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## **Editorial.....**

### **Connecting People to Nature.....**

*World Environment Day is the United Nations' principle agenda to mobilise people across the world to work towards protecting the environment. It began to be commemorated in the year 1974, with the primary concerns then being marine pollution, global warming and emphasis on wildlife crime and sustainable consumption of resources.*

*This year, there is just one word for what we want to make World Environment Day: epic. The aim is*

*for celebrations to be bigger and better than ever and to call on people to show their love and affection for our shared natural world. World Environment Day is the United Nations' flagship day for encouraging worldwide awareness and action for the environment. Over the years, it has grown to be one of the largest global platforms for public outreach celebrated by over a million people in well over 100 countries.*

*In recent decades, scientific advances as well as growing environmental problems such as global warming are helping us to understand the countless ways in which natural systems support our own prosperity and well-being. For example, the world's oceans, forests and soils act as vast stores for greenhouse gases such as carbon dioxide and methane; farmers and fisher-folk harness nature on land and under water to provide us with food; scientists develop medicines using genetic material drawn from the millions of species that make up Earth's astounding biological diversity. Billions of rural people around the world spend every working day 'connected to nature' and appreciate full well their dependence on natural water supplies and how nature provides their livelihoods in the form of fertile soil. They are among the first to suffer when ecosystems are threatened, whether by pollution, climate change or over-exploitation.*

*Once you are there, why not set yourself a challenge (seek out a rare mammal, identify five butterflies, reach the remotest corner of the park). Record what you see, and send us a photo of yourself and/or your discoveries so we can post it on our digital channels and encourage others to go exploring too. You could join the growing number of citizen scientists. More and more smart phone apps help you log your sightings and connect with others who can identify the species. The records feed into conservation strategies and map the effects of climate change on biodiversity. Connecting to nature can involve all the physical senses: why not take off your shoes and get your feet (and hands) dirty; don't just look at the beautiful lake, jump in! Take a hike at night and rely on your ears and nose to experience nature.*

**Naturally yours**

**Vijikumar Sahadevan**

**Editor in Chief, IJONS**

