursue M.Sc. and Ph.D. programs using their research in the projects to feed into and fulfill requirements of the advanced degrees. Where applicable and possible, educational and sometimes advanced specialized training was arranged in the U.S. and Europe where BNHS/USFWS project personnel visited appropriate scientific or educational facilities, and received formal and informal exposure to pertinent topics.

The other part of JC's vision was to effect an institution that could accommodate and employ the addition into the work force the freshly trained biologists the cooperative projects would produce. In the mid-1980s with the backing and prestige of Dr. Sálím Ali, a petition and plan to create such an institution was put forward to the Government of

India. While the concept was well-received, a key component stressed by the BNHS was that the proposed institution, while being governmentally funded, should be independent about what research was carried out and how it was reported. This the Government would not support.

Stymied by this seemingly insurmountable impasse and then jolted by the sudden and tragic loss of one of the BNHS's staunchest supporters, the Prime Minister, Madam Indira Gandhi, the independent BNHS research institution proposal was withdrawn.

Subsequently, however, the concept was put forward again and after many years, eventually morphed into the creation of the Sálím Ali Centre for Ornithology and Natural History (SACON), which came into being in 1991. Many of the graduates of the BNHS/USFWS cooperative projects found employment with SACON.

J.C. Daniel - associated with the BNHS since 1950, an excellent source of valuable information on all forms of wildlife, successful published author of scientific papers on all forms of wildlife, as well as author of numerous books and monographs, mentor to multitudes of students and lay persons, a teacher, task driver, family man, an irreplaceable scion of BNHS who not only worked for the Society was, in fact, its total embodiment. I am proud to have known him, worked with him and called him a friend. May his soul rest in peace. 🍀

Mr. David Ferguson, now retired from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, headed an international program to support biodiversity conservation with India from 1976-2005.

JC – The Motivator

Deepak Apte

Daniel Sir, popularly known as JC has a profound influence on me as a person. My appointment letter in BNHS was signed by him, my first book was published because of him, and he was the only person who stood firmly behind me whenever there was a need.

My first interaction with JC was around 1977. As a school kid from a tiny rural village, access to natural history books was rare. Internet did not exist and the only name for snake identification known to me at that time was of JC. Thus, when I sent him a photograph (terribly bad quality) of a snake for identification, I was not expecting much to happen. But to my pleasant surprise, a week later, my father handed over a letter to me signed by JC providing the identity of the snake. This was my first lesson in communication. No matter how indiscreet the enquiry, a prompt communication can be of great encouragement for budding naturalists. My journey in wildlife from that day till date owes great admiration to JC for that small gesture he made in 1977.

I was pleased to meet him in person in December 1993, when he was part of the panel that interviewed me for the post of Nature Education Officer in the BNHS. Without

any formal job experience in the field, I was assured during the interview that I had no hope of making it. But it was JC who probably spotted some worthiness and gently told me, at the end of the interview, that I cannot assure a job, but we will publish your book on shells. He thus not only guided me to write my first book *THE BOOK OF INDIAN SHELLS* but also edited it; I was 26 then. But my luck was on rolling and within two weeks of the interview, I got a call from JC asking if I was still keen to join as Nature Education Officer. I became part of the BNHS family from January 2004. Since then JC has been mentor for me. During the past 17 years, I shared some very special moments with JC and each was a new learning experience. His affection for the staff and staff welfare, punctuality, honesty, integrity, commitment, meticulous and critical editing, passion for conservation, his words of wisdom when we expressed our frustrations on several fronts, and above all, his scientific temperament. He has left a legacy of leadership which will be hard to replace.

His absence will be felt by those who worked closely with him. For me it's a loss that cannot be expressed in words. The only tribute I can pay to JC is to follow the path of wisdom, commitment, passion and honesty he showed to us. 🍀

Mr. Deepak Apte is Deputy Director (Conservation) and Principal Investigator for many projects at the BNHS.

The Ardent Naturalist

Dilnavaz Variava

I joined the World Wildlife Fund-India as its Chief Executive in 1973. I found myself, along with an Executive Assistant, a secretary, and an office boy crowded into a small 200 sq. ft. corner of what is presently the library on the 2nd floor of Hornbill House. It was a considerable contrast from my previous position as a Director of a Public Ltd. Co.! Mr. J.C. Daniel was the person with whom I had the most frequent interactions, and the warmth of his welcome, the depth of his knowledge and the generosity with which he shared it made me immediately feel welcomed in my new habitat. I brought to the BNHS nothing more substantial than some management experience and a desire to put this to use in a meaningful social context. My knowledge of environmental issues was virtually non-existent and it was Duleep Mathai who provided me with a broad understanding of environmental concerns and JC who answered every question with enthusiasm and expertise. The BNHS office bearers, who gathered almost daily in the Honorary Secretary's room, further inspired me by their knowledge, commitment and generosity of spirit to the CEO of what could have been considered a competing organization. I was frequently called into discussions on BNHS plans – or dreams – with the three Vice Presidents – Dr. Sálím Ali, Mr. Dinshaw Panday and Mr. Hawkins, the Hon. Secretary Mr. Ashok Nanavati and the Hon. Treasurer Dr. C.S. Kulkarni. Daniel was always a part of and central to these discussions. It was an exciting time for the BNHS as PL 480 funds had just been made available for dispersal on projects jointly approved by the Governments of India and USA. The BNHS was one of the few NGOs acceptable to both these governments, and Daniel used his prolific expertise and writing skills to draft out project after project with the help of his small team. It



DAVID FERGUSON

With Dr. Sálím Ali and Mrs. Dilnavaz Variava at the Field Museum, Chicago, Illinois, on June 20, 1984, during the celebration of the BNHS Centennial

was both a joy and a burden to him when virtually all the projects put forward were approved and the BNHS had to expand its activities many fold. The administrative skills at BNHS were not exemplary, but the enthusiasm was substantial and contagious. In the process of the execution of several large projects JC was sometimes exposed to more criticism than praise, and he occasionally erupted like a volcano. However, he never permitted his ire to turn into indifference and tenaciously returned to doing what he thought was in the best interest of promoting conservation and the interests of the BNHS and its staff.

JC was not a person who could be brow-beaten on what he believed to be right and I recall with amusement his response to Maneka Gandhi, then Environment Minister, when she attacked Daniel's statement that the large number of peacock feathers being collected for handicrafts were primarily feathers that were shed and not from poached peacocks. With dry sarcasm he responded: "Madam, I am not talking through my hat. When I say peacocks shed their feathers, they shed their feathers". So typically Daniel – and the Honorary Minister was, for once, silenced!

JC inoculated so many with his knowledge and his love of the outdoors.

If there is a God of Knowledge of Natural History, J.C. Daniel was his true devotee and follower. The sweep of his knowledge was wide and he held nothing back. This generosity of spirit is rare, and it drew people to him and to the BNHS. His love for the Society was as central to his heart as his love for his own family, and his concern for the welfare of his staff manifested itself repeatedly in the discussions of the EC.

After a person goes, their essence lingers. Only the time span and the number of people impacted differ. Daniel impacted and shaped many lives. I knew JC for almost 38 years, and when I heard of his terminal illness I wanted him to know how he had impacted my life. I therefore met him a week before he passed onto the great beyond, and was glad to see that neither age nor imminent death had got the better of him. He still spoke with the same enthusiasm about India's wild places, shared his concerns for the governance of the BNHS, and was ready for, though not certain about, his departure. His hair was still black, his smile was still brilliant ... and the sound of his self-deprecating chuckle still lingers in my memory. ♣

Mrs. Dilnavaz Variava was an EC Member for 30 years and Vice President for 20 years of the BNHS.

"Remembrance Of Things Past"

Gayatri W. Ugra

At my desk in Hornbill House editing a write-up on the Eurasian Curlew (*Numenius arquata*), I find the description of the underside confusing, perhaps due to a minor error in syntax. I go through the pile of reference books on my table, but not one of them has a description of the juvenile. Then a voice that I will always remember prompts me in my mind: "Habeas Corpus – produce the body!" Mr. Daniel used to say, "Go check the skins in the Collection." I do just that, and with the help of a juvenile skin I sort out my problem. I recollect another usual working day in the past, the first time I had raised a similar query. The instruction "Habeas Corpus", he told me then, came to him from his mentor Dr. Sálim Ali. Thus, I learnt many a valuable lesson by induction.

I often carried my problems – big or small, private or work-related – to the Honorary Secretary's room, and was never disappointed. He always gave me a fair hearing and did all he could to sort out the problem. It is so difficult for me to accept that I will never have such an opportunity again ... to discuss a problem, share a laugh, a bird walk, or an event at Hornbill House. Even as I write this piece, I realize I have done what he would have done ... taken a line from a favourite poem for the title!

I remember most of all his 75th birthday celebration. The invitation



Source: VIBHUTI DEDHIA

At the Conservation Education Centre (Goregaon) on his 75th birthday with family, Gayatri Ugra, Supriya Jhunjhunwala, Divya Fernandez, Vibhuti Dedhia and Isaac Kehimkar

came from his granddaughters, to all his friends, and to each member of what he called his extended family, the BNHS staff. We collected at the BNHS Conservation Education Centre, and were each greeted on arrival with a fresh pink rose. Once all the guests had reached, we set off on a bird walk along

the forest trails, guiding ourselves and each other, every member of the party pointing out items of particular interest, then breaking up into subgroups, depending on temperament and taste. When we returned to the Centre, we were treated to a lavish birders' brunch. It was a gathering of friends young and old, a birthday party with a difference, just like the birthday man himself. We also had the more traditional chocolate cake at Hornbill House.

Here I would like to reproduce a poem I wrote and presented to him on that birthday – and it makes me happy to recollect that he quite enjoyed it. 🍀

A DAY IN THE LIFE OF JCD

*At ten in the morning we all reach there, and find he's gone off to collar a bear.
Now he's with Bala, ringing a dove: slush underfoot or bright sky above.*

*Reading in office or banding a crane, writing the edit or watching a snake.
Reptiles and mammals appear animated, facts and figures – all correlated.*

*Leopards and lions and whale sharks galore ... (natural history is never a bore!)
In jungle and wetland, in swamp and in bog, watching an insect or catching a frog.*

*Up slippery slopes, down rivers and valleys, in deep dark forests, and winding alleys,
Elephants in Corbett, or birds in the wood ... faster and faster, his going is good!*

*In field or in office we follow his track, and stumble along, and never look back.
Uphill and downstairs we run to keep pace, and try not to pant "Granddad" you're the ACE!*

Dr. Gayatri W. Ugra, ex-Head, Publications Department, BNHS, is now Consultant Editor at the Society.

A Field Trip to Remember ...

George B. Schaller

I was greatly saddened to learn of the death of J.C. Daniel. Over the years he has made a major contribution to natural history in India, much of it through his long association with the Bombay Natural History Society. I met him on occasion in Mumbai, when I gave talks at the Society in 1968 and 1969, and when I received the Sálím Ali Conservation Award in 2003. I always rejoiced at seeing him again because it brought back such fond recollections of the only field trip we made together.

In 1965, while I was studying wildlife in Kanha National Park, I received a letter from the Bombay Natural History Society inviting me to take part in a survey of the rare Wild Buffalo (*Bubalus bubalis*) in the West Bastar district. My Nepali driver Madhu and I went to Jagdalpur where in the afternoon of April 2, we met J.C. Daniel and his colleague Robert Grubb. The forest department had kindly erected a large tent for us at the village of Kutru, and from there we wandered for a week through the dry, stunted forests in search of buffalo, ably guided by tribal men in loin cloth. Villagers were collecting fleshy *mouba* flowers to dry and eat, and we snacked on the persimmon-like *dedu* fruit in refreshing interludes, as we trudged through the enervating heat. On the banks of the Indravati river we found some relief from the searing temperature. After tracking a buffalo herd for one and a half hours, we caught only a glimpse of the shy animals. All wildlife was scarce here, obviously heavily hunted. But on April 10, on my last day with the team, we found a buffalo herd of 16 females and young resting on the flats of the Indravati. For two hours we were watching the sleek and massive animals, and then left them silently and in peace, for us a wonderful conclusion to the survey here.

I much enjoyed this week with J.C. Daniel in this remote part of India. Dedicated, quiet, pleasant, uncomplaining and persistent, he was a marvellous field companion as we trudged together through the heat of the forest in search of the elusive animals. Such are the memories one treasures for life. ♣

Dr. George B. Schaller is a naturalist who has studied many species throughout the world, including two years in Kanha NP on tigers and their prey.

A Loyal, True Conservationist and Friend to the End

Jane Fenton

I believe, I first met Mr. Daniel (known to many as 'JC') during a meeting of the WWF (World Wildlife Fund) in New Delhi in the 1960s, when I was working for WWF in London before moving to become International Conservation Assistant to the late Sir Peter Scott based at The Wildfowl Trust (now Wildfowl and Wetland Trust) at Slimbridge in Gloucestershire. Sir Peter was then Chairman of WWF, as well as the Survival Service Commission of IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature), which soon after my arrival held a meeting at Slimbridge in spring 1968. This, combined with his interest in WWF, meant that I had regular contact with Mr. Daniel through the Bombay Natural History Society. From 1968-1979, I attended all the major WWF and SSC/IUCN gatherings with Sir Peter and occasionally on my own, regularly meeting 'JC' who always gave sound advice on all issues affecting conservation in India. I continued this link when I transferred to the newly formed IUCN Species Conservation Monitoring Unit in Cambridge as Coordinator in late 1979. The Unit was responsible for gathering all the IUCN Red Data Books under one roof, decided at an important meeting of the SSC held in Costa Rica in 197(?) where it was agreed that such an institution should be in Europe or North America within a University City. Tim visited Slimbridge the following weekend and subsequently found a disused building in Cambridge belonging to the Department of Zoology. It was my initial task to get this off the ground with a very small budget in 1979/1981, during which time many members of the SSC were invaluablely helpful, including Mr. Daniel. In 1981, I joined ICBP (International Council for Bird Preservation, now called BirdLife International) when they moved to the same premises in Cambridge. My first role was Director for Network Relations, which meant maintaining contact with the large number of Sections (now called Partners) for the organisation. The BNHS had long been an important contributor on ICBP's wide network and I always went through Mr. Daniel for advice (I was delighted when the BNHS were admitted as a full Partner to BirdLife International in May 2008). Meanwhile, soon after I joined ICPB in 1981, they held an Asian Regional meeting in Sri Lanka. I contacted Mr. Daniel seeking his advice on a planned visit to southern India following the meeting and he most generously arranged for me to be taken around important conservation areas by Dr. Johnsingh (now on the Board of BNHS) for a most memorable tour, most especially the remarkable Nilgiri Hills. I subsequently became a Life Member of the BNHS, which I greatly value to this day. It is a remarkable organization with excellent people supporting it, not least 'JC' who was a loyal, true conservationist and friend to the end. It is people like him who found organizations for the future and it is gratifying from my point of view to see BNHS increasingly involved to this day in national and international conservation issues. None of us can give up our passion for the natural world. There is still a long way to go with continuing threats to wildlife and the human race, now being tackled by excellent new generations of conservation leaders; but it is the pioneer spirits like Mr. Daniel within WWF, IUCN/SSC and ICBP/BirdLife international with whom I had the privilege to work from 1965 to 2007, who must not be forgotten. ♣

Ms. Jane Fenton is Vice President Emeritus, BirdLife International (Rare Bird Club) OGA (Dutch Order of the Golden Ark)

Magnificent Obsession

Kumaran Sathasivam

Mr. J.C. Daniel's passing represents to the Bombay Natural History Society, the loss of one of its greatest champions. Mr. Daniel wrote this once, "From the time I walked into the services of the Society as a 23 year old Research Assistant in 1950, the Society has been and continues to be my magnificent obsession." Strengthening the BNHS, so that it could protect the natural world better, was indeed his passion.

I first knew of Mr. J.C. Daniel as the author of THE BOOK OF INDIAN REPTILES. As such, he already had a special place in the pantheon of Indian naturalists, along with Prater, who wrote THE BOOK OF INDIAN ANIMALS, and Sâlim Ali, author of THE BOOK OF INDIAN BIRDS. I became personally acquainted with Mr. Daniel after I had been a member of the BNHS for some years. One day I learnt that he had come to Madurai, where I live, and that he would be spending some days there. I met him for the first time then. He was very friendly and attentive. I asked him a number of natural history questions, keen to have the answers from one of the greatest naturalists in India. Mr. Daniel answered readily. Then we had an interesting discussion on many aspects of conservation. Mr. Daniel spent a month or so each year at Madurai, as it was Mrs. Daniel's hometown. I met Mr. Daniel several times on his subsequent visits to Madurai, apart from meeting him at Bombay (now Mumbai) and at BNHS events held elsewhere.

Once I accompanied Mr. Daniel and Dr. Balachandran on a trip to the Palni Hills. They were searching for a site that would be suitable for a permanent bird banding camp of the BNHS. Mr. Daniel was in his 70s then. We left from Madurai in the morning by van with a tight schedule. I had thought that we would be staying overnight at Kodaikanal, in the hills. But Mr. Daniel intended to travel more in the next few days and wished to return to Madurai the same day. I was impressed by Mr. Daniel's energy and readiness to put up with demanding travel at his age. Our first stop was at Sholai School. I remember us admiring a bronzed drongo that was flitting about in the tree tops there. Mr. Daniel was asked to give an impromptu talk on bird banding to the school children, and he readily

obliged. On our way back to our van, we had to walk up a steep slope. Mr. Daniel asked us to go ahead and said that he would follow slowly. We found out that he was experiencing angina. But back in the van, he did not suggest or consider changing our plans. I realized that Mr. Daniel was pushing himself to his limits. That evening, after an exhausting day, we were driving down the hill when Mr. Daniel fell sick. He needed medical attention, and we rushed to Madurai.

The next month, Mr. Daniel wrote about the episode in the bimonthly letter he sent as the Honorary Secretary of the BNHS to all members. He was dispassionate about it, but he hinted that he had experienced fear. He went on to recount an ironic story about the inescapability of death. I believe that Mr. Daniel considered the transience of human existence to be an inconvenience as far as conservation was concerned. I do not think that he wasted time brooding over the inevitable. There was so much to be done and so little time to do it in.

In another letter, Mr. Daniel wrote about the need to increase the number of members of the BNHS to continue its conservation efforts. He urged each member to create interest in nature and conservation in his or her city by identifying a local biodiversity hotspot. Along with the letter he sent a list of members from the area so that they could all join hands in the endeavour. And Mr. Daniel did everything he personally could to support them. When Dr. Badri Narayanan undertook efforts to have a water body at Madurai declared a bird sanctuary, Mr. Daniel gave him all encouragement. From the BNHS, he wrote to the officials involved and later even met them himself.

There are times when the problems involved in conservation appear overwhelming to us and it seems that the situation is hopeless. At such times, we would do well to draw inspiration from the unflagging efforts of Mr. Daniel, who never gave up. ♣

Mr. Kumaran Sathasivam is a life member of the Society. He is interested in all aspects of natural history.

J.C. Daniel: The Man I did not Know!

Lavkumar Khachar

So, why did I agree to write on him? To write something is to put on permanent record one's understanding, which would be highly irresponsible when it involves expressing views on an individual who is no longer there to take umbrage. Yes, I really do not know JC Daniel; what does "JC" stand for? That he came from Kerala is all that I know about his place of origin! What were the antecedents of his family? Was he a member of the Bombay Natural History Society before he joined the staff, or did he become a member later? What indeed were his

qualifications that made him capable of guiding Ph.D. students? All I know is that JC was one of the three faces of the Society that greeted me whenever I happened to be in Bombay (now Mumbai) and inevitably visited. I had to visit the Society, above all in the anticipation of spending time with the chief face – Sâlim Ali, who meant a great deal to me since I had started recognizing the birds around me thanks to the first edition of his THE BOOK OF INDIAN BIRDS. It was my very great good fortune that in later life I had the privilege of having

got to know him extremely well. The second face was Humayun Abdulali with whom I developed a close association, much later when I spent a couple of years in Mumbai as the first Education Officer of World Wildlife Fund-India in the late 1970s. When neither of these two was around, Daniel, the third face was always present to spend some time with. He was my age, and like myself, rather shy and reticent, but he was always helpful in guiding me to the right person to deal with my queries. My interaction with him unhappily had always remained tenuous.

With both Sálím Ali and Humayun considering me as having the potential, I was accorded considerable recognition which, as indicated earlier, I valued as a great privilege. It was therefore no surprise when I received a personal invitation to stay with Zafar Futehally at his lovely cottage in Andheri and, his charming wife Laeeq came personally to receive me at the Central Station that I realized I was expected to play a central role in what was about to be laid out. What surprised me was that Humayun had then been replaced by Zafar as Honorary Secretary of the Society and was not present at the deliberations. Sálím Ali had proposed that we start a newsletter for birdwatchers which we all thought was to be part of the Society's services; it therefore came as a considerable surprise when he indicated and insisted that it should have nothing to do with the Society. I recall being one of those who expressed doubts about its impact on the already slim membership of the Society, and Daniel who was there had also concurred. Sálím Ali, however, had had his way and so, paradoxically, the Honorary Secretary was given the responsibility of seeing that the newsletter came out regularly ... and it did, a modest cyclostyled assemblage of papers with me providing regular write ups. I know Daniel was not too happy as indeed Humayun was not, but the wisdom of having something informal soon became apparent when a great number of people from all over India started sending in write ups. My impression was that, it actually raised the level of interest which the Society had been falling short of achieving with its progressive scientific articles, which frankly most of us amateurs found rather dull.

It was during this visit that I became aware of there having developed a rift between the two Alis, whom we all looked up to. Zafar Futehally had been press ganged into taking on the responsibility of Honorary Secretary on the resignation of Humayun. The exact nature of the acrimony was never clear to me, but with passage of time, and given the obstinacy of both Sálím Ali and Humayun, the matter continued to bedevil the atmosphere at Hornbill House. This state of affairs continued even after Zafar moved south to settle in Bangalore (*now* Bengaluru), and his vacancy was filled by Dr. A. Nanavati, a shy gentleman. All along, Humayun was in the background a smoldering rebel and as I got to interact with him more, I realized that small issues had accumulated to bring about the break and it was as I indicated earlier, the sheer obstinacy of the two that prevented any possible rapprochement. It indeed

must have been difficult for both, the Honorary Secretary and especially the Curator/Director, who headed the staff. This unhappy situation was held by Daniel; it was JC who had to bear the brunt of Humayun's displeasure.

The real extent of the situation dawned on me, when I joined World Wildlife Fund-India as their first Education Officer in the late 1970s. The entire Society personnel thought I was a Humayun man even though they saw my relationship with Sálím Ali was extremely warm. He had been a regular visitor to my family at Hingolghadh after mist netting had been conducted there. To add to the undercurrents of antagonism was the fact that I had come as an employee of WWF, which was progressively being seen as a competitor, an illegitimate child left, so to speak, in the garret by Zafar Futehally. To everyone's further annoyance, Humayun opted my name for the Executive Committee and Sálím Ali had supported it. So there I was, perpetually branded as Humayun's man yet unexplainably treated with great affection by Sálím Ali. It was during the two years that I spent in Bombay (*now* Mumbai) that I tried my bit to bring the two men together, but to no avail.

During our several frank discussions on the problems of the Society, I told Humayun in no uncertain terms that he was being very unfair to JC who was after all a member of the staff while he, Humayun was a member of the Society with considerable national and international recognition. If JC appeared to show loyalty to Sálím Ali, he was performing his duty towards the President. I pointed out that he should be proud of the meticulous writings and the broad-based knowledge he had acquired over the years working with the two of them, but to no avail.

Looking back, I marvel at the affection and loyalty Daniel had for the Society that made him stick out for so very many years of what must have been most unpleasant service. A man with lesser dedication and determination would have quit long ago, especially since the Society was not paying that high a salary. Instead of giving the man his due, several of the senior members thought he was marking time to become Sálím Ali's heir as it were, though grudgingly acknowledging that JC had accumulated vast knowledge and insight into India's wildlife and its problems. His editorials of the *Hornbill*, started as a counter to the *Newsletter For Birdwatchers*, have given us a wonderful understanding of problems laid out in brilliantly written editorials. They are masterpieces in concise writing, which I forever envy him! Whatever critics may say, here was a man of considerable loyalty to the Society and the two giants who had been instrumental when the British left India, in keeping the abandoned ship afloat, till once again it became the flagship of the growing armada for the cause of conservation. JC Daniel who started as a mid-shipman, ended up as a Vice Admiral as it were and we have lost in his passing a stalwart from among our ranks. 🍀

Mr. Lavkumar Khachar, a well-known naturalist, is a life member of the BNHS.

WILDLIFE OF THE HIMALAYAS and the Terai Region

Editors Dr. Ashok S. Kothari and Dr. Boman F. Chhapgar

Bombay Natural History Society's forthcoming coffee table book, WILDLIFE OF THE HIMALAYAS AND THE TERAJ REGION is in the final stage of production. The book will open a treasure box of:

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have interesting articles culled from old issues of the *Journal of the BNHS*, *Journal of the Darjeeling Natural History Society*, *Journal of the Bengal Natural History Society* and also from the precious books in the Society's possession and from Dr. Ashok Kothari's collection. An added attraction will be Himalayan landscapes by famous artists like Major Molyneux, Col. George Strahan and ten double spread plates of pheasants in their dazzling colours.

The book is dedicated to the memory of Mr. B.G. Deshmukh and Mr. J.C. Daniel



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My Teacher for Life!

Lima Rosalind

J.C. Daniel - My mentor, guide, teacher and philosopher! Sounds clichéd!! He was more ...!!! As a young student having just written my final masters exams in 1984, I applied for the post of junior field biologist ... notwithstanding parental opposition, who wanted me to get an officers job in a bank. One lazy Saturday afternoon I was delivered a telegram which read you are requested to appear for an interview at the Bombay Natural History Society! I was ecstatic ... I knew I would clinch the post!

There were all grey haired men on the interview board save one person, all serious and intimidating ... Mr. J.C. Daniel. After what seemed like eternity checking my biology skills, Mr. Daniel pointed to the trees outside the Honorary Secretary's window and asked me to identify the trees! I did, it still stands there, the Jackfruit tree (*Artocarpus heterophyllus*) and lo-n-behold, the interview ended. I was asked to wait outside. I suspect there was a glint of a smile on Mr. Daniel's face! I got the job and was assigned to the Bird Hazard Project. Analysing bird remains from remnants of bird hits became my forte!

Mr. Daniel's white toothy smile was the gift for a job done well, and to his liking. His morning rounds were like

those of a stern headmaster in a hostel. Mr. Daniel was hawk-eyed, for him if one were out of one's seat meant one was up to something and not working!!! For me and my young colleagues, he was one man to be feared at the BNHS. We made sure we were on our seats when JC, as he was popularly known, was on the 'prowl'! His famous stance of both hands on his hips, surveying all he saw standing in the corner of the room is etched on my mind.

When Dr. Sálím Ali shifted to the Royal Yacht Club (RYC), Mr. Daniel put us, the young ones, in the duty of ferrying books for the old man to and from the BNHS to the RYC. This also lessened the strain on Archana the then secretary of Sálím Ali and also gave us the opportunity to spend some time with the old man. I was able to decipher this long after I had done many such ferrying jobs ... I thought it was very attentive of Mr. Daniel to have done something so resourceful!

In conferences where all the big 'oldies' like Prof. R.M. Naik - Baroda University, Prof. A.H. Musavi, Aligarh Muslim University, Chairman of Wildlife Sciences Department, attended, he made sure that one BNHS scientist was assigned to them exclusively to make them comfortable and looked after. He

had a caring attitude toward his colleagues.

Years went by and I changed organizations, but never forgot to wish him on his birthday, which falls two days after mine in the same month. I sought certificates for references many a times, which always arrived in time. For I knew integrity thy name is JCD.

And when he turned eighty, he sent me an invite, I was somewhere travelling and could not attend, but I made sure I sent him this charcoal line drawing of a Tiger from the School of Ranthambhore Art, and couriered it to reach him in time for the day! It was a surprise for him and he thanked me enough and placed it in his drawing room. He wrote to me "whenever I enter the drawing room Lima's tiger looks down at me from up there". Little things made him happy! On most visits to Mumbai I would meet him at the BNHS. This year on July 14th I met up with him, he remembered me and we spoke, little did I know that he will now be looking at me from up there! I miss JCI! ♣

Ms. Lima Rosalind worked at the BNHS as a Junior Field Biologist and Research Officer from 1984-1996.

My Mentor and as I Knew Him

Meena Haribal

When I was in second year of college, I realised that I was interested in birds, and the bird that piqued my interest was a breeding pair of Pheasant-tailed Jacanas (*Hydrophasianus chirurgus*) in Vidyavihar, Bombay (now Mumbai). But I had no knowledge of how to identify birds or if there were any books on birds. Just around that time, the *Science Today*, a popular science magazine by the Times of India group, had an article on Dr. Sálím Ali with his cartoon by R.K. Laxman on the cover page. In this cartoon, Sálím Ali is looking through the binoculars and the bird is sitting right on top of the binoculars! This article introduced me to Sálím Ali and to the existence of Bombay Natural

History Society. I looked up Sálím Ali's postal address in the telephone directory and sent him a letter expressing my interest in birds and asking him how I should go about it. I got a reply from Sálím Ali a month later expressing apologies for the delayed reply as he was travelling in the field looking for birds. But in that letter he mentioned I should go to BNHS and meet Dr. Nanavati, then Hon. Secretary and let him know that Sálím Ali had asked me to join BNHS.

So next week, I made a trip to the BNHS and paid my dues, and as I was getting out of the building, I saw a notice about a monthly bird count in Borivli National Park (now Sanjay Gandhi National Park), in a couple of weeks. So

I decided I was going on this trip. Those days I did not do anything without another friend going with me. So I asked my friends if they were interested in going with me but none of them seemed keen enough to come. Later on a friend agreed to come with me to find out more about this trip.

My friend and I went to BNHS on the Wednesday before the week-end of the bird count trip; in the office we asked Ms. Savitri, who was Secretary to a Mr. J.C. Daniel, for more information on the BNP bird count. She told me that Mr. Daniel would be the best person to give all the information I needed and that he was in a meeting with another member (whom I later learnt was Dr. S.R. Amladi) and that she would let Mr. Daniel know that I wanted to meet him. She sent a note to Mr. Daniel and within five minutes, I was asked to come into his office. I was welcomed as a new member of BNHS; Mr. Daniel was pleased to learn that I was interested in birds and wanted to go on the trip. He asked me where I lived, "Matunga", I said. He told me that he could pick me up at Tashkent Textorium at Sion Circle at 6:00 a.m. as he lived in Sion. This was my first introduction to Mr. Daniel, which lasted for less than five minutes.

On the day of the trip my father decided that he was going to come with me to Sion Circle, probably to ensure that I was going with a sane person. We arrived ten minutes before the appointed time. All I remembered then about Mr. Daniel was that he wore spectacles. And as I was expecting him to come in a car, every car with a bespectacled driver that passed us caught my attention. Had he probably forgotten that I was supposed to be picked up by him? I expressed my anxiety to my father and was almost giving up hope when a jeep pulled up in front of us. My father asked if that was the person I was supposed to go with. I looked at the driver and told my father that I was not sure. Mr. Daniel got out of the vehicle and came to us, and greeted me "Good Morning Ms. Haribal". That was the first time anyone had addressed me as Ms. Haribal! He turned to my father and told him not to worry about me, that he would take care of me and bring me back to Sion by about 2:30 or 3:00 p.m.

Thus, this was one of the many hundreds of trips I made with Mr. Daniel, but the first trip was the most memorable. We went to Aarey Market in Goregaon and met other people, some of the others I met that day were Bannerjee, Arati, Katie, Dilip, Bakubhai and Amladi. We were assigned different sections for the bird count and I was to join Mr. Daniel for the Tulsi sector from culvert 43 to 55. On the way to Tulsi, we stopped at the quarry pond near culvert 10 and walked to the pond. Mr. Daniel was looking at the ground as we walked and announced, "He has been here, I see his pug mark". I was puzzled who that could be.

Mr. Daniel explained to me that there was a leopard in the area that used to come to drink water. I could not believe my ears. I asked if he meant leopard and that too in Bombay City? Surprised and excited, I told all my friends about this once I got back home. We then continued with our bird count. Before this trip I had already become familiar with Hugh Whistler's book of INDIAN BIRDS, Lavkumar Khachar's SIXTY INDIAN BIRDS from my college library and Loke Wan Tho's photography book of INDIAN AND NEW GUINEAN BIRDS from British Council Library (BCL). We saw both Red-vented Bulbuls (*Pycnonotus cafer*) and Red-whiskered Bulbuls (*Pycnonotus jocosus*), Red-breasted Flycatchers (*Ficedula parva*), and we heard Tickell's Blue Flycatchers (*Cyornis tickelliae*) and Verditer Flycatchers (*Eumyias thalassinus*) at the Tulsi dam. As we walked down along culvert 52, we saw Rose Finches. Then we came to the open area with a perennial stream near culvert 54. As we walked in, Mr. Daniel spotted a female Asian Paradise-Flycatcher (*Terpsiphone paradisi*) which he pointed out to us, I looked at the bird, it was all rusty and had a short tail. So I turned to him asking if he was sure that it was a Paradise-Flycatcher, as I thought it was a white bird with a long tail! He looked at me and gave broad smile; I still remember that smile. Mr. Daniel told me, yes that was a Paradise-Flycatcher, but a female. Then he opened Salim Ali's THE BOOK OF INDIAN BIRDS and showed me the plate of Paradise-Flycatchers.

Then later that day after the bird count, I was introduced to a long term study of phenology of plants and other natural history. So we marked several 10 x 10 m plots and the plan was to visit the plot every week or every other week and identify all plants in the given plot, the changes that occur to vegetation, identify the birds that are seen in the plot and the insects associated with the plants. So that was my first introduction to ecology! Dr. Amladi was the plant expert, so he showed us all plants in one particular plot near culvert 13 and that was my first introduction to identifying plants and also I learnt about Grey Downy Balsam (*Garuga pinnata*), that eventually became subject of my Ph.D. thesis, investigation of medicinally active chemicals in the plant.

After that, I went on many delightful natural history trips with Mr. Daniel. Every Thursday or Friday I would call him and ask if a trip had been planned for the week-end and he would tell me where to meet. I would join the trips. Daniel and four others Dr. Amladi, Bakubhai, Bansibhai and Nayak often did trips together and hiked in the Park. I remember one trip when we walked from Goregaon to Borivli via what we called 'the film city ridge'. I remember seeing a Green Pit Viper (*Trimeresurus* sp.) in the bamboos, langurs, Grey Hornbills (*Ocyrcos birostris*), Gold-fronted Chloropsis (*Chloropsis aurifrons*), Malabar Whistling-Thrush (*Myophonus horsfieldii*) etc. It was a full day's walk and we ended up at the

Kanheri Caves. At one point we were lost; Amladi climbed a tree to look above the forest to ascertain our location. This trip was an introduction to orienteering and rock climbing.

On one of the BNHS trips a few months later, we divided the group into two groups and Daniel told me to lead one of the groups to Rampada, this was the first time I led a trip and was surprised that he was asking me, when there were many more experienced people in the group. Nevertheless, I accepted the offer of leadership and lead the group. For the first time we saw lorikeets in the Park. I remember Bansibhai asking me how I knew that they were lorikeets and if I had seen them before.

Mr. Daniel also introduced me to the books, collections, and other people in BNHS. I wanted to borrow Sálím Ali's book from the BNHS library, which J.S. Serrao, then librarian, refused to lend me as they were considered to be reference books. So I went back to Mr. Daniel and told him about it. He immediately wrote a note to Serrao that I should be allowed to borrow one for a few days. I was also introduced to bird skins and insect collection and in later years, I had the pleasures of studying them many-a-times. A couple of years later, on most Saturdays, a group of us nicknamed 'Jungle Babblers' (original members were Ulhas Rane, Anil Kunte, Dilip Patil, Arati Kaikini and myself) met at BNHS in the afternoons. We visited everyone in the BNHS, when BNHS was more like a family unit, visited the collections and library, and learnt about natural history. S.A. Hussain, who was in charge of the collection, often acted as if he was hiding behind the desk at my arrival as he thought I would ask tough questions about bird identification.

When I was in college, I was not capable of paying for nature camps, so on one of nature camps to Point Calimere, I was asked to go as a volunteer and all my expenses were paid for. Often on some of the trips with Mr. Daniel or others in BNHS, I was not allowed to share gas money as I was a student. Those trips were valuable to me and later when I arranged nature camps for BNHS, I too included students as volunteers. Even now in the US, when I have students travelling with me, they go free. So this was an introduction to philanthropy, of whatever I am capable of.

Mr. Daniel was my mentor in many ways, he introduced me to natural history, ecology, leadership, philanthropy, and management, yes he was the one who introduced me to the committees at BNHS and for many years BNHS was a kind of second home to me. He was one of the rare people in my life whose memories I will cherish forever. ❀

Dr. Meena Haribal is a naturalist and chemical ecologist, and lives in Ithaca NY.

Mr. J.C. Daniel – An Unforgettable Dynamic Person

M.G. Mathews

On a fine sunny morning on September 15, 2003, I was asked to meet Mr. J.C. Daniel, Hon. Sec. It was the most fascinating experience for me to meet such a wonderful person. He is the most unforgettable and resourceful person I have ever met. It was a pleasure to work under his dynamic leadership and excellent guidance. Although my association with him was of only nine years, we shared a pleasant personal relationship. Since he knew about my earlier association with a multi-specialty hospital he would ask for more information on symptoms of diabetes and diabetic diet, which I provided. Subsequently, I advised him to get a glucometer to check the random blood sugar and he got one immediately. He would call me twice every month to check his blood sugar, which I gladly did for him in the office. He made changes in his diet meticulously as per the diabetic diet chart, and his blood sugar level soon became normal. I also had a good personal relationship with his wife Mrs. Esme Daniel, his son Mr. Jay Daniel, and other members of his family.

Mr. Daniel had a solution for any problem, whether it was technical, scientific, or administrative due to his vast knowledge and versatile expertise in various fields. His writing skills were excellent. His unparalleled and educative articles and books on natural history and wildlife over the past 60 years were well-known and recognized nationally and internationally and these have indeed been appreciated by many from all over the world.

He was a kind-hearted person, pious and humane in nature. He was always concerned about the welfare of the staff. He had gone out of the way to help many staff members who had financial problems by mobilizing financial support from other organizations.

Mr. Daniel's commitment to conservation science, love of nature and his dedicated service to the BNHS, cannot be expressed in words, but will certainly remain as a glorious epitome of universal concern for nature and environment. His matchless efforts with simplicity have revitalized the research efforts in wildlife conservation and natural history, which will definitely remain a monumental service to the BNHS and the conservation movement as a whole. In his death we lost a well-wisher, a renowned scientist, and an ardent philanthropist. Let this Special Issue be a glowing tribute to his memory. I sincerely pray that his soul rests in eternal peace. ❀

Mr. M.G. Mathews is presently the Administration Manager, BNHS.

The Great Man I Knew

J.P.K. Menon

In 1986, I returned from Oman after having worked there for two years. In those days, it was a craze to work in the Gulf countries even if one had a decent job in India, and I was no exception. However, I soon realized that I had made a wrong decision – I could not bear the alien lifestyle and returned to India!

On landing in Mumbai, I advertised in the *Times of India* for an opening and left for my hometown in Kerala. On returning after a gap of two months, I received a two-line hand-delivered letter at my residence. The letter, which had a somewhat unusual signature, stated that I was required to meet Mr. J.C. Daniel, Curator of BNHS at 1.00 a.m. on 26th March, 1987 – a rather odd time for an interview! Anyway, I reached BNHS at 1.00 p.m., met Mr. Daniel in his chamber and handed over the letter. Perusing it, he angrily asked the reason for attending the interview late! I was puzzled and pointed out the time mentioned in the letter; he apologized, smiled and said “it’s again a typo error, it should have been 11.00 a.m.!” After a bit of waiting in Hornbill House, I was offered a posting in the General Administration Department of the Society as I was working as a Front Office Manager in the Gulf. I readily accepted the offer without even asking about the monetary aspects, as I had already heard of the BNHS, having seen news of the Society’s Centenary Celebration in 1983, just before I had left for Oman. So, that was my first interaction with Mr. Daniel, a father figure for many in the BNHS.

In 1987, Mr. Daniel transferred me to head the Computer Department (on

the recommendation of Dr. Robert Grubb, then Project Coordinator), which was just established. Mr. Daniel was then revising *THE BOOK OF INDIAN BIRDS* by Dr. Salim Ali and he entrusted me the job of correcting the manuscript and formatting the publication on the computer. He was happy with my work, though I was not proficient in it then. However, I specialized in it later and he had started giving related tasks of the Society to me (other than my primary job) and these to name a few are *THE BOOK OF INDIAN BIRDS*, and *THE BOOK OF INDIAN REPTILES AND AMPHIBIANS*. The last publication I worked for him was *BIRDS OF THE INDIAN SUBCONTINENT – A FIELD GUIDE*, a project close to his heart and which he was fortunate to see published before he passed away. In fact, the last time he visited the BNHS was for the release of this book – he would always ‘blackmail’ the co-authors, Publications Department and me that if we delay the book, he may not live to see it!

I not only considered Mr. Daniel as a boss, but also as a fatherly figure and took his advice on my official, as well as personal life. There was a case when I was offered a big job in a corporate office, but he vehemently said “NO” as he said he wanted me in the Society, and which I feel was a very wise decision. Whenever he was to take a 10-15 days break from the BNHS (after retirement as Director) he would come to say that he would be away and return to office on ‘so and so’ date. He never forgot to wish me Happy Onam even once from the day of I joined the BNHS. He always made it a point to

meet the family of the BNHS employees whenever possible, and he always acknowledged and appreciated good work undertaken, and on one occasion, he had called me to his chamber handing over a box of chocolates, saying they were for my daughters.

During my 24 years of service with the BNHS, I had not visited his house even once. However, when I heard he was hospitalized due to cancer, I was really disturbed. On August 19, 2011, I went to his residence at 6:30 in the evening and he was really happy to see me. The first thing he asked me was regarding the sales of the new book, which was the most taxing book I had worked on, having had to work on innumerable drafts. He then enquired about my family, and even the status of my daughters’ education. I left his residence at 7:30 p.m. with a heavy heart as I had witnessed the pain he underwent while even talking to me – the reason why I did not overstay. Alas, that was my last interaction with him – he passed away on 23rd August exactly four days after I had met him. That was one of the saddest days of my life.

On his 84th birthday (his last) on July 9, 2011, I wished him and told him that he had seen 1000 full moons in his life, which as per the Hindu calendar happens only with lucky persons. I really miss him just like all others at BNHS and am yet to come to terms with the fact that I will never receive Onam wishes from him anymore. All that remains are the golden memories of my moments with him – for me to cherish forever. 🍀

Mr. J.P.K. Menon is presently the Systems Manager at the BNHS.

“The increasing human population has resulted in an increasing human presence in Indian Wildlife habitats, to the extent that there is hardly any forest area in India which is truly free of human intrusion. Those species which show a low tolerance for such intrusion have the least chance for survival.”

— J.C. Daniel, CASSANDRA OF CONSERVATION

J.C. Daniel – An Epitome of Deserved Success

Pheroza Godrej

Barely had we got used to the sad and sudden loss of our President, Mr. B.G. Deshmukh, earlier this month, like a bolt from the blue came the news of Mr. Daniel's ill-health. Yes, we gradually reconciled ourselves to the fact that we would not have him with us for long, but the end came with galloping speed, sooner than we believed it to be. In a way, God has been kind and generous, and in our hearts we know that the Almighty did not want a good man to suffer.

JC had his heart in the right place; he lived life purposefully for his family, passionately for natural history, and at the same time quietly and gracefully. He did not have to demand respect; it was his humanness and his good old-fashioned values that appealed most of all to his staff, colleagues on the Executive Committee and members of the Bombay Natural History Society (BNHS) that endeared himself to all. His caring nature was epitomised in his final wish that his mortal remains be cremated and not buried, so that his disease-ridden body would not contaminate the Earth. The conservation movement has lost a pioneer and a most committed conservationist.

I recall his generous guidance to me personally when, in 2000, we worked together on the Soonabai Pirojsha Godrej Foundation-Bombay Natural History Society publication: GODREJ: A SYMBIOSIS OF INDUSTRY AND NATURE. His encouragement, enthusiasm, and ideas helped to make it an attractive book. Other instances that come to mind are the two Art Auctions, 'Greenscape I' and 'Greenscape II', which I had the opportunity to organise. We worked on these as a close-knit group, and I will never forget the beaming smiles on the faces of Mr. B.G. Deshmukh, JC and Dr. Rahmani as the auctions concluded beyond our expectations.

Many people – some officially connected and others generally interested in natural history, have left their mark on the BNHS. We recall their role on memorable occasions. JC belongs to the 'unforgettables'. He has left an indelible mark and he will forever remain an important and integral part of the history of the BNHS. Moreover, his enormous contribution to Indian Natural History will always be remembered nationally and internationally. Our greatest tribute to the memory of JC, to whom the BNHS was home away from home, is to come together as a family – to strengthen the foundation laid by the Society's Founding Fathers. Hornbill House will never be the same without JC, but his memory will live on and his spirit will guide the future of the BNHS.

Finally, it has been said, you cannot command success, you can only deserve it. JC, without a doubt, was most deserving of it, and to those who knew him intimately, he was a very successful and contented human being. In naturalists' parlance, contentment is natural wealth.

My deep condolences to his wife, Esme; his son, Jay and daughter-in-law, Tina; his daughter, Susan and son-in-law, Subash; and to his grand-children, Shilpa, Divya, Deepika and Shama.

May his soul rest in eternal peace with the Almighty. ❀

Mrs. Pheroza Godrej was Vice President of the BNHS from 2001-2009.

A Strange Family Coincidence

Prakash Rao

It all began in the autumn of 1983 when the Bombay Natural History Society (BNHS) celebrated its centenary year. During this period, a special issue of the *Hornbill* was published to commemorate the successful existence of BNHS over a century through some memorable expeditions and natural history studies. I had just about joined the BNHS then, and was a novice to the world of ornithology let alone natural history. One of the first things that I did on joining the Society was to read the excellent centenary *Hornbill* issue brought out by Mr. Daniel, who was then the Curator of the BNHS. In a sense, this summed up for me what the BNHS stood for in terms of its contribution to the world of ecology and Indian conservation efforts. While I continued to put in my efforts to contribute to various facets of natural history research through some of the ongoing research projects at BNHS, I had carefully kept this very special edition of the *Hornbill* in my personal library at home. After several years, in the late 80s, my father who was by then past his mid-sixties decided to go through some of the interesting notes, and books in my collection as a post retirement hobby. During this phase he chanced upon this memorable *Hornbill* issue, which he read with great care and attention.

By this time, I had registered under Mr. Daniel for a doctoral study on the breeding biology of the Bar-headed Goose (*Anser indicus*) in Ladakh. This never materialised due to the political situation in Jammu and Kashmir, and I ended up doing a study in the remote forests of Sriharikota several thousand kilometres further south! At about the same time, my father related to me an interesting episode, through one of the articles in the centenary *Hornbill* issue, which set him thinking. Apparently, the article mentioned about one Mr. J. Daniel who was then Inspector of Schools in the Education Department in the Madras Presidency in 1938, and about his experiences in assessment of education levels

in places like Chittoor, Madras, and elsewhere in the Presidency. His exploits made a lot of interesting reading, which strangely caught my father's attention!

When I questioned my father about why this was so special to him ... he went off and brought to me a document which he had carefully preserved since the 1930s ... and it was none other than his school leaving certificate way back in the 1930s, when he was just about 15 years or so. The document was interestingly enough signed by a gentleman by the name J. Daniel! And my father instantly started to think on how this gentleman was in some way linked to our very own JCD. My father quite clearly remembered that the 'J' stood for Jivanayakam making the case even more curious and coincidental.

I was in the early stages of my career and like most of us who had joined then, viewed some of the senior conservation fraternity within BNHS with great

reverence. I had great personal respect for Mr. Daniel in terms of his stately presence and vast experience as a conservation professional, and although was never directly associated with some of his field projects until my doctoral work, I had constantly valued his advice and guidance. I also did not have the courage at that point of time to frankly ask Mr. Daniel on this interesting coincidence, which my father had pointed out. In fact, my father kept egging me on to go and ask JC about this episode. After many years in the mid-1990s, when I had moved on to World Wildlife Fund to a new position, I finally managed to see Mr. Daniel during one of my Mumbai trips and relate to him this interesting bit of history! When I mentioned that my father actually got a school leaving certificate from his father in the 1930s and here I was studying under his guidance for a doctorate, he was pleasantly surprised at this interesting anecdote! While he did tell me that he

did not recollect too much about his father's days in the late 1930s, he promised to confirm the fact I had related.

By then, I had moved on to take up managerial responsibilities in the world of environment and somehow never could solve this interesting coincidence between our families! To this day this query remains unresolved ... although my father continues to be supremely confident of the fact that it was indeed Mr. Daniel's father who had signed his school document, which he still preciously preserves.

For me this important connection or call it coincidence remains a long lasting link with Mr. Daniel and his family. ♣

Dr. Prakash Rao is an Associate Professor - Energy and Environment in Symbiosis Institute of International Business. He has worked with BNHS from 1983-1994, as a Scientist on several ecological research projects.

J.C. Daniel: His Commitment to Conservation

Priya Davidar

J.C. Daniel was one of the pillars of the Bombay Natural History Society (BNHS) and of the conservation community in India for decades. He was one of those rare people who did not mind standing up for what he believed in and fought for conservation.

I have known Mr. Daniel since 1976 when I was a doctoral student at the BNHS. In fact, I arrived at around 5:00 a.m. at Dadar station on a rainy monsoon day, and he and S.A. Hussain picked me up and dropped me off at the YWCA, where I was temporarily lodged. The BNHS was conveniently located across the street near the Prince of Wales Museum.

Soon I discovered that Mr. Daniel was an all rounder. Apart from carrying out the administrative work, overseeing projects and students, he was a good birdwatcher and field person. He used to accompany the BNHS field trips to Borivli, which used to begin at an ungodly hour in the morning. His cool and calm temperament contrasted sharply with that of Dr. Salim Ali who used to often fly off the handle. He maintained his poise throughout the rough and turbulent times at the BNHS. He was very loyal to the BNHS and its legacy, and fought to maintain it during difficult times.

He was also responsible for initiating many projects, among which was the Asian Elephant Project and bird migration studies at Point Calimere. The Asian Elephant study headed by Ajay Desai provided key insights into their ranging behaviour. He has guided many students, who are now well-established and have contributed to the field of conservation and natural history in India.

Although low key, he was strongly principled and dedicated to conservation and did not compromise his values, a rare quality today. He was willing to take a strong stand on issues which resulted in many positive conservation actions. I remember that a few years ago I appealed to him for support against establishment of the Neutrino Observatory on the border of Mudumalai Tiger Reserve. He gave his unstinted support, and a letter from the BNHS President to the Ministry of Environment and Forests no doubt went a long way towards changing the mind of the Environment Minister, Shri Jairam Ramesh. His contribution to the study of natural history and promotion of conservation in India is remarkable. We will greatly miss him. ♣

Dr. Priya Davidar is with the Department of Ecology and Environmental Sciences, Pondicherry University.

Remembering the Legend

Prashant Mahajan

It was my first job interview within a month of finishing my final year exam in 1993. I was evidently nervous while facing the interview panel comprising of stalwarts of the Bombay Natural History Society (BNHS). My biggest worry was on how I would converse in the 'Queen's language', which was so foreign to me! While I was struggling to sort my thoughts on being asked: "Tell us about yourself"... I heard kind words from a soft-spoken fatherly figure giving me an option of speaking in a language I was more comfortable with! At that point, I had no clue about who the gentleman was who understood the dilemma of a boy from a village. His words helped me muster the courage and I decided to face the interview in 'the English' (Hinglish!) I was then comfortable with! It was only after joining the Conservation Education Project at Mudumalai I realised that the fatherly figure was none other than

Mr. Daniel himself! With great love and reverence we all call him Daniel Sir!

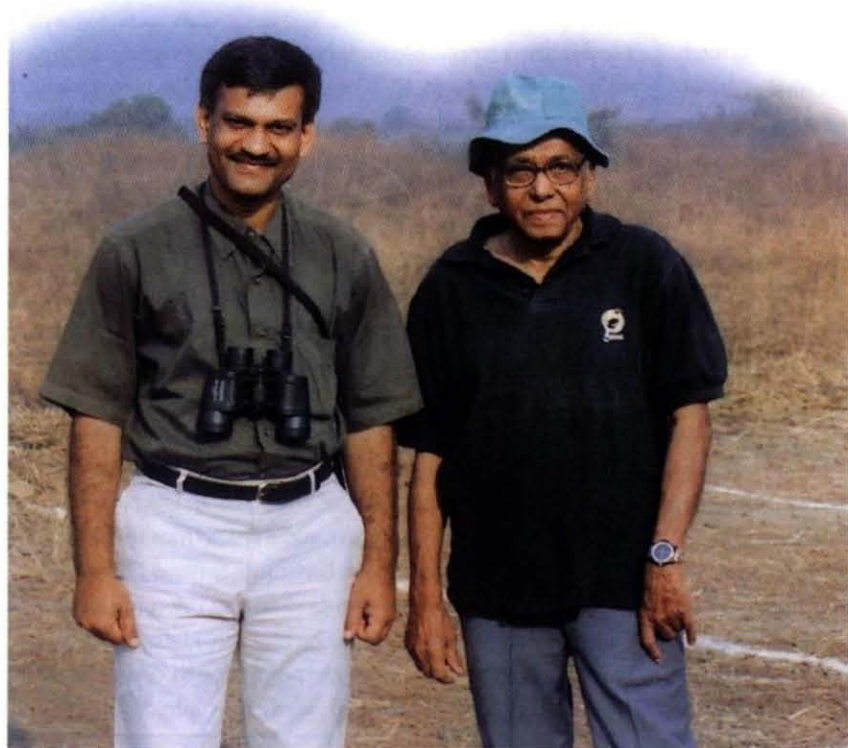
Although I did not get an opportunity to interact with Daniel Sir during my initial three years at BNHS, I felt privileged to have started my career at Mudumalai, a place where Mr. Daniel was instrumental in launching India's first radio collaring project on the Asian Elephant! The BNHS legacy set up by Mr. Daniel was so evident that a fresher like me was also treated like a VIP by the local forest department staff. It was only after I was absorbed as part of Conservation Education Centre (CEC) team based in Mumbai and asked to prepare a draft note on 'Role of Conservation Education in Formal Education System' by the Wildlife Advisory Board, Government of India, that I had my first interaction with Daniel Sir. I must mention here that whenever we developed educational material, such as interactive displays, field guides, wall

posters, booklets Daniel Sir always helped us voluntarily with his inputs. He would not only help us check the correctness of information, but also help make it grammatically perfect. What puzzled me the most was the speed at which he would give back the corrected proofs! This certainly helped me improve my English language skills. During the period I was heading the CEC (1999-2007), I was privileged to have Daniel Sir's mentoring to help evolve CEC as a significant entity, within and beyond BNHS.

His passion for and attachment with the forest land, donated to BNHS by the Government of Maharashtra during the BNHS Centenary year celebration, was clearly visible. His efforts to initiate a vegetation monitoring programme around CEC involving BNHS members on weekends gave many of the members a first-hand opportunity to become 'citizen scientists'. Daniel Sir's 75th birthday was celebrated by planting a banyan tree at CEC in the presence of his family and the members of BNHS staff. That was when I experienced that the BNHS staff was very much a part of his extended family in real sense. He always cared for the well-being of staff members and very often gave advice to a newbie like me on saving some money for retirement! I do regret having missed the opportunity of being his last Ph.D. student!

While I attempt to capture some of my memories associated with Daniel Sir, I am overwhelmed ... my mind is flooded with so many fond memories and learning experiences that articulating my thoughts is becoming a challenge. It is almost similar to the emotions I experienced when I faced my first job interview at the BNHS! ❀

Mr. Prashant Mahajan has worked with the BNHS from 1993 to 2008. He was heading the CEC and IBA programme. Currently he is working with the Earthwatch Institute.



ASAD R. RAHMANI

With Prashant Mahajan at the plantation programme at CIDCO land, Mumbai, on February 06, 2007

J.C. Daniel – A Eulogy

Rishad Naoroji

I knew JC from my school days. At that time, even though I wasn't officially a member I would attend talks at the Bombay Natural History Society (BNHS) often with my father. JC, the then curator, was always present.

At my 18th birthday, my father presented me with a BNHS life membership. My involvement with the BNHS increased and I got to know Daniel well over the years.

I became interested in raptors post

college days and was encouraged by JC in those early years.

Gradually, I organized trips to mainly Gujarat and Rajasthan, to study the breeding biology of raptors and became experienced in locating nests, the first requisite for studying breeding of different raptor species. JC also took me to Sálím Ali who was keen that I study the breeding biology of the Great Pied Hornbill (*Buceros bicornis*). I don't think Sálím Ali was too happy when I mentioned I wanted

to concentrate on raptors. With JC's guidance, most of the breeding work done was published in the *JBNHS*.

JC was devoted to the BNHS – it was his life. He was also very sensitive to staff needs. It is fitting that during the last few years, he became Vice President of his beloved Society. He will be missed. ♣

Mr. Rishad Naoroji is currently a member of the BNHS Governing Council.

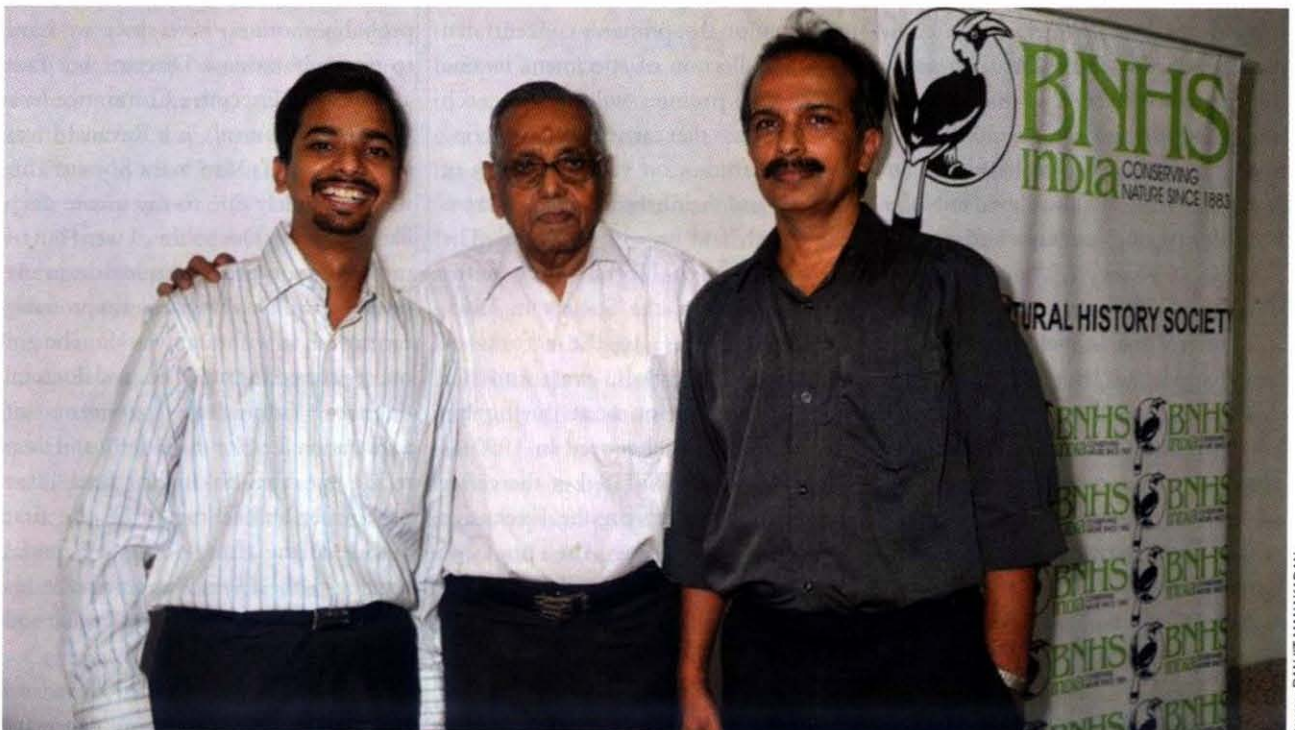
The End of an Era

Ranjit Manakadan

'Hello sir, how are you?' I asked. 'I am fine Ranjit, but I am on my way out' he said with a faint laugh! That was his response over the phone on August 10th, 2011, after he came back to his residence in Sion in Mumbai after hospitalization. The tests revealed that

he had cancer and that his days were numbered. "And, how is the FIELD GUIDE doing", referring to his last publication, BIRDS OF THE INDIAN SUBCONTINENT – A FIELD GUIDE. The FIELD GUIDE is an avatar of PICTORIAL GUIDE authored by Dr. Sálím Ali and S. Dillon Ripley, which was till

the early 1990s the most coveted field guide for Indian birds along with THE BOOK OF INDIAN BIRDS by Sálím Ali. Almost every birdwatcher had a copy of the publication, which was first published in 1983 during the Bombay Natural History Society Centenary celebrations.



With Mr. Nikhil Bhopale (left) and Dr. Ranjit Manakadan (right) at release of the book titled BIRDS OF THE INDIAN SUBCONTINENT - A FIELD GUIDE

Source: RANJIT MANAKADAN

On reaching Mumbai on the 20th morning, I went to see him at his residence in Sion. On meeting, he at once enquired about the sales of the book. He was on the whole cheerful, and except for saying very briefly “it is time for me to go” and that he had “progressed” from the “chair stage” to “bed stage”, wasted no time in being gloomy or talking about his pains. His thoughts were only on the Society.

I met him another time, a few hours before his demise in hospital. He looked drained, but again the first question and the last comment during my visit were on the FIELD GUIDE. It gave him so much happiness to know that the book was being appreciated and selling well. The revision of the PICTORIAL GUIDE was a project very close to his heart, and which he first took up during 2000. The publication had over the years become outdated, it had its inaccuracies and deficiencies, and a major drawback was that it was a pure pictorial guide without text on the descriptive features of the species. The arrival of new field guides by European birders from the 1990s posed an ominous challenge for the PICTORIAL GUIDE. While others took this lying down, Mr. Daniel, a fighter by nature and who had an ability of ‘making things happen’, picked up the challenge, not willing to throwing away the Society’s legacy. He asked me to help as a co-author, and later we also roped in Nikhil Bhopale, a young, hardcore birder of the Society. The story of our journey to resurrect the PICTORIAL GUIDE is a long and difficult one and which witnessed a lot of opposition, but as they say “all’s well that ends well”. Other than this last book of Mr. Daniel, his other major publications are THE BOOK OF INDIAN REPTILES AND AMPHIBIANS, THE LEOPARD IN INDIA, and NATURAL HISTORY AND THE INDIAN ARMY.

Mr. Daniel had an association of 60 long years with the Society. A Tamilian, from Kanyakumari district of Tamil Nadu, he did his schooling in Thiruvananthapuram. He then studied in

Madras Christian College (Chennai) to obtain his post-graduate degree in Zoology. After this, as he says in an article, “feeling on top of the world”, he audaciously thought himself suitable for the advertised post of Curator in the BNHS in 1950, which he had never heard of till then! To his dismay, he was offered the post of Research Assistant. The staff at the BNHS then consisted of about a dozen odd individuals, distributed between a room in H. Phipson’s office and the Natural History Section of the Prince of Wales Museum (now called the Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Vastu Sangrahalaya). Sálim Ali and Humayun Abdulali served as the Honorary and Joint Honorary secretaries. During the initial five year stint in the BNHS, he picked up all his skills on the study of natural history, including taxidermy, museum organization and editing the *Journal*, punctuated with frequent field trips mainly with Sálim Ali and Humayun Abdulali. He then left to join the Natural History Museum at Darjeeling as Curator, but fortunately for the Society, returned in 1960 to head it as Curator. From then on, Mr. Daniel was witness to the Society’s growth from an organization that primarily concentrated on the collection of specimens to one of India’s premier wildlife research organizations that carried out pioneering in-depth studies on various species of animals and their habitats, spread across the length and breadth of India. The establishment of Hornbill House, the headquarters of the Society in 1965, built largely due to the efforts of Humayun Abdulali, was another significant development during his tenure. Mr. Daniel retired in 1990 as Director of the BNHS, but thereafter served the Society on the Executive Committee holding the post of Honorary Secretary for some years, and then Vice President till his demise. Other than the BNHS, he represented the boards of various national and international committees and was given a number of awards, including the

prestigious Sir Peter Scott Award and Indira Gandhi Paryavaran Puraskar.

As for what a person Mr. Daniel was actually like, I think very few really knew. Even while talking to you, he appeared to be looking into the distance with his soft, brown and rounded eyes, pondering about something. Basically, he was a very private person. I think that this, besides being basically a Cancerian trait, was because he preferred to spend more time on working, reading and editing more than anything else. People were a disturbance most of the time except when it concerned work. In the BNHS, he chatted only when he wanted a small break from his work. If so, he would call you, enquire about the progress of some job given, or ask about the happenings in a project and how the field personnel were doing. But again, this would be brief, and the signal for you to leave was when he rubbed his palms together! And if you still did not get the message, he would rub them more briskly, get up and go saying “Okay, I have some work in the library!” It was only in the field outings that he opened up and talked about other things. As with all institutions, there has always been politics in the BNHS, and probably more so here since we have to not only tackle a Director but face a 12-headed Executive Committee (*now* Governing Council), *a la* Ravana! I was termed ‘Daniel’s Man’ in the Society. This was true solely due to my innate deep liking for him. Due to this, I went out of my way to not earn his displeasure in any possible way. This fondness was probably reciprocal, as without my asking, he got me registered for my M.Sc. and doctoral degrees (including payment of registration fees for the latter!), and then made me the co-author and later practically bullied me to be the first author of the FIELD GUIDE. My initial articles in the *Hornbill* were also at his goading, and I picked up my writing and editing skills from him.

Mr. Daniel was quite stubborn and could be a (mild) bully too – necessary when you are running an organization

like the BNHS! He displayed a natural, but at the same time not overbearing dominance over others – no wonder he thought himself fit for the post of Curator of the BNHS soon after graduation! During the 1980s and 1990s, he was well-known for his daily rounds to all the floors and corners of departments of Hornbill House, during which unfortunate employees caught chatting, reading newspapers or napping got quite a dose of his unnerving pugilist-like stare or a short outburst. Not many know that he had been a chain smoker in his early days, and would puff cigarette after cigarette as he worked – till health problems arose. In the earlier days, he would quite readily give the boot to staff who transgressed – including nearly me on one occasion! By nature and probably further moulded by having worked with Sálím Ali, he was a stickler for punctuality, discipline, frugality in use of funds, doing hard work without looking at the watch or bothering about holidays, and not cribbing about salaries or job security issues. He expected others to be like him, little realizing that people had their own opinions, priorities and problems, which gave rise to discontent and ill-will towards him. However, at the same time, there was a contrasting ‘weakness’ of warm heartedness, decency, gullibility and readiness to say sorry, probably influenced by his Christian upbringing, which was exploited by manipulative staff. These so called weaknesses grew as he aged. The three cases of employees who committed suicide over the years due to family or/and financial problems and the dire status of others who became jobless after projects ended or for other reasons troubled him a lot. Towards the end, he took personal efforts to provide financial help to the families of former and existing staff plagued by difficulties, especially towards education and medical expenses.

Coming to other things, Mr. Daniel was the only one in the BNHS who never said no to anyone, however junior, to perusal of a draft, report, thesis or paper

on the grounds of being too busy, and he completed it promptly. *Sambhar* stains on a manuscript clearly showed that he started work even while having breakfast! His editing skills were legendary. A letter to him very rarely went unanswered, even if it was from a small child writing from a remote corner of India – poor Shalet, his devoted steno for ages! He wrote a very enthralling prose and it is unfortunate that he did not write much – too busy with work I guess. On the other hand, he was not a good talker. His speeches were short, and if a little longer, were invariably supported by some text in hand. On the lighter side, he could crack jokes or pass unique comments, all narrated very casually with a smile and élan. A good one that I particularly remember is: “The (aged) airhostesses in Indian Airlines are okay Ranjit, but they should not smile as otherwise they would remind one of one’s mothers-in-law!” A snide remark to stop one of the former Directors of an institution from blowing his trumpet about his upcoming ‘monumental book’ was “Mr. _____, you will not cut yourself while shaving if you talk less”, quickly pointing to a cut on his chin! To a Forest Department official who was bragging about his breath control powers and stamina due to yoga practice, the retort was “Have you ever attempted to take a final deep breath”!

Mr. Daniel was not one bit religious. In my conversations with him, it appeared that he looked upon religion, ritual and beliefs as a waste of time. Probably, he did have a belief in a creator, but felt that it was better to let him/her/the thing stay in peace in its own abode than sing or chant praise about it, as there were so many projects to run, manuscripts to correct, books to read/write, and much more other interesting and better things to do. For him, human beings were all the same: Hindu, Christian, Muslim, Dravidian, Aryan, Caucasian, Arab, Mongol or African. He had told me once during a field trip that he wanted to be cremated in a

crematorium (which was adhered to by his family) than to have a Christian burial, as it is presently the quickest, non-polluting and cheapest way to dispose of corpses.

Mr. Daniel was not perfect, as none of us are. He made mistakes and policy decisions affecting employees and the Society at times. But overall, he cared for the Society and the welfare of its staff. Once, when he was having a particular bad patch in the BNHS, I asked him why not give it all up, retire, and write books from home. His response was that he could not live without coming to the BNHS and being engaged in work. He needed to see Hornbill House and its occupants every day as he had been associated with it for very long. The Society became an extension of him, it was his flesh and blood, and he could not survive without it. For many of us at the BNHS, especially as he aged, he took on the role of a grand, old patriarch. The tears that so many shed at his funeral were a testimony to this.

Mr. Daniel’s demise signifies the end of an era of the BNHS: an era when he and men like Charles McCann, S.H. Prater, H. Whistler, Sálím Ali, Humayun Abdulali, S. Dillon Ripley, Zafar Futehally and Loke Wan Tho roamed the (then) unspoiled and vast Indian wilderness documenting its flora and fauna, with much less worries and with much more time to ‘stand and wonder’. I had suggested to Mr. Daniel that after the *FIELD GUIDE*, he write a semi-autobiographical account of his days in the BNHS and the story of that bygone era, but then fate decided otherwise. May his soul rest in peace, however, I am sure he would be much happier if God gave him ‘some work to do there’, and there were frogs, toads, lizards, snakes, birds, wild buffalos and elephants to watch and document in the Garden of Eden. 🍀

Dr. Ranjit Manakadan has been working with the BNHS since the early 1980s. He is presently an Assistant Director at the BNHS.

J.C. Daniel – A Career Maker

Ragupathy Kannan

I have always wondered if Mr. J.C. Daniel, my mentor for over 20 years, had a self-imposed limit to the size of letters he sent me. They were invariably no more than four or five lines — terse, polite, to-the-point, and highly effective. A four-liner he sent me when I was in Belize, training for my doctoral programme at the University of Arkansas in the summer of 1989, changed my life. “I suggest you study hornbills in the Western Ghats, because they are threatened with habitat destruction and

Looking back, I am glad he coaxed me to stretch my frontiers. My two-year tenure in Bharatpur lead to two rewarding graduate programmes in the United States, and then a fulfilling career teaching tropical ecology at the University of Arkansas, Fort Smith. I still study hornbills in the Western Ghats. I wouldn't be where I am without Mr. Daniel's guidance and inspiration.

When I was in Bharatpur, I was eager to do my M.Sc. in bird biology through the BNHS via field research. Due to bureaucratic and other reasons, it never



C.K. AJITH KUMAR

With Ragupathy Kannan (standing fifth from left) and Dr. Sálim Ali at Bharatpur in 1984

loss of large trees for nesting,” he wrote, and this set me on a decades-long pursuit towards research in hornbill conservation, which continues to this day.

Thanks to that letter and many more that followed wherever my journeys took me from the Western Ghats to Arkansas, many lives were touched for the better. I trained many students on this path and some of them are reputed in their fields today. I continue to guide students toward careers in conservation.

Mr. Daniel hired me in 1983 to work for the Bombay Natural History Society Hydrobiology project in Bharatpur. I asked to be sent to their station in Point Calimere (Tamil Nadu), since it is geographically and culturally closer to my home town of Chennai. He urged me to get out of my comfort zone and seek new vistas.

materialized, leaving me frustrated and discouraged. Mr. Daniel was a rock of support through it all. He suggested I do my M.Sc. traditionally. In one of his letters he said that a traditional M.Sc. with a broad variety of courses could be better for me because the M.Sc. by research alone tends to be rather too narrowly focused. He was correct. The two traditional M.Sc. degrees I earned prior to my doctorate gave me such a vast array of experience and training that they prepared me for a career doing effective science.

Some people have the remarkable ability and the big-heartedness to reach out and profoundly influence lives for the better. Mr. Daniel was one such person. ♣

Dr. Ragupathy Kannan is a faculty at the Biology Department since 1994 at the University of Arkansas — Fort Smith, U.S.A.

J.C. Daniel, as I Knew Him

Robert B. Grubb

September 14, 1964, was the day I stepped into ‘White House’ in Malabar Hill, Bombay (now Mumbai), which lodged the Bombay Natural History Society until we moved into Hornbill House, adjacent to the then Prince of Wales Museum. I was one of the candidates to be interviewed for the post of Junior Research Assistant. Mr. Zafar Futehally, Mr. Dinshaw Panday, Mr. Humayun Abdulali and Mr. J.C. Daniel were on the interview panel, all of whom I was meeting for the first time. Mr. Daniel, the Curator of BNHS (equivalent to the present Director's post), was extremely kind; he trained me in the art of identification of species and collection maintenance, which gave me first hand opportunity to study the vast collection of mammals and birds that fascinated me. Over this period, he gave me various opportunities and responsibilities to prove my worth. The happiest memories of him that I cherish are when he used to take morning rounds of the bird/mammal gallery, where I was working in the beginning. His broad smile of appreciation and technical suggestions on what I was doing with the specimens were something I always looked forward to and enjoyed.

But for me mere working with the collections was not enough. I went and stood before him one day, “When am I going to do the hard field work that was specified as a job requirement in the advertisement?” He smiled, and said it would be soon. By next summer I was on an expedition to Bastar forests, in the then Madhya Pradesh, along with Mr. Daniel and Dr. George B. Schaller, the man who did pioneering work on primates in Africa. Our mission was to study the status of the Wild Buffalo (*Bubalus bubalis*) in Bastar area. We walked

long distances in the jungle every day, in scorching heat, for a glimpse of the elusive buffalo, and slept out in the forest with trees and stars as our canopy. Once I suddenly woke up in the middle of the night with the feeling that a cow licked my face, an experience familiar back at home where I grew up in a farm house with cows and hens. When I opened my eyes into the bright starlit night, I saw silhouettes of a startled herd of buffaloes making a hasty retreat from the scene. There were no domestic buffaloes in the area! When I disclosed this in the morning, Mr. Daniel heard it with a kind broad smile, which said, "the boy had a good dream". However, we did see a herd of wild buffaloes, including a huge male the next morning, some standing and some lying down in the shallow waters of Indravati river, with a peacock with a long train standing majestically on a large roundish rock in the water next to the buffaloes. Mr. Daniel made me, a raw hand, his co-author for the buffalo survey report, which was published in the *JBNHS* (1966, Vol. 63, 32-52).

Soon I was sent on field surveys to various destinations in the Indian subcontinent, including the Andamans, Nicobars, Himalaya and Western Ghats; and on bird banding operations to wetlands in Bihar, Rajasthan, and Tamil Nadu. It was all fun, and I would often wonder why they have to pay for such an enjoyable profession. These field programmes gave first hand knowledge on the habitats of birds, and also helped me to learn to identify bird species in the hand and in the field. Just by touching a bird in a dark basket or a bird bag I could tell the species and even subspecies apart: Garganey *Anas querquedula* from Common Teal *Anas crecca* and the House Sparrow *Passer domesticus* from the local migratory House Sparrow *P.d. parkini*, for example. All the same, the bird banding operations, which were carried out virtually every day during every winter and summer, fell into a pattern and got me thinking. There was a steady decline

in the amount of new knowledge one could gain ... we banded water birds during the first half of the day, transferred data in the afternoon, and caught and banded land birds late in the evening and at night.

It was during this period, while I was on a brief visit to the BNHS headquarters, that Mr. Daniel called me to his cabin, "Robert, would you like to join a team of field biologists, with Mrs. Almitra Patel as Project Leader, who are to spend two years in the Gir Forest?" God speaking through Mr. Daniel! I jumped for it. The aim of the project was to save the Asiatic Lion from

Bird Hazard project, which was headed by me, included 22 airports covering most parts of India. This and the rest of the field projects were successfully completed because of the most able research administration of Mr. Daniel, who made sure that the researchers out in the field promptly received supplies, reimbursements and other much needed administrative cover.

Mr. Daniel had enormous trust in me. A year after I returned from the Gir, when he had to visit the US for three months, he made me officiate in his place as Curator. That was a big responsibility for an inexperienced young man, but his brief



With Robert Grubh at a conference

Source: ROBERT B. GRUBH

extinction, and I was to study the vultures, then abundant there, which often visited the lion kills. He said, I could turn my field research on vultures into a dissertation under Dr. Sálím Ali. The Gir Project was a turning point in my life and also in the field activities of the BNHS. The Collection expeditions and bird banding operations had led to field ecological research projects, such as (i) Population and Movement of Indian Avifauna, (ii) Bharatpur Wetland Ecology project, (iii) Ecology of Point Calimere, (iv) Elephant Ecology project and (v) Ecological Control of Bird Hazard at Indian Aerodromes, for the BNHS. The

to all administrative staff to extend full cooperation to me did wonders. When he returned, everything was in order and much work was accomplished too.

Thinking back, I must say often I did not repay the kindness showered upon me by Mr. Daniel over the years. I wanted everything right, the way I thought was 'right'. In the process of achieving it, I made a few thoughtless moves, which were most unpleasant and deeply hurt Mr. Daniel. I realised my mistakes much later and apologised to him. True to him, he had no grudge in his heart and his broad smile, a different type this time, said it all.

Mr. Daniel loved his staff and the BNHS members, who built and shaped the culture of the Society. He grieved when a number of temporary project staff were to be terminated with the closure of many field projects. His major desire to establish the Salim Ali Centre for Ornithology and Natural History (SACON) was, as he openly confessed, to accommodate those deserving researchers who were to be axed.

After Mr. Zafar Futehally, who was the Honorary Secretary for well over a decade, it was Mr. Daniel, along with Dr. Ashok Nanavati, who kept the BNHS members together as a family of nature lovers.

Mr. Daniel is not with us any more. Nor are Dr. Salim Ali and many others who laid the foundation and also watered and nurtured the Society. All of us living today, too, will go away from this scene one after the other. The living ones are not necessarily better or more fortunate than those who went ahead, just because we are yet living. In eternity, each one is given a fixed time slot, which varies in length from person to person. While we have no control over the length of this time slot, we have a good deal of authority and control over the way we use this precious time period. This is where our accountability comes in, for the quality of life that we lead, rather than the quantity of life that we live. The Bible says, 'It is appointed for every human being to die once; and then there is judgement'.

Mr. Daniel used most of his time with and for the Society. His last wish was to come to Hornbill House, 'just one more time'. It did not materialize though. While Mr. Daniel is no more with us, he comes alive in every nook and corner of Hornbill House; and he continues to exist in the sweet memory of every member and staff of the BNHS who was associated with him in some way. ❀

Mr. Robert Grubh was a BNHS staff from 1963-1993. He specializes in field ornithological surveys, wetland conservation and bird-strike hazard to aviation.

How Daniel Sir's Article and Letter Changed my Life!

Rajat Bhargava

My biology teacher Ms. Sudha Bhatnagar was the only person who encouraged my interest in birds, and supported me saying that there are many doctors and engineers around, but since I was the only one with such interest, I must pursue my career in birds. At that stage, I could only think of bird-keeping and had no idea of becoming an ornithologist. The first time I read about bird research was in a special issue on Indian birds in *The Illustrated Weekly of India*. In my early childhood, the only bird book I had seen was THE BIRDS (Life Nature Library Series) by Roger Tony Peterson, which was in my father's book collection. While in Class XI and on my 16th birthday, I was gifted three bird books, including Salim Ali's and Dillon Ripley's PICTORIAL GUIDE TO BIRDS OF INDIAN SUBCONTINENT. Since I disliked reading then, I mostly looked at the bird illustrations, but I still managed to recognize more than 200 bird species from it by the local trade names.

Seeing my obsession with birds, some of my family friends advised that I meet Dr. Salim Ali, as he had been nominated as a Member of the Rajya Sabha for a two year term (1985 to 1987), and therefore would be coming to Delhi often. Doordarshan, the only television channel in India at that time occasionally telecast a short film on Dr. Salim Ali with shots of mist-netting a White-breasted Kingfisher (*Halcyon smyrnensis*), which made me keen to meet Dr. Salim Ali. However, while watching the evening news in 1987, I heard the news of Salim Ali's death, and felt lost. Fate was again kind to me, as after sometime, I came across a touching article titled *Unforgettable Salim Ali* by Mr. J.C. Daniel in the November 1988 issue of the *Readers Digest*. This article inspired me to become a full-time ornithologist. I then wrote to Daniel Sir about his extremely well-written article and my desire to pursue my career in birds. To my utter surprise, he answered my letter within a week advising that I complete my B.Sc. degree first (with a first class!) and then do my masters in Wildlife Science. The second person associated with the BNHS I met was Vivek Menon, who was working for an M.Sc. degree via research on the Brahminy Kite (*Haliastur indus*). He visited my locality in Meerut to look into birds in trade, and I remember proudly showing him Daniel Sir's letter.

As advised, I subsequently completed a degree in Wildlife Science from Aligarh Muslim University, and was also fortunate to have Dr. Asad Rahmani as my first teacher, who was earlier with the BNHS (and is now the Director). After some years, I had the chance to work with the BNHS twice, and also had the opportunity to meet Mr. Daniel and travel with him to Sri Lanka for the 2001 Pan Asia Ornithological Conference. On his return, he wrote in the Society's newsletter how he enjoyed my company and hearing my presentation on the Finn's Weaver (*Ploceus megarhynchus*), a favourite species of Salim Ali. Whenever I take a look at the group photo of participants taken in the Sri Lanka conference in my album, I feel a sense of loss now that he is no more, and additionally since Dr. Ravi Sankaran and Mr. S.A. Hussain, both former BNHSians, who also figure in the photo, are also no more with us. Another memorable occasion with Daniel Sir was when he was awarded the Indira Gandhi Paryavaran Puraskar award by the Ministry of Environment and Forests, Government of India in 2001 at Delhi, coinciding with the BNHS – organized international conference on vultures. I insisted after the workshop ended that all the organizing staff of BNHS should have a picture taken



Source: RAJAT BHARGAVA

With Rajat Bhargava (standing fifth from left in middle row) in Sri Lanka

with Daniel Sir, but Dr. Rahmani insisted that I (though not a BNHS staff) also figure in the picture!

It is with a heavy heart that I write all this. It is because of Daniel Sir's article and his prompt reply that transformed me from a local bird enthusiast to a full-time ornithologist, who especially works for bird conservation. Had he not written back, I would have been forced to become a lawyer

by my parents. Daniel Sir, thank you for changing my life by showing me the path to be with birds and pursue bird conservation full-time. 🍀

Mr. Rajat Bhargava is working on his Ph.D. at BNHS, under the supervision of Dr. Asad R. Rahmani. He is also an ornithological consultant, with special interest in the conservation of the threatened Finn's Baya and Green Munia.

“ India has had a blanket ban on trade in wild birds since 1991. The trade goes on merrily ... trapping and smuggling of birds has not been contained and is unlikely to be, considering the number of people who make a living out of it. The trappers have to be identified and alternative employment found for them. The BNHS, in its bird migration studies, uses trappers from different parts of the country and we have been impressed by the knowledge that they have of the species they trap. The Mirshikars of Bihar are particularly noteworthy. Ali Hussain, for instance, who has been working with the Society for the last three decades, can, from seeing the droppings of birds on the shore, predict with commendable accuracy the species he expects to trap in the night.

Ali Hussain, after working with the Society can identify in the dark, by touch only, the species in his collection basket before taking it out, and give its scientific name as well! There are similar talented trappers whose knowledge is being lost. It is now necessary to record this storehouse of information that trappers have on the behaviour and food habits of birds ... This could be one source of alternative employment for trappers.”

J.C. DANIEL – CASSANDRA OF CONSERVATION

Shri J.C. Daniel

Rashida Atthar

As a relatively new member in 2000, I was under the spell of the enchanting forest land of the Bombay Natural History Society (Conservation Education Centre - south end of Sanjay Gandhi National Park), and that is where I first met Mr. J.C. Daniel, a father figure, encouraging members for various activities. From whatever little, but significant, interactions I had with Mr. Daniel I began believing that his forte was to actually create practical opportunities, and encourage a member's interest to soar and develop through the right activities within the outreach of BNHS programmes. I was directly involved in two of his initiatives. The first was a meeting to brainstorm on subjects and format of workshops to enable more inputs from members interested in being resource persons for

activities at the CEC-BNHS. Although a senior and feted conservationist, he wrote letters asking for views of members and the areas of interest they wanted to get involved in. In August of 2002, he held a meeting where we had brainstorming sessions for the same; several ideas for subjects and modules were generated for workshops to better equip members interested in contributing to BNHS programmes. The second interesting activity in which I was directly involved is the 'Introduction to Conservation Education' (ICE) programme he started in 2006. Members were asked to select quadrates of their choice and study them over a period of time for their biodiversity. Mr. Daniel would be present every month, whilst we would go about observing the plants. What amazed me was the fact that he

was not required to be present, every month, and yet so enthusiastically he was present encouraging us and inquiring about our observations.

Members like me are enchanted and indebted to BNHS for the various nature activities, which has led us to connect with nature and learn more scientific facts in the process. Whilst listening to Mr. Daniel speak on various occasions at BNHS celebrations and seminars, I have always been fascinated at the depth of his scientific knowledge and how he could make it so interesting for everyone involved with the natural world. I will always remain grateful to Mr. Daniel for this. May his soul rest in peace. 🍀

Ms. Rashida Atthar is a Social Scientist, deeply interested in nature studies and education.

Missing J.C. Daniel Sir

Ravi K. Tawde

I joined BNHS in March 1988 as a *Shipai* and was asked to work in the library. Mr. Daniel checked on the workings of all departments, twice a day. He was particular about cleanliness and would never accept an excuse if a book or bookshelf was dusty. In fact, at times it would be frightening, as he worked sincerely and expected others to do the same.

I was fortunate to have worked with him in sorting journals and other publications, without getting

his 'famous' scolding! Appreciation for good work would be a pat on my back and a lift in his car to go home!

I was given a bravery award in 1997 at the Society's Annual General Meeting, but his pat on the back was more precious. I will miss his caring nature forever. 🍀

Mr. Ravi K. Tawde is presently Senior Office Attendant with the BNHS.

We are grateful to
SETH PURSHOTAMDAS THAKURDAS & DIVALIBA CHARITABLE TRUST
for a generous donation to the
Pratap Saraiya Hornbill Fund
to support the publication of *Hornbill*

JCD – The Rishi of Nature Hymns

Satish Pande

Several memories flood my thoughts when I think about Mr. J.C. Daniel. His inspiring voice, sprightly gait, warm nature, twinkle in his eyes, humorous smile, attention to detail, demand for perfection, and also his kind words and love, touch my mind. I pen two instances from the several meaningful exchanges that I had the honour to share with him. These experiences show his concern for conservation education and love for books.

The first is about an Ornithology Course. Some of us in Pune principally agreed to launch a study course in Ornithology for nature enthusiasts, for scientific study of birds. In December 2004, the first ‘The Certificate Course in Basic Ornithology’, jointly conducted by Ela Foundation and M.E.S. A.G. College, Pune, was announced. We wanted a distinguished ecologist to inaugurate this interactive course. One name that unanimously emerged was of Mr. J.C. Daniel. I was asked to invite JCD for this event because of my association with him.

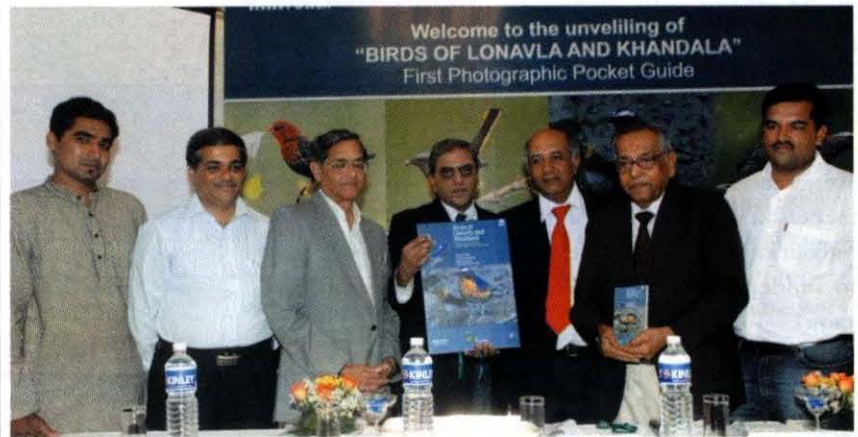
I spoke to JCD on the phone. As usual, he answered in a warm and inspiring voice. He liked the idea, as he said, “it was aimed at educating the common man”. I then went to his home in Sion to formally invite him to come to Pune with Mrs. Daniel, and inaugurate the Ornithology course, and also speak to the audience on a subject of his choice. A man of few words, he instantly said that he would speak on the ‘History of Indian Ornithology’. He said, “We should always remain indebted to the great people who have contributed to science, and keep their memories alive”. He then kindly presented to me the excellent compilation – A CENTURY OF NATURAL HISTORY that he had edited. Over a period of years, JCD gifted several books from his personal collection to me, for the ornithology and ecology library that we are proposing in Pune, under the auspices of Ela Foundation. His subsequent talk at the auditorium of Garware College,

Pune, was well received. I always informed JCD about the outcome of the Course that he had inaugurated and this made him happy.

The second experience is about our favourite subject, books. One morning in 2009, I received a call from JCD, then Secretary of the BNHS, with a request to meet him. With my friend Vivek Vishwasrao, I met him in the office of the Secretary. It is a sacred place, where we still feel the vibrant presence of the

to him in the mother tongue, conservation will be a reality”. He added with a smile, “Sálim Ali was from Maharashtra and he worked from Mumbai, you should do this book fast”. He regretted that the project had been attempted twice, but unsuccessfully. He had painstakingly revised the previous editions of the book.

I have completed translating THE BOOK OF INDIAN BIRDS in Marathi. The late President of BNHS, Mr. B.G. Deshmukh, was equally interested in the progress of



With Satish Pande (standing third from right) at the release of the book titled BIRDS OF LONAVLA AND KHANDALA - FIRST PHOTOGRAPHIC POCKET GUIDE

great luminaries in ornithology. JCD greeted us and in his direct manner simply asked me to translate THE BOOK OF INDIAN BIRDS in Marathi. He immediately handed me the copy of the thirteenth edition of this popular book by Dr. Sálim Ali. For a moment I did not believe my ears. It was a great responsibility. JCD was a distinguished and renowned scholar, but in spite of his tall stature he had a knack of not dwarfing others in his presence, but inspiring them to rise. JCD believed that I should do this work because it was in tune with my work of spreading conservation awareness about ornithology at the grassroots level. I remember his thoughts, and quote, “Sálim Ali’s book should be available to the Marathi speaking people of rural Maharashtra as quickly as possible. Conservation is a priority. If we empower the common man with knowledge given

the translation. Dr. Asad R. Rahmani, Director, BNHS, has always encouraged me in this project. The Marathi translation of Sálim Ali’s THE BOOK OF INDIAN BIRDS, will be our humble tribute and homage to the great man and ecologist that Mr. J.C. Daniel has been and shall always be, in spirit and in thought. He will continue to inspire future generations of nature lovers. In the words of P.B. Shelley, let me say for JCD,

*“And so thy thoughts when thou art gone,
love itself shall slumber on”.* 🍀

Dr. Satish Pande is Founder Director of Ela Foundation, Pune, and Fellow of the Maharashtra Academy of Sciences. He is an Interventional Vascular Radiologist and Associate Professor of Radiology at KEM Hospital, Pune.

J.C. Daniel: Memories of a Mentor

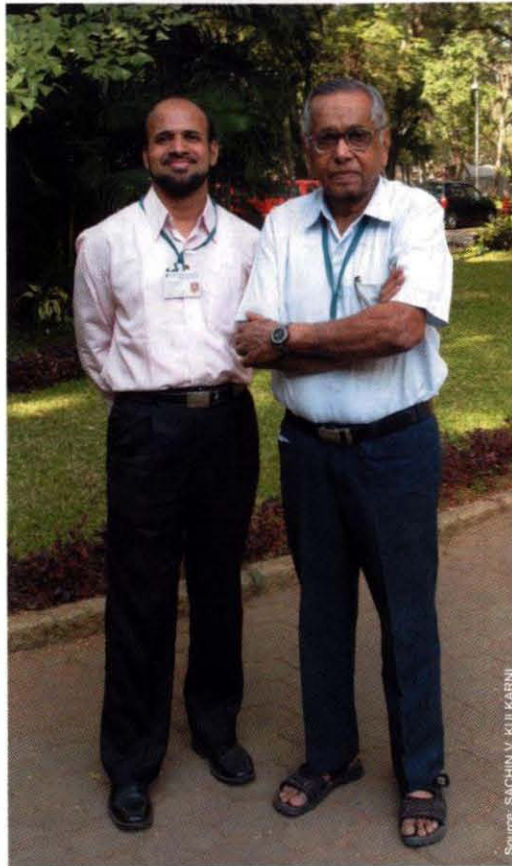
Sachin V. Kulkarni

It was an unwritten rule between me and Mr. Daniel that he would bid goodbye before leaving the office at around 4:00 p.m. I would then note his schedule for the next day. Whenever he left Hornbill House, he would come to my table before leaving and say, "Sachin, I'm off!". However, on August 23, when I received a call at 10:00 p.m. from Mr. Mathews, our Administrative Manager, to tell me that Mr. Daniel had passed away, I could not believe it. I had spoken to him in the afternoon on the same day and he had told me that he wanted me to see him the next day. Most unbelievable was the fact that the person who never left the office without informing me, left the world so suddenly, without letting me know!

I joined BNHS in 1990 when I was 17 and half. Mr. Daniel was not present when I was interviewed; later he called me and said, "It seems you have all plans to put me behind bars – I am appointing a person who is seventeen and a half!" not yet 18, this was illegal. But as usual, he found a solution, and I was appointed as a trainee on apprenticeship with a stipend, not as salaried staff, and sent to Bharatpur. I was made permanent after I completed 18 years of age, as he appreciated my efforts and wished me to have a long association with the BNHS.

When I came back to Mumbai and reported at Hornbill House after working for five months at Bharatpur, I met Mr. Daniel. He was happy to know that I had learnt to use a computer at Bharatpur and immediately issued instructions that I should be allowed to use one for my work.

Besides working at the BNHS, I enrolled in an evening college and took psychology as a major subject. Mr. Daniel



On the occasion of International Conference in Bengaluru, February 18, 2009

would keep a thorough check on my attendance at college and my progress. I still remember the pat on my back that he gave me when I informed him that I had secured a first grade in Standard 12.

Though he retired in March 1991, he remained associated with the Society as Honorary Secretary and then as Vice President, and this long association gave me numerous opportunities to be with him and learn many things from him. I learnt the importance of sending an acknowledgement as soon as I received a letter, paper or document, to prioritize my work, to maintain professionalism, to strive for excellent communication skills, and most importantly, how to be a good administrator.

I had heard much about his famous

short temper, but by the time I joined the BNHS he had mellowed. However, once during a meeting, after a heated argument with one of the Committee members, he walked out in anger. The next day he briefed me about the incident, to which I listened patiently. I said that getting angry or leaving a meeting was okay, but such moments should not affect his health. After this, whenever he got angry with anybody at office, he would call me and say, "I know you won't like it, but I fired that idiot anyway, but I am fine!"

He would make it a point to remain in touch with me whenever I was sick. In 2010, I was hospitalized with a severe lung infection in Nagpur. He would call me regularly to enquire about my health. However, he was not convinced about the treatment that was being given to me, so finally he spoke to the doctor and made sure that I got the correct treatment.

BNHS was his extended family. He was a father figure to everybody, equally concerned about the staff and their families. He would get worried whenever any staff was in trouble and in fact, more worried and restless if he was unable to extend any assistance to that staff. He personally saw to it that the daughter of an ex-BNHS scientist, who had died under tragic circumstances, would be able to continue her studies.

The only lasting memory for me is to see him writing or reading either a paper, file, or scientific article. By now, I am sure, he must have been allotted a place in heaven where he must be busy reading or writing on natural history, to which he gave a lifetime! ♣

Mr. Sachin V. Kulkarni is Manager (Projects) at the BNHS.

My Impressions of J.C. Daniel

Shailaja Grubh

On my first day at Hornbill House in September 1967, when I joined as a Junior Research Assistant, Mr. J.C. Daniel took me around the bird and mammal collection, and also to the library. He told me that I could use the library as often as I wanted. It was like opening a treasure trove for me. Then he introduced me to the Entomologist Mr. N.T. Nadkarni, a soft spoken elderly gentleman, and gave me a seat next to him. I was the only lady staff then, and initially I was scared as it was my first job; but Mr. Daniel was like a father figure, caring and understanding.

Soon I became a part of the Bombay Natural History Society family. Mr. Daniel encouraged me to learn the keys to identify small mammals. When the identification was correct he would appreciate it with a smile. Every morning and afternoon he would come around the Collection section, to see the progress of work from each staff member.

Later on, when Mr. Raut, the then nature education organizer, retired, Mr. Daniel wanted me to take up his position as I knew Marathi, the local language and was comfortable conversing with Marathi youngsters. He also encouraged me to go with birdwatching groups to get acquainted with birds and other aspects of nature.

By this time I had started writing columns on natural history in a Marathi newspaper. Whenever my article was published, I would show it to him; I loved his smile of appreciation. He also happily permitted me to use photographs of mammals from an earlier edition of

THE BOOK OF INDIAN ANIMALS by S.H. Prater, for my Marathi book *Maharashtra til Vanyaprani* (Wildlife of Maharashtra), which was published by the Maharashtra State Board for Science and Literature.

During the centenary year of the BNHS, when Mrs. Indira Gandhi visited the Society he gave me and other staff members equal opportunity to meet her.

In the 1980s, there was only one telephone line at the Society, and that too in Mr. Daniel's room. As a result, the staff members would avoid receiving personal calls. But my elder sister, who was working for Voltas, would invariably call me once in two or three days; yet he never hesitated to pass on the phone calls to me.

My years with the Society were educative and inspiring under Mr. Daniel's leadership. Most staff found a sense of belonging to BNHS under his able leadership. Every scientific staff had to maintain a diary of the work done, and obtain his signature once a month. It was a good and essential habit that I cultivated and continue with till today, 18 years after I quit the BNHS along with Robert.

Mr. Daniel's handwriting was extremely good. I think, no one would forget his long train-like signature too. Today, he is not amongst us, but he will be remembered by both staff and the members of the BNHS family. 🍀

Mrs. Shailaja Grubh was BNHS staff from 1967-1993. She specializes in conducting nature education activities and writing books on birds, animals and other natural history subjects.

A Pat on the Back

Santosh Mhapsekar

Even today, I feel proud to say that I am Mr. Daniel's find. I joined the Society in December 1976, and my entry to the BNHS was special – I was escorted by Mr. Daniel himself in his own vehicle!

His discipline would be frightening as one would never know when he would come to check what one was doing. When I was handling the despatch section, I had to at times stay after office hours to complete the posting, and would be late the next day. On observing this on a couple of occasions, one day Mr. Daniel came to my table and after praising me for my hard work, he advised me to be punctual, to maintain office

discipline. He himself was punctual and maintained office discipline throughout his life.

I learnt from him to be honest in discharging responsibilities, without expectations. Though at times, the rewards were not monetary, the pat on the back would more than compensate it. He was a perfectionist and would try to inculcate the same in his staff also.

Not only was he caring about me, he was very fond of my daughter, Puja, who was doing quite well in her studies. He used to talk to her very affectionately whenever she gave him a courtesy call.

He was a disciplinarian, hard task master, but also had a good sense of humour. In 1983, while despatching a letter meant to be sent to USA, I mistakenly sent it to UK. I was forgiven by Mr. Daniel for this unpardonable mistake. However, while introducing the staff to the delegation that came for the BNHS Centenary Celebration in 1983, he introduced me as a hard working and efficient staff member, and added "He is so efficient that he sends letters meant for USA to UK!". 🍀

Mr. Santosh Mhapsekar is presently the Officer (Sales) at the BNHS.

My Memories of Daniel Sir

Shalet Alva

'The superior man is modest in his speech, but exceeds in his action' thus goes a famous saying by Confucius. So was Daniel Sir, a man of few words, but great knowledge and understanding, my teacher and guide, and someone I cared for like my own father.

Hailing from Mangalore, I joined the Bombay Natural History Society in 1981 as Personal Assistant to the late Mr. S.A. Hussain in the US Fish and Wildlife Service funded Avifauna Project. I remember the first time Hussain Sir took me to Daniel Sir's room, to introduce me to him. He was the Director (then termed Curator) and I was virtually trembling as I entered the room. However, he put me at ease immediately with a gentle smile, saying a simple hello! I took an instant liking to him like many in the BNHS.

After the project, I was absorbed as an office staff and worked mostly for Daniel Sir. Working for Daniel Sir was not easy. He was extremely punctual in terms of time and work, and I would be loaded with dictations to take and letters to type. However, his kindness, politeness and habit of using the word 'please' often made up for these grinding hours. He was very particular about replying to letters of BNHS members and others, and almost no query went unanswered. He was sociable, but preferred to interact with people through correspondence. After retirement as Director, he became the Honorary Secretary of BNHS, and though age had caught up with him, continued to work with the same energy and zeal – this time without a salary! A common sentence which Daniel Sir loved to sign off in his letters to old colleagues and friends as he crossed his 80s was "I am still active"! Though Daniel Sir was a bit impatient, and expected sincerity and good work from staff, he basically had a soft heart, and would put up with employees as far as possible, mainly since he knew that behind every employee, there was a family.

After knowing about his illness, I was heartbroken as I had regarded him as a replacement for my father who had passed away in 1990. I went to see him in his home a few days before his demise. He spoke to me with a pale smile, and also asked me to send him a copy of the Centenary issue of *Hornbill*, as he wanted to refer to it to write an article. His thoughts even at this stage of his illness were on the BNHS and work. Such was his love for the Society. I remember the last sentence that Daniel Sir said to me "Shalet, I am almost out". These words hit me like a stone thrown on my head, as I knew then that I would be losing someone again as precious as my father. The last letter I typed for him was on 16th August (he passed away on the 23rd) addressed to Dr. Erach Bharucha, former Executive Committee member. It said that he was glad that he had been able to complete the reading and submitting the report of Dr. Bharucha's student's thesis. This shows that he was working almost till the end.

Thank you Daniel Sir for everything, and I can only pray to Almighty God that your soul rests in peace. ♣

Mrs. Shalet Alva has been closely associated with late Mr. J.C. Daniel for almost 20 years and is presently a Secretary at the BNHS.

A Caring Disciplinarian

Shantaram V. Karambele

With mixed feelings, I carried Mr. Daniel's coffin on 24th August, 2011 from the ground floor to his residence on the third floor. I was shocked when I heard that Mr. Daniel, our father figure, had passed away.

I first met him on 2nd May, 1977, when he was the Director of BNHS and interviewed me for the post of *shipai*. After some casual questions I was appointed and along with other office work also entrusted the responsibility to accompany members for birdwatching at Sanjay Gandhi National Park every Sunday morning. That is when I gradually came to know Mr. Daniel. The first thing was his punctuality. The second was his energy; it was amazing. He would walk from Borivli railway station to Kanheri caves with members, sometimes alone, during the nature trail.

One thing I realized, even now as I look back, was that there were two sides to Mr. Daniel, one a disciplinarian and hard taskmaster in the office, the other a typical head of the family, caring, in the field. There was an open invitation to all members present, especially to Class IV employees, after nature trails, to take a lift in his car from SGNP to their destinations on his way back home.

He was very particular about work and always appreciated hardworking staff. Any staff, who when busy, tried to stand up out of respect on seeing him, would be asked to "Carry on."

I am grateful for his caring attitude towards the entire staff, and their families. Whenever he had any useful household equipment to be sold or discarded, he would first enquire whether anybody was interested in them, they were welcome to take whatever they wanted.

Though he was short-tempered, and one would often be scolded, he would soon forget it. In fact, irrespective of the class of employee, he would also apologize if he had scolded any staff for no fault of theirs. I will always remember him as an elder of my family. ♣

Mr. Shantaram V. Karambele is Senior Office Attendant with the BNHS.

My Interactions with Mr. J.C. Daniel

Sunil R. Zaveri

First impressions are always stated to be lasting impressions. My very first interaction with Mr. J.C. Daniel was also the first meeting with Dr. Sálím Ali, when I had visited the Bombay Natural History Society for the very first time, more than 30 years ago, when I wanted to be a member of our esteemed Society, as an extremely self-conscious 14 year old gawky teenager.

My membership form was 'approved' by Mr. J.C. Daniel who was not visible, at a first glance, as he was behind a huge pile of books and journals. He somehow managed to get away from his work, shifted his chair so that he could see me and asked me questions about my interests in natural history, etc. I replied that it was mainly the birds that interested me.

He looked at me for a few minutes and suddenly decided to introduce me

to the grand old man of Indian ornithology, Dr. Sálím Ali. It was this, so very spontaneous action on his side that not only felt good, but also made me feel pleasantly welcomed to the Society. Thus, my very first meeting with Mr. Daniel had a life-time bonus of meeting Dr. Sálím Ali for the first time.

During the course of my stint on the Executive Committee as an Honorary Treasurer, he and I had a very passionate love and hate relationship. We argued, debated, discussed a lot of day to day issues of the Society, many a times parting without agreeing on a particular issue, or worse, angry or upset with each other's stubbornness and / or unwilling to see from the other person's perspective. He was as passionate with the hands-on day-to-day affairs and workings of the Society, staff members, commitments and deadlines, as I was

with the fragile finances of the Society. Fights between us were well-known to many of the staff members and others in the Committee, as both strived to make the best use of resources to complete tasks and projects on hand and to plan for future events.

However, it was routine, that after his frugal dinner, he would call me and apologise, and the next day, he and I would sign off all the papers or get back to the Society's network. No amount of requesting him, not to say sorry to me, would stop him from apologising to me!

Rest in peace my best friend, mentor, philosopher and guide. 🍀

Mr. Sunil R. Zaveri is an amateur naturalist, environmentalist and conservationist. Life member of BNHS for 30 years, he served as Hon. Treasurer of the Society and also was Fund raiser and Chairman of CEC.

A Man of Principle

Sunil K. Ghavnalkar

I have been fortunate enough to know Mr. Daniel since I joined BNHS in November 1980 till his death in 2011. Looking back and considering his disciplined nature, I was never scolded by him, instead I always got appreciation. He was such that if somebody made a mistake, he would be fired instantly, but when one performed well praise would follow quicker!

He was a man of principles and one who liked work to be done without delay; the word 'pending' did not exist in his dictionary. Today, whatever efficiency I have is all because I followed his work pattern.

I was moved when he called me after my father's sudden death in 1991 and not only offered his sympathies, but also advised me to look after my mother ... advice always comes from the head of a family. In his sudden demise, I have lost the father figure of my family. 🍀

Mr. Sunil K. Ghavnalkar is currently Officer (Despatch) at the BNHS.



With Sunil Ghavnalkar (extreme right) and his 'extended' family on his 80th birthday

VIVEKANAND NAIDU

End of an Era at the BNHS

Ulhas Rane

Some memories get deeply imprinted on our mind and they remain fresh forever.

One such pleasant memory is that of the first time I met Mr. J.C. Daniel, past Curator/Director, Honorary Secretary and Vice President of the Bombay Natural History Society.

This was around 1974-75, when I was struggling to establish an architectural practice. I had given up my idea to join an American University for postgraduate studies in 'Landscape Design'. Professional practice in India was important to me and 'Landscape Design' was the subject of my passion. I had plans to learn botany and horticulture on my own. I was looking for an institute where I could acquire knowledge of these subjects in an informal way. Just at that juncture I read a letter in *The Times of India* written by Mr. Daniel, then Curator of the BNHS, about activities

at the BNHS, and I thought that this might be the institution of informal learning that I was looking for.

I went to Hornbill House (the BNHS headquarters) the following day and met Mr. Daniel who was so cordial and warm that I liked him at the first instant. He listened to the account of my interests, and rather than pushing forward a BNHS membership form, he asked me whether I would like to join a short study expedition, scheduled the following week, to survey the Godavari river basin right from the source at Trimbakeshwar near Nashik. I had been an avid mountaineer and trekker, and was more than thrilled to have this opportunity. I agreed immediately to join this survey and participated in this most wonderful study expedition in the company of BNHS stalwarts in various fields. I got my first lessons in field botany from Dr. Amladi, birdwatching lessons

from S.A. Hussain and overall natural history exposure from Mr. Daniel, during those seven wondrous days. Mr. Daniel never made me feel a novice. In fact, considering my architectural background, he gave me the responsibility of observing and recording the topographical features of the region and made me feel important! Our expedition ended at Madhmeshwar – the 'Bharatpur of Maharashtra', and my long journey with the BNHS had begun. This incident is representative of Daniel's wonderful way of encouraging and involving amateurs in the study of natural history and conservation. He attracted several nature lovers to the BNHS and subtly transformed them into scientists or conservationists. This was the ethos of the BNHS at that time.

I was so impressed with the people at the BNHS, that I became a Life Member. Mr. Daniel introduced me to Prof. Bole,



With Bittu Sahgal, Ulhas Rane, J.D. Panday, Dr. Sálím Ali and Air Chief Marshal I.H. Latif (Governor of Maharashtra)

an Executive Committee member, and Head of the Department of Botany at St. Xavier's College, and requested him to fulfil my urge to learn Botany informally. Prof. Bole opened the doors of his Department to me and very soon the whole team at the Department – Dr. Irani, Dr. Almeida and the amazing herbarium assistant – Bhagat, took me under their wing. It was a swift and efficient process of knowledge transfer, which even included field botany under the able guidance of Marselin Almeida. So much so, that I soon became a visiting faculty member at the Certificate Course in Gardening at the College.

At that time, I used to work from 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. as an architect for the Life Insurance Corporation of India, and the only available time for me to study was after 6:00 p.m., whereas the BNHS would close at 5:30 p.m. Mr. Daniel was always accessible and receptive. I told him my difficulties and he was so considerate that he requested the Librarian Mr. Serrao – himself an encyclopaedia of natural history – not only to allow me access to the library after office hours, but also to guide me in my botany studies and explorations. I owe a lot to Mr. Daniel and his colleagues at the BNHS for such warm and affectionate grooming.

My close association and active participation in the BNHS is undoubtedly due to Mr. Daniel. I remember activities such as the monthly Bird Count at the Borivli National Park, the Leopard Study Project, Pongam Valley Project etc., wherein Daniel would initiate the participation of many new-comers and would then help them graduate to become serious birdwatchers or naturalists. Knowing my interests in mountaineering and trekking, he encouraged me to lead field outings to difficult regions for BNHS members. These members' outings became very popular over the years. He also encouraged members to share their field observations and experiences through talks or slide shows at Hornbill House. He encouraged me and other interested members to widen the scope of


nature education activities. Many of us learnt much through this process, and Daniel was always there to help and guide. I feel that this was the most important achievement of Mr. Daniel. He quietly created a generation of young nature lovers and scientists, using the BNHS platform.

We were thus a group of young, enthusiastic nature lovers at the BNHS whom Dr. Reza Khan (then Sálím Ali's Ph.D. student) baptised as the 'Jungle Babblers'! Mr. Daniel adopted this flock of Jungle Babblers and encouraged us to explore various facets of natural history. He recognised the strengths of each of us and guided us to proceed in suitable directions. For us, Mr. Daniel was not a difficult-to-approach BNHS Curator. He was a mentor who would listen to us intently and many times would even pick us up in his car and drive us to some interesting natural history destinations. He moulded many of us into fine ecologists, scientists, and naturalists. While training and guiding a scientific cadre of field biologists at the BNHS, he still had a very soft corner for amateurs. This culminated in his idea of starting a monthly magazine *Hornbill* for amateurs for whom the BNHS *Journal* was heavy reading. The tremendous success of *Hornbill* today tells us much about this visionary mentor.

Daniel, of course, has several scientific achievements to his credit. His enormous number of research papers and books speak volumes about his dedication to the field. In addition to this, he was an excellent administrator and task master and looked after the BNHS in different positions for many years as Curator, Director, Honorary Secretary, Editor of *JBNHS* and Vice President. I was fortunate to work with him when he was the Director and I was the Honorary Secretary. We conducted many innovative programmes in those days and I cherish those times even today. Daniel's enthusiasm and drive was at its peak during the Centenary Year (1983) of the BNHS, and apart from the main celebrations several important

activities were carried out throughout that year.

Daniel was so involved and engrossed in field research, natural history, and more so in the BNHS throughout his life that he practically had no other life. He confessed this to me when he retired as Director. He continued his involvement in the BNHS as an Executive Committee Member, Honorary Secretary, and lastly as Vice President. His most honourable achievement was serving consistently as the editor of the *JBNHS* for many years, besides his dedication to several other BNHS publications.

I was in Mumbai in mid-August 2011 and when I learnt about his illness I visited him at his residence at Sion. I could not see any obvious signs of illness on his face; neither were any of the ravages of illness reflected in his attitude. He told me quite casually that the doctors had diagnosed cancer, which was at an advanced stage. He told me cheerfully that he had lived a full and happy life, and wished to pass away happily too. Mrs. Daniel was also listening in on our conversation and mentioned that Daniel was 85 years old and had been active until a few days ago. I admired the courage and boldness of this lovely couple in confronting reality. We exchanged a few nostalgic memories of the old days at BNHS and our various activities together. He looked tired after a while, and I left wondering whether I would meet him again, since I was to return to Bengaluru the next day. I was in touch with his family and when he was moved to hospital a few days later, I was worried that the end may be near. When his son called me on the morning of 24th August to inform me of his demise, I could only say that this marked the end of an important era in the BNHS. 

Mr. Ulhas Rane is a practising architect with specialisation in Environment & Ecology & Sociology. He has been actively involved with the BNHS since 1975, and handled various responsibilities, including being Chairperson of Programmes and Nature Education Committee and also Honorary Secretary.

Daniel Saab

Uma Pratap Singh


One day in 1967, after my work contract with the (then) Prince of Wales Museum ended, I sat forlornly outside Hornbill House, planning my return to my village in Satna district and pondering on what I would do in the future. Just then, Mr. Daniel, who knew me as I used to also patrol the premises of Hornbill House, as it did not then have a dividing wall with the Museum, saw and beckoned me. Why was I 'loitering around' he asked. On explaining that I was without work now, he in his typical short outburst, said "who told you are without work" and asked me to start work on the spot as the security guard for Hornbill House! And after 44 years, I have the fortune of still working for the Society, thanks to Daniel Saab.

In spite of the 44 years, I had little direct contact with Daniel Saab as he was mostly busy in either reading or writing, attending to the Society's affairs, talked little and plus just had a smattering of Hindi. His favourite word in Hindi was *ullu* (owl!), which was the curse-word he used for reprimanding non-English speaking staff caught chatting or loitering. He tended to have a soft corner for me and never actually scolded me even once in spite of the occasional opportunities I gave him! I got a memo from him only once, which was likely due to somebody's machinations. The memo stated that I was not to engage in talk with anybody while sitting at the entrance of the Society. The next morning, a group of visitors came to the Society and I kept

my mouth shut, and they soon trooped into the Collection Department mistaking it for the Natural History Section of the Prince of Wales Museum! The late Mr. N. Chaturvedi, the Curator of the Collection Department, immediately complained to Mr. Daniel. I was summoned and asked why I had let the visitors in, and on showing him the memo, Daniel Saab read it, tore it up, and told me to go back and attend my duty, and to open my mouth if the occasion demanded, thus permitting me to get into my element again!

There were many experiences with Daniel Saab, who I nicknamed *Bada Lankapathy* (*Chota Lankapathy* is for Ranjit Manakadan!), but I would just like to narrate one which showed his considerate nature. He had just started work on THE BOOK OF INDIAN REPTILES, the book for which he is most well-known. On the first day of starting it (after office hours), he called me asking me to bring a plate of dahi vada, a plate of paav vada and a flask of tea. On bringing these, he told me that he had started work on the book and would be working late, adding that I was to go for my usual evening outings after locking the door of Hornbill House from the outside and to come anytime before 9 p.m. This got me totally anxious as I told him that it was against my conviction to lock the Society with somebody inside! However, he would have none of it and insisted on this saying this will continue for a number of days and he did not want to spoil my

evenings. This was a regular routine for many months – I would give him his grub and lock him up and roam around as I wished – till he completed the publication!

Mr. Daniel has been associated with the Society for many long years (longer than me), has been witness to changes taking place over time, seen young men and women reaching retirement age or retiring, or sadly even passing away. It saddened me considerably when I learnt that Daniel Saab was diagnosed with cancer. Ranjit suggested that we visit him at his residence on August 20th morning (after he reached Mumbai), but I was unable to go as I was told at the last moment that some staff would be coming to office to attend to some urgent work in spite of it being a weekend holiday. I felt helpless and bad, but there was no other option. There was talk that Dr. Ashok Kothari was planning to bring him to Hornbill House after a few days of getting better after hospitalization and I thought that I could see him then, but unfortunately he passed away on the 23rd. On the 24th, the day of the funeral, I thought that I would again be held up in the office, but fortunately, Dr. Rahmani sent a message asking me to change my uniform and get ready to attend Daniel Saab's funeral. So, I could at least see his body to pay my last respects – *unki atma ko shanti mile.* 

Mr. Uma Pratap Singh, Security Guard, has been striving tirelessly to keep the Society safe since four decades.

We are grateful to

RISHAD NAOROJI

for a generous donation to the
Kekoo Naoroji Memorial Fund
to support the publication of *Hornbill*

JC Sir – My Hero!

Varad B. Giri

“I think this is a nice book on snakes”; my friend Satyajet Mane was showing me a book with a picture of the cobra on the cover. This was during my M.Sc. in Shivaji University, Kolhapur, when I had just started photographing snakes and was looking for a book to identify them. We were searching for a good book to identify Indian snakes in the University library, but our efforts were not very fruitful as most of the books were on ‘exotic’ snakes. I was finally happy to see the book on Indian reptiles written by J.C. Daniel of the Bombay Natural History Society published in 1983. It was as if I had discovered a treasure. I issued the book and started going through it. Being a book from a library it was issued for a fixed period and so I realized the need for a personal copy and purchased a copy from the WWF office in Kolhapur. Over a period of time, I was engrossed in this book as my room partner Anil Shingare caught different species of snakes and I would identify them. This was my first exposure to Indian Herpetology and I started dreaming about working with the BNHS and meeting the legend who wrote this wonderful book.

In March 1999, I had a chance to visit BNHS to do some reference work in the library. This was the turning point in

my life as on the same day there were walk-in-interviews and Mr. Prashant Mahajan suggested that I attend it. During this interview there was an old gentleman who was silent and asked a few questions related to herpetology and asked me to show my album on snakes. I got selected and realized that this gentleman was Mr. J.C. Daniel. I joined office in April 1999 as a Research Assistant in the Herpetology section.

I still remember my earlier days in the Collection Department of the BNHS. After joining I received an alert from my then colleagues that I should be careful about Daniel Sir and Dr. Rahmani, as they may visit the section anytime of the day, and if one was not working then that was bad news! I realized this on the very first day as I was looking at some specimens in the jar, and suddenly there was someone behind me, when I turned it was Daniel Sir. He started asking me questions about herpetology and after some time he realized that I was ‘illiterate’ on the subject. He suggested some books to read and began interacting with me regularly. I was really lucky as his book had been my first exposure to herpetology and now he was training me himself. I consider him as an encyclopedia of *JBNHS*, as he knew most of the articles and along with their respective volume numbers. In

the initial years of my career he was the one who forced me to read scientific articles and also to carefully look at each and every taxonomic character of the various specimens of amphibians and reptiles in the BNHS collection. I give the entire credit of shaping my early career in herpetology to Daniel Sir, as his presence kept me alert all the time.

My first real field outing was during a membership camp at Tansa Wildlife Sanctuary. It was monsoon and Daniel Sir only told me that “now is the time to go on the field, so go along with the membership camp and assist them in the day and do your field work in the night”. He also told me to collect a female specimen of the bush frog, *Philautus*. I confidently said, I would. Interestingly, my knowledge then on amphibians was very poor and I was able to only identify a frog and a toad and was not sure about what a *Philautus* looked like. I was accompanied by my colleague Mr. Vinod Patil; this was a



Source: BNHS Archives

Strategic Planning workshop at Kashid in 2009

memorable experience as every frog was new for me. I had read that *Philautus* is a tree frog and we searched trees. We collected a frog from a tree and I was happy that I kept my word. Back in BNHS while observing our collection, Daniel Sir asked me 'Where is the *Philautus*?'. I proudly opened the jar and showed the frog we had collected, anticipating appreciation. But after looking at the specimen he said "Ullu, this is *Pohypedates* and not *Philautus*!" Saddened, I frankly told him that I did not know how to identify frogs. He promptly told me to read his articles in the *JBNHS*, published on amphibian identification. Apart from this he also taught me how to look at various characters in frogs with the help of specimens in the BNHS collection.

Eventually I got a chance to learn herpetology from various experts visiting the BNHS and notable among them were Mr. Ashok Captain of Pune and Dr. Mark Wilkinson and David Gower of Natural History Museum, London. One day Daniel Sir asked me that 'Did you identify the specimens collected during the recent field visits? And if so then write a short note.' This was a new chapter in my career, converting observations in the field in an applicable format, i.e. writing a scientific paper. I really appreciate Daniel Sir's efforts in reading my short notes repeatedly and giving valuable suggestions. Over a period of time he forced me to write scientific notes and papers in various journals. Every time he would ask me about my notes and papers. So before submitting them to a journal I would send these articles to him for critical review. I consider him as one of the best editors as he read each and every sentence very carefully.

If Daniel Sir had not been there then I would have taken a different turn in my professional career. Thus, as an honour for his support to me and also with due respect to his enormous contributions to Indian herpetology we named a new species of caecilian as *Gegeneophis danieli*, my first new species description. When I gave a hard copy of this paper to him, he just smiled and asked me about the progress of my other publications. I consider that whatever little contribution I have made to Indian herpetology, the credit goes to BNHS and Daniel Sir. He

stood with me in every crucial situation in my early days at the BNHS.

At one time, due to a crucial financial problem I wanted to join a post in the Tiger Cell of the Conservation Department of the BNHS. At that time Daniel Sir was not the Honorary Secretary, but a regular visitor at the BNHS. The moment he learnt about this, he asked me "Why do you want to run behind tigers? There are many people in that field, just concentrate on your study in herpetology." He not only told me this, but made the situation so comfortable that I continued my study in amphibians and reptiles without shifting the job. He made me believe that I have a good career in Herpetology and a small discussion I had with him was an eye-opener for me. I think that was the last time I thought of leaving herpetology and this thought never again came to my mind.

I have had many interactions with Daniel Sir in BNHS during the last decade. I was happy that while he revised his THE BOOK OF INDIAN REPTILES TO BOOK OF INDIAN REPTILES AND AMPHIBIANS, I was part of it. He made me go to various places and encouraged me to collaborate with researchers from India and abroad.

Apart from this, I was also grateful to him for his support in some of my personal problems. Though we did not have long interactions, but the ones we had have left long lasting impacts on me. Today also whenever I make a spelling mistake in my presentations or publications, I still hear "Ullu, galat spelling likhta hai, dictionary dekho", Daniel Sir would say this whenever he saw a spelling mistake in my short note.

Even today, every time I take taxonomic notes of specimens under a microscope or finish the first draft of my paper, I feel his absence. I know that today he is no more, but I am sure his work and contribution to Indian natural history will surely encourage many researchers like me. For me the best homage to a legend like Daniel Sir is to continue to work in the field of Herpetology till the end. ♣

Mr. Varad B. Giri is currently Deputy Director (Collection) at the BNHS.

A Tribute

Vibhuti Dedhia, Sonali Vadhavkar, Priyanka Iyer

The beginning is always difficult, especially when one has to 'capture' the impact of a man like Mr. J.C. Daniel in one's life in a few words. As we remember Sir, a number of things come to our mind, his discipline and his persistent follow-up of projects. Before he would complete the project in hand he would have worked out the

ground plan for another ... never a minute idled. He also never gave up what he believed in, and pursued it till the end.

His passion to disseminate knowledge about the natural world was so profound that everything else appeared trivial. Everything – from the moment he walked into the department, distraught

with emotion and deep anger, on hearing about some project destroying an elephant corridor, to the effortless way in which he would cite the exact volume and page numbers of a particular manuscript published in the *JBNHS* – spoke about his love and passion for the natural world. He was, at the same time, a man of few words and it would be

difficult to make him add text to his writings, especially if we were stuck when designing a page and only a few words would end our woes.

Being a part of the editorial team, we always admired the fact that the Society's publications were always backed by him as a pillar of knowledge. An excellent editor, he almost never missed an error. These experiences marked our benchmarks for us.

He would come into the department quietly and enquire if anything needed to be read. No work was big or small,

for him work was worship; be it something as routine as acknowledging a paper or going through the entire draft of a *JBNHS* issue. He would give both importance and work on them with equal vigour and dedication.

He encouraged the youth and gave them the opportunity they deserved to the best of his ability and understanding. He believed in them and supported them. And more importantly, he always gave them courage for he would take responsibility for any error that would be spotted in a publication; teaching us

that with great power came great responsibility!

We will miss this great man and we still have in our memory the words we heard so often, words that spoke of a man who lived to work for wildlife and the Society

– “I am just sitting in my office twiddling my thumbs, can you give something to read?” ♣

Vibhuti, Sonali and Priyanka have worked under the mentorship of Mr. Daniel for a long period.

J.C. Daniel – A State of Modesty

V. Gopi Naidu

My appointment was made by Mr. Daniel in March 1995 as a Senior Computer Operator in the Society's Publications Department, mainly for *Hornbill* and the *Journal of the BNHS*. It was always a pleasure to work with him. Once I pointed out a mistake which he had missed; he apologized, with a Tamil proverb, “*Elephants also slip sometimes!*”

What was heartening for me was his concern about my illness. In 2006, I had heart trouble, which gave me a lot of health complications and mental trauma. But his encouraging words always

stood by me. He not only expressed his concern over the telephone, but helped me raise funds to clear my debts, as I had borrowed from relatives and friends during my hospitalization.

Soon after, we were working together on one of the Society's prestigious books, *NATURAL HISTORY AND THE INDIAN ARMY*. His concern was always equal – to bring out an excellent publication and ensure my well-being. After working hard in the office on a non-working day, he would call me, unflinching, to check whether I had reached home safely!

The only funny incident I recollect was that concerning a cable operator, also called Gopi, who had taken money from Mr. Daniel and had not delivered the work promised. Furious with this irresponsible behaviour, Mr. Daniel called and started firing, believing me to be Gopi the culprit. I was speechless and left wondering what work had I taken money for and failed to deliver? After his firing stopped, I politely drew his attention to the fact that he was talking to me, Gopi from BNHS and not the cable operator. He broke into laughter and apologized to me immediately and the next day too.

One thing I learnt from him is apologizing on realizing one's mistake, irrespective of whether the person is a senior or junior.

I liked his hardworking nature and high energy level, even though he was 80+. In fact, it used to boost my morale and make me put in more efforts in discharging my responsibilities.

I remember him as not only a good administrator, but also a complete family man who looked after his family and also his extended family at BNHS, such that even today, we at the BNHS are yet to come to terms with his demise. ♣



With Mrs. Esme Daniel and V. Gopi Naidu at the release of the book
BIRDS OF THE INDIAN SUBCONTINENT - A FIELD GUIDE, BNHS

Mr. V. Gopi Naidu is currently Manager (Designing) at the BNHS.



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In the days ahead, we at Union Bank, intend to spread the conservation message to all our customers and beneficiaries. This, we believe, is vital to national development.



Union Bank
of India

Messages ...

**Mr. Alistair Gammell,
BirdLife International, UK**

The very sad news of J.C. Daniel's passing has only just reached me and it was of course an enormous shock. He was a great man and a notable leader to all who are interested in conservation. And most importantly a great friend too. He will indeed be sorely missed not just in India, but also by many of us throughout the world who were inspired by him. Please pass my condolences to his family and all at BNHS.

**Mr. Amarendrasinh D. Solanki,
Life Member, BNHS**

I am deeply grieved reading your e-mail about the demise of Mr. J.C. Daniel, I was out of station and not able to access the internet till my return yesterday. Not only BNHS, but India has lost an invaluable conservationist; people like him are very few and rare to find now-a-days, and, in the language of conservationists, we can put them in the highly endangered list facing extinction. I knew him personally and held him in very high esteem. At the invitation of my father, Shri Digveerendrasinhji, former Maharajasaheb of Vansda, he had accompanied Dr. Sálím Ali to Vansda, a short period before Dr. Sálím Ali passed away. I also had the honour of having him grace our residence for a short while at Ahmedabad just a few years back. We pray to almighty God to grant eternal peace to his soul and strength to his family to bear the loss. Though I will not be able to come to Mumbai to attend the condolence meet, please do convey this message of condolence to the Committee, staff and all members of BNHS at the condolence meet.

**Mr. Ashok Kumar, Vice Chairman,
and staff of the Wildlife Trust of India,
New Delhi**

I am extremely saddened to hear about J.C. Daniel. On behalf of the WTI family, I express our condolence to his family, and pray for him to rest in peace.

An award winning conservationist, an author, a naturalist *par excellence*, a leader and a friend, JC was a person admired by all of the conservation fraternity. His work and dedication has inspired and motivated many conservationists of today, and will continue to inspire those of tomorrow.

With his death, we have lost yet another irreplaceable stalwart of nature conservation. However, his memory remains with us. Having played a significant role to shape up the Indian conservation fraternity, he remains alive within us, in our united goal to secure India's natural heritage.

I consider myself fortunate for having known him, having shared his passion, and having fought similar battles.

Rest in peace, JC.

**Ms. Belinda Wright, Executive Director,
Wildlife Protection Society of India,
New Delhi**

Anne and I are very sorry indeed to hear this news. JC's contribution to BNHS and his many publications will long be remembered by conservationists and scientists alike, and I know he will be sorely missed.

**Ms. Cristi Nozawa,
BirdLife International, Japan**

This is indeed very sad news, particularly right after Mr. Deshmukh's passing away as well. JC was a pillar of BNHS, as was Mr. Deshmukh. I remember him at the hundred year anniversary of the BNHS *journal* and I will keep this as a fond memory of him. I am sure you and all in BNHS have lots of these memories to cherish. I wish you and BNHS the strength to face these losses and continue their legacy into the future. May JC and his family find peace.

**Dr. Divyabhanusinh Chavda,
President, WWF-India Secretariat**

The news of J.C. Daniel's passing away is indeed a sad event for all those associated with him and indeed, all those concerned with conservation at large. His contribution to the cause was seminal and crucial. There are but, only a few like him.

My association with him goes back to the 1970s when I came on the executive committee of the Society, and later in the 1980s when I had a stint as the Society's Vice President. I shall always remember him as an understanding and supportive person for whom the Society was the beginning and the end.

Please convey my heartfelt condolences to his family,

and I pray they have the strength to bear this irreplaceable loss.

**Dr. Gopal Sharma,
Scientist-C & Officer-in-charge,
Zoological Survey of India, Patna**

This is a great loss for the BNHS, as well as for those who were taking inspiration from Mr. Daniel. I still remember his book *The Book of Indian Reptiles and Amphibians*.

I pray to almighty God to give him peace in heaven.

**Mr. Harsh Vardhan, Honorary General
Secretary, Tourism & Wildlife Society of
India, Jaipur**

The death of J.C. Daniel is an irreparable loss to the conservation community and difficult to be bridged, for he represented the quintessential researcher, analyst, debator, thinker, writer and beyond all these, became the repository of scientific pursuits. His editorial contribution in numerous papers, journals and books will continue to inspire coming generations. I had my share of meetings with him about the Indian Bustard Study Group (IBSG). May God bless the departed soul and provide strength to the bereaved BNHS fraternity to bear the sad loss.

**Ms. Hetal Hariya, former staff of the
BNHS Publications Department**

I am extremely sorry to hear about the death of Mr. Daniel. My condolences to all BNHS staff members. He was a man of unwavering spirit, and a very encouraging and patient mentor; he will be greatly missed.

**Dr. Jack Frazier, Smithsonian
Institution, USA**

I've just received a message from Dave Ferguson, about the passing of J.C. Daniel.

BNHS and the community of natural historians and conservationists have lost an icon, a man who gave his all.

As I think back, there are many happy memories of sitting with JC and talking about different natural history issues, sharing ideas with him through correspondence (real letters!), and so on. Somewhere I have a photo of a small group from BNHS (JC, Sálím Ali, Dilnavaz Variava) when they visited the Conservation and Research Center, in Virginia, in 1984.

I am proud to have known him, and to have been able to have worked with him.

Please pass my condolences on to his family.

**Dr. John Reginald,
Head of Neurosurgery,
Apollo Group of Hospitals, Chennai**

I am extremely sorry to hear of the demise of Mr. Daniel, who has contributed so much to our Society.

May his soul rest in peace and the Lord comfort the members of his beloved family, as well as the members of our Society, who had the fortune to know him well.

**Mr. Kiran Srivastava, member,
Bombay Natural History Society**

Having been associated with the activities of the BNHS since the early 80s, I feel sorry for loss of our dwindling wildlife, our habitats, but even more so, the loss of persons who lived for wildlife. J.C. Daniel was committed and dedicated to the cause of wildlife and his passing away is part of an era that is gone forever. My condolences to his family.

Mr. Daniel must have left behind a treasure trove of wildlife memorabilia, letters, etc., and I hope these are preserved by his family.

**Mr. Kishor Rithe, President, Satpuda
Foundation, Amravati, Maharashtra**

Very sad news! It is a great loss of Indian conservation biology! His valuable research contributed through books would be always with us along with his great memories! I salute this great personality!

**Ms. Latika Dikshit, daughter of
Smt. Sheila Dikshit, Chief Minister of
Delhi, and a well-wisher of the BNHS**

Kindly accept my deepest condolences and please convey them to Mr. Daniel's family members as well. I had the honour of interacting with him on a number of occasions during my visit to BNHS. He was a father figure to all, a man of great wisdom and sense of humour. His gentleness and statesmanship deeply touched me. May his soul rest in peace.

**Mr. Marcus Cotton, Managing Director,
Tiger Mountain (P) Ltd., Nepal**

May I, on behalf of Tiger Mountain Nepal, express

our sorrow at hearing this sad news. J.C. Daniel's *The Book of Indian Reptiles* is one we use all the time in identifying the various snakes found in Chitwan National Park and further afield.

He was a luminary and BNHS has lost one of its great heroes.

May he rest in peace.

**Dr. M.V. Rao, Scientist-C,
Wood Biodegradation Centre (Marine),
Institute of Wood Science and
Technology, Visakhapatnam**

It is indeed sad to note of the demise of Daniel Sir, I express my deep felt condolences to his family and friends.

**Dr. M.K. Ranjitsinhji,
renowned Conservationist**

I was deeply grieved to learn the very sad news. I have known Mr. J.C. Daniel for over 50 years and have worked closely with him on a number of conservation efforts, such as the establishment of the Gir National Park during President rule in Gujarat, when Mr. Satarawala was the Adviser; the establishment of SACON, the Migratory Species Convention and others. In the past, when 'experts' were so few, his knowledge, commitment and help were invaluable and his self-effacing ways made him an outstanding team person. Please convey my deepest condolences to his family.

**Prof. R. Sukumar, Chairman,
Centre for Ecological Sciences,
Indian Institute of Science, Bengaluru**

*Message from CES Condolence meeting for J.C. Daniel
(30.8.2011)*

We, at the Centre for Ecological Sciences, Bengaluru, were saddened to hear of the demise of J.C. Daniel. Mr. Daniel was a true naturalist, deeply fascinated by the living world. This fascination and the passion for natural history that it generated inspired everyone who had the good fortune to be associated with him. As Curator, Director, Hon. Secretary and later Vice President of the BNHS he had the opportunity to interact with amateur naturalists and professionals of all ages, and he nurtured the BNHS tradition of making natural history knowledge available to all. Many of us at CES, Raman Sukumar and Renée Borges in particular, have had our careers influenced by J.C. Daniel, for which we are grateful. At this moment, we

would like to honour his memory, and hope that his life, which was devoted to Indian wildlife and its conservation, will long continue to be an inspiration to young naturalists in India and elsewhere.

We offer our condolences to his family and can only say in consolation that he will continue to live through the many books and articles that he wrote, and the lives that he touched with the spark of love for nature.

**Prof. Dr. P.J. Sanjeeva Raj,
Consultant Ecologist, Chennai**

It is indeed very sad to hear of the passing away of Mr. J.C. Daniel, who was my classmate in Zoology at the Madras Christian College, Tambaram, during 1945-47.

He has been such a humble person that despite his great achievements, he never expected any honours from his *alma mater*. I met him last at his son's wedding in Chennai, long ago. As his classmate and friend, I send my deep condolences to his family, praying for peace for his soul in eternity. If possible, please send this message to the family. Please convey my condolences to the Bombay Natural History Society.

**Dr. Rajah Jayapal,
Conservation Scientist,
Wildlife Conservation Society – India,
Bengaluru**

I just came to know that Mr. J.C. Daniel has passed away. Truly, it is a great loss to BNHS and natural history science in India. I have had some memorable interactions with him during his regular visits to WII in the late 90s. Our deepest condolences to all the members of BNHS family.

**Mr. M.S. Mukherjee,
Director and
staff of the Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj
Vastu Sangrahalaya, Mumbai**

I was deeply grieved to learn about the sad demise of Shri J.C. Daniel, Vice President, BNHS, and veteran conservationist.

On behalf of the Trustees and Staff of the Museum, kindly accept our sincere condolences. May his soul rest in peace!

**Dr. Sarath Kotagama,
Field Ornithology Group of Sri Lanka**
May we all share with you and BNHS the loss of a

great ornithologist, and a person who has done so much for nature conservation and birds. I personally feel very sorry having known the doldrums which BNHS went through and the contribution made by JC to ensure that it remains focused and alive. We are all going to miss him. But it is also the time to respect his Ideals and ensure that they live on.

We in Sri Lanka have a saying that comes from the Buddhist scriptures, "*Rupan Jerathi Naman ajirathi*" meaning *figures decay but names do not*. JC has left a 'name' that will never ever decay. May he attain the highest bliss in his future life.

Dr. Satish Kumar,
Aligarh Muslim University

I came to know yesterday about the sad demise of Mr. J.C. Daniel. We had a condolence meeting in the Department today. Mr. Daniel was one of the Committee members of the UGC when our Department was established. We are all very sad hearing this news.

Mr. S. Sivakumar, former employee of the BNHS

It was shocking news. He was one of the great persons I met in my lifetime. I feel proud that I worked in BNHS when JCD Sir was in BNHS. I am proud that I met and interacted with him on a few occasions. Though I left BNHS years back, I always remember him. I have kept the materials I received from JCD Sir in safe custody. We lost a legend, who spent almost his entire life in BNHS. He was a model and inspiration for numerous youngsters.

I convey my deep condolence to his friends and family members.

Dr. Sushant Chowdhury,
Wildlife Institute of India, Dehradun

Please accept my sincere condolences for the sad demise of Mr. J.C. Daniel, who was a constant source of inspiration for our conservation campaign. To my personal front he was the man who inspired and guided me to become a professional in the wildlife conservation arena. His sudden passing away has been very disturbing to me and many others of this Institute for whom he always cared. Really speaking, I am unable to believe that he is no more with us. I would appreciate if you could pass this condolence message to his family and assure them that personally I and members of this institute are deeply saddened

on sudden passing of Mr. J.C. Daniel. Mr. Daniel was a great soul who relentlessly served for the welfare of the society through his actions on conservation of the natural resources. I know this is a difficult time for the family, however, if it is any consolation, Mr. Daniel was very much admired and respected, and we can truly say that he had never been unkind to anyone.

I on my personal, as well as on behalf of this Institute, extend deepest sympathy to the wonderful family of Mr. J.C. Daniel, and pray to God to give them strength and courage to get through the days ahead.

Our thoughts and prayers will be with them only.

Mrs. Tara Gandhi, member,
Bombay Natural History Society

Please convey my sincere condolences to the family of Mr. J.C. Daniel. All of us who are members of BNHS or who have been associated in any way are also part of his larger family! His name was inseparable from BNHS. For me personally, he held a special place in my memory as the first person I saw during my earliest visit to BNHS way back in 1969. Though I was a mere M.Sc. applicant at that time, he was most kind and courteous, and remained so all through my long association, since then.

It is indeed a sad August for the Society, losing its President and Vice President in quick succession. It is a difficult time for you and your colleagues. If there is any role I can play to assist, please let me know.

Mr. Vivek Menon, Executive Director,
Wildlife Trust of India

I am very sorry to hear about JC. He has lived a full life, to say the least, and history will record his contributions to Indian conservation, which are varied and manifold.

I am not in India at the moment, but will you be so kind as to pass on my deepest condolences to his family. The same to everyone who at BNHS knew and worked with him.

Is this the beginning of the end of the great era of naturalists in Indian wildlife conservation, I wonder? Today, we have more and more specialists and less and less generalists of the oeuvre that JC represented. In sorrow.



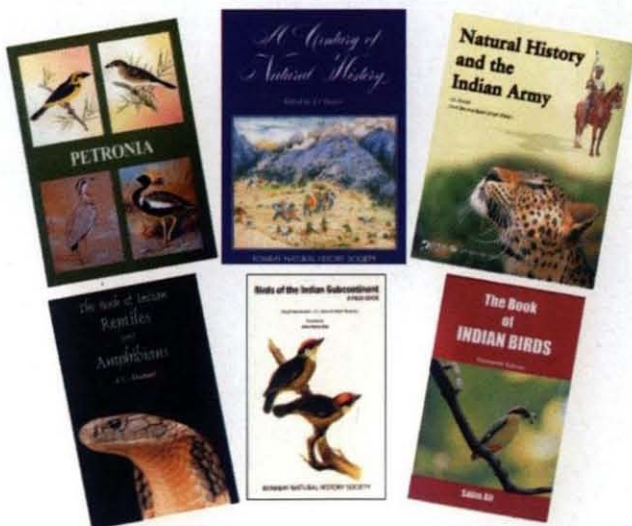
His Awards ...

- The Peter Scott Award for Conservation Merit – 1988
- Award of the Kerala Agricultural University for outstanding contribution to the study of the Asian Elephant – 1989
- Indira Gandhi Paryavaran Puraskar – 1997
- Sanctuary – Amro Bank, Millenium, Lifetime Service to Conservation Award – 2000

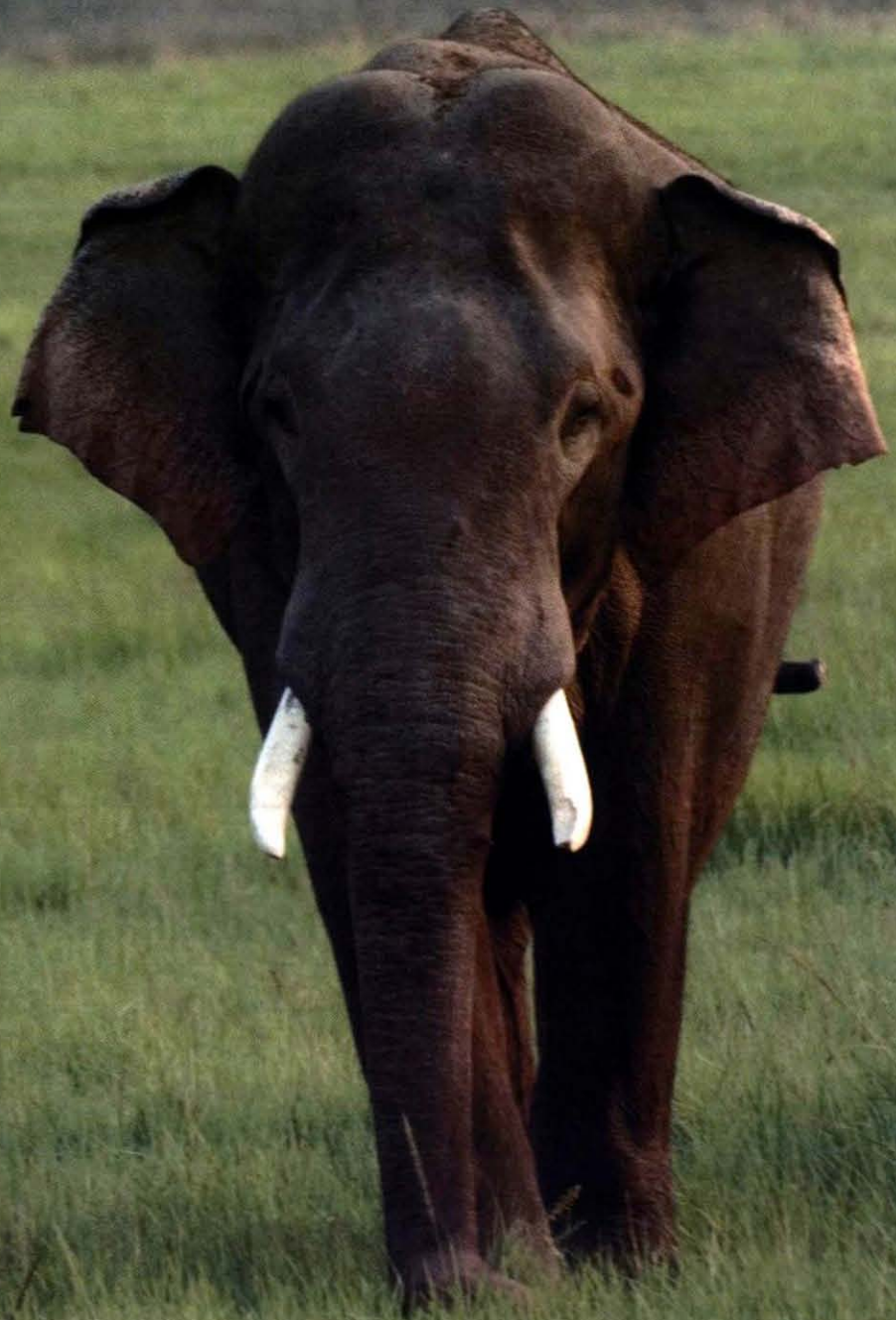


J.C. Daniel was awarded the Indira Gandhi Paryavaran Puraskar for his contribution to natural history

His Publications ...



- The Book of Indian Animals, by S.H. Prater, Revision of 3rd edition, 1971
- Gazetteer of Maharashtra, Fauna Volume. Chapters on Mammals and Reptiles, 1974
- The Book of Indian Reptiles, 1983
- Indian Wildlife, Insight Guides, Section on Lion, 1986
- Conservation in Developing Countries: Problems and Prospects, Proceedings of the Centenary Seminar of the Bombay Natural History Society, 1990
- The Leopard in India - A Natural History, 1996
- The Asian Elephant - A Natural History, 1998
- The Tiger in India - A Natural History, 2001
- Apart from the above publications, he also published 50 peer-reviewed papers on natural history from 1953-1989.



1978-86: J.C. Daniel was the Chairman of the Asian Elephant Specialist group, a part of the Species Survival Commission group, which was organized towards the study of problems facing the population in different areas of its distribution. The activities of the group acted as a catalyst for conservation of the elephant. He was also the Principal Investigator of projects on elephants in 1983-1992 and from 2005 onwards.



1967: J.C. Daniel accomplished the first scientific survey of the Blackbuck *Antelope cervicapra* population, thus drawing attention to isolated populations, and to the conservation needs of this endangered species.





NIKHIL BHOPALE

1973: J.C. Daniel undertook investigation on the status of the single population of the Saltwater Crocodile *Crocodylus porosus*, at Bhitarkanika in peninsular India. This was one of the bases for the declaration of the area as a Sanctuary and the rehabilitation of the Saltwater Crocodile through captive breeding.



ASHOK CAPTAIN

1986: J.C. Daniel rediscovered the peculiar and endemic Golden Gecko *Calodactylodes aureus*, in the Tirupati Hills of Andhra Pradesh. This was one of the reasons for the establishment of a major national park in the area.

VARAD B. GIRI



Gegeneophis danieli, a species of caecilian named after J.C. Daniel.

ISAAC KEHIMIKAR



1965: J.C. Daniel investigated the endangered nature of the isolated peninsular India population of the Wild Buffalo *Bubalus bubalis* in a joint survey with George Schaller of the New York Zoological Society. Conservation measures, including declaration of the area as a wildlife sanctuary for the Wild Buffalo, were the outcome.

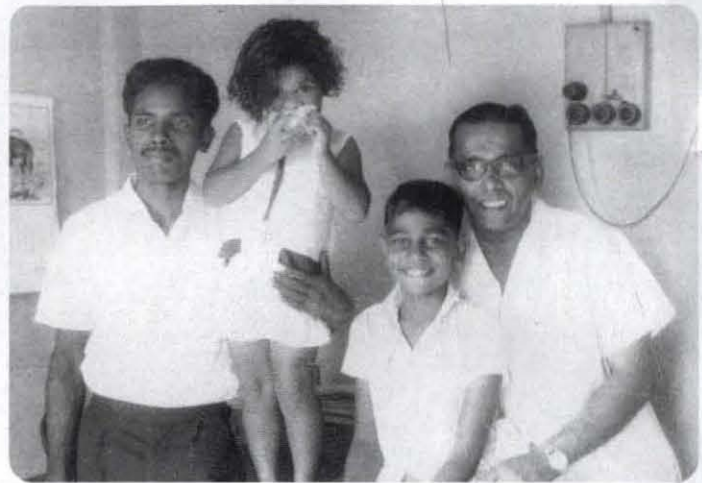


1968-69: J.C. Daniel conducted a questionnaire survey throughout the country, which resulted in an analysis of the status of the population of the Tiger *Panthera tigris*, and drew attention to the need for urgent conservation measures.

Memories...



Happily married to Esme, 1959



With his children and Robert Grubb in Daulatabad, Maharashtra



Release of THE BOOK OF INDIAN REPTILES, 1983



At the Brookfield Zoo in Chicago on June 20, 1984



J.C. Daniel as Curator presenting a copy of A PICTORIAL GUIDE TO THE BIRDS OF THE INDIAN SUBCONTINENT to the Prime Minister, Smt. Indira Gandhi, 1983



A tête-à-tête with Sálim Ali at Kihim



Birding in the Keoladeo National Park with A.N.D. Nanavati and Sálim Ali, 1980



With the tracking group in Mudumalai Wildlife Sanctuary, 1987



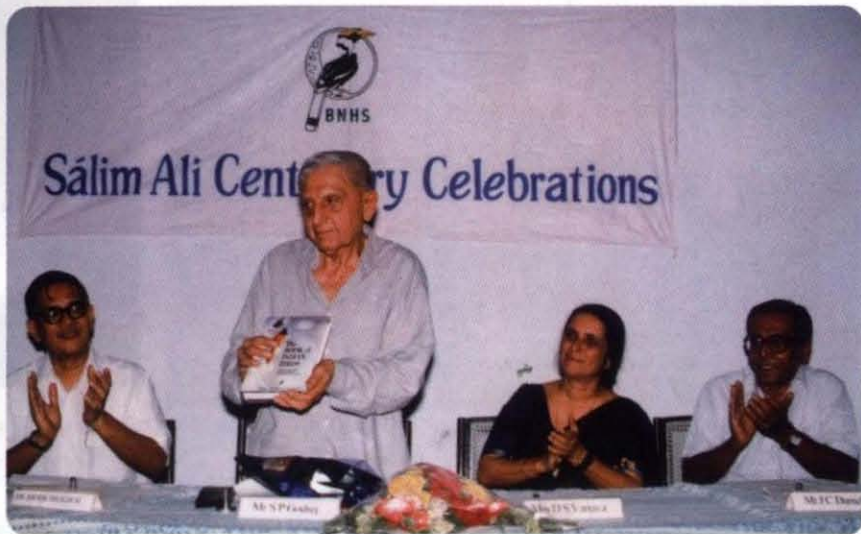
In the field with S.R. Nayak and Sálim Ali



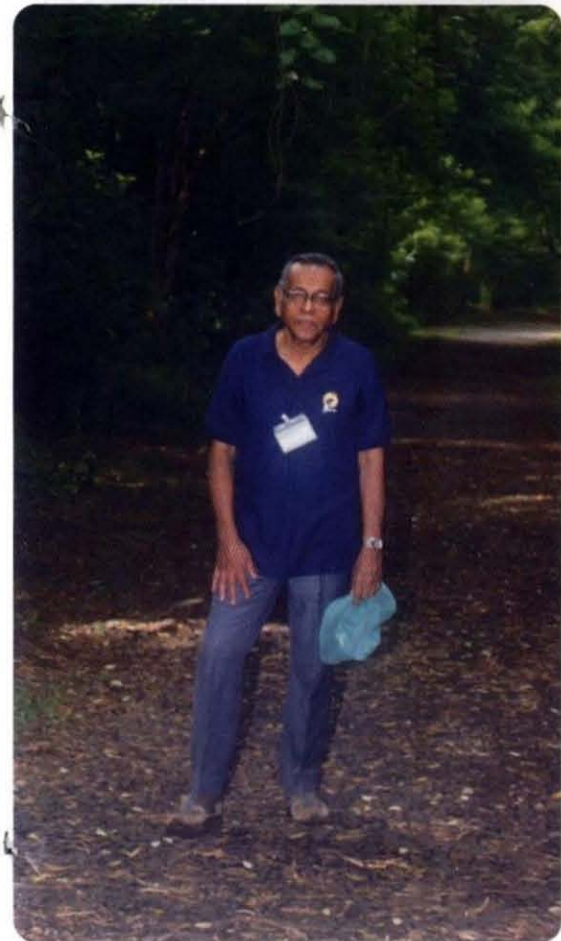
Showing Suresh Prabhu, Hon'ble Minister for Environment and Forests, specimens from the Collection Department, 1998



At the farewell party for S.R. Nayak and P.B. Shekar, 2002



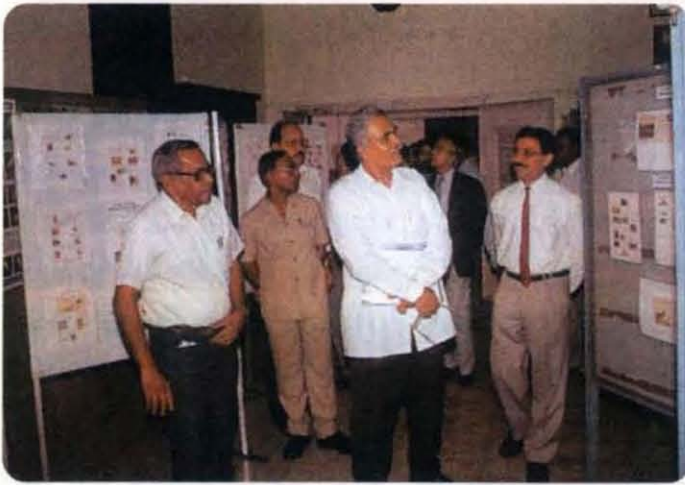
At the release of the 12th edition of THE BOOK OF INDIAN BIRDS with A.M. Bhagwat, Hon. Secretary, S.P. Godrej, D.S. Variava, Vice President, 1996



On CEC land (Goregaon)



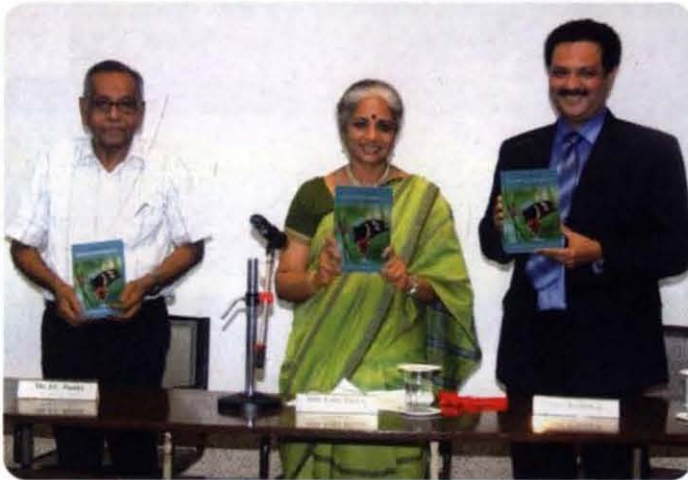
A moment of solitude on a field trip in southern India



At the exhibition of postal stamps depicting nature with the Chief Post General Manager, D.S. Bhalachandra, October 4, 1999



At the website launch of the BNHS, April 22, 2000



At the release of THE BOOK OF INDIAN BUTTERFLIES with Usha Thorat, Deputy Governor, RBI, and Isaac Kehimkar, the author, 2008



With the Hon. Chief Minister Vilasrao Deshmukh for the BNHS 125 years celebrations at Y.B. Chavan Auditorium, Mumbai, 2008



With the winners of the Annual Research Seminar, and Rachel Reuben, Ian Barber, Homi Khusrokhhan and Asad R. Rahmani, September 22-23, 2009



At a plantation drive in Vashi, Navi Mumbai



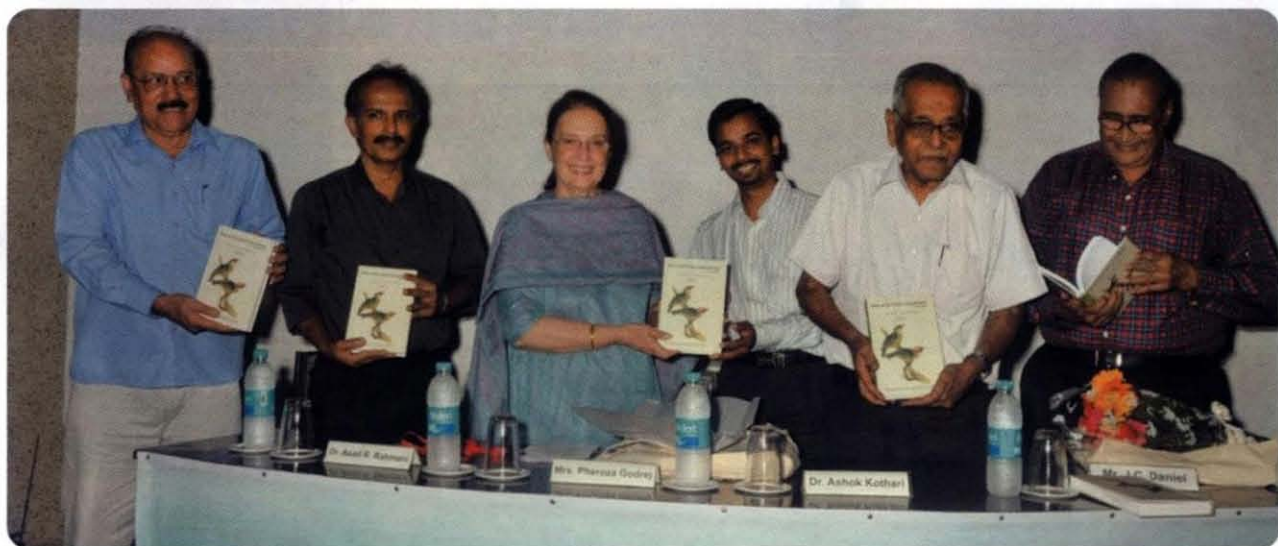
The critical conservationist at his best in a seminar at Bengaluru



At the 7th BNHS Rare Book Exhibition, December 16-23, 2008



Donating a sapling to a participant at National Society of the Friends of the Trees



At the launch of the book BIRDS OF THE INDIAN SUBCONTINENT - A FIELD GUIDE with Asad R. Rahmani, Director, Ranjit Manakadan, Pheroza Godrej, President, National Society of the Friends of the Trees, Nikhil Bhopale, and Ashok Kothari, Hon. Sec., July 30, 2011

Picture Credits: 58, Top-right, P.B. SHEKAR, centre-right, MIKE GREER; 61, bottom-left, ASHOK S. KOTHARI

Source: 58, Top-left, ESME DANIEL, centre-left, BNHS Archives, centre-bottom, ESME DANIEL; 59, BNHS Archives; 60, Top, AJAY A. DESAI, bottom, BNHS Archives; 61, Top-left, top-right, BNHS Archives, bottom-right, ESME DANIEL; 62, BNHS Archives; 63, Top-left, top-right, centre-left, BNHS Archives, centre-bottom, centre-right, ASHOK S. KOTHARI.

Afterwards

*When the present has latched its postern behind my tremulous stay,
And the May month flaps its glad green leaves like wings,
Delicate-filmed as newspun silk, will the neighbours say,
'He was a man who used to notice such things' ?*

*If it be in the dusk, when like an eyelid's soundless blink,
The dewfall-hawk comes crossing the shades to alight
Upon the wind-warped upland thorn, a gazer may think,
'To him this must have been a familiar sight.'*

*If I pass during some nocturnal blackness, mothy and warm,
When the hedgehog travels furtively over the lawn,
One may say, 'He strove that such innocent creatures should come to no harm,
But he could do little for them; and now he is gone.'*

*If, when hearing that I have been stilled at last, they stand at the door,
Watching the full-starred heavens that winter sees,
Will this thought rise on those who will meet my face no more,
'He was one who had an eye for such mysteries' ?*

*And will any say when my bell of quittance is heard in the gloom,
And a crossing breeze cuts a pause in its outrollings,
Till they rise again, as they were a new bell's boom,
'He hears it not now, but used to notice such things' ?*

— Thomas Hardy



“ No other life form in India has the catastrophic problems that face man, with an environment pauperized by the insatiable needs of an ever expanding population. It is indeed a curious paradox that unlike other endangered species, numbers will be the ruin of us. ”



J.C. DANIEL





We are a mining company.

We are responsible for this.

Since 1977 we, at MSPL, have been tirelessly working to transform 240 hectares of harsh mining terrain into lush landscape by planting over 18,10,000 trees. Going beyond our sphere of influence, we have also planted 85,000 trees outside the lease area.

We are one of the leading mining companies in the world who regularly publish and publicly disclose their environmental and social performance through a detailed independently audited sustainability report. Testimony to this commitment is a series of recognitions:

FIMI-CSR Awards | Business World-FICCI-SEDF CSR Awards | Indira Priyadarshini Vriksha Mitra Award | The Council of Fair Business Practices-Jamnalal Bajaj Uchit Vyavahar Puraskar



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