

DEPARTMENT OF ZOOLOGY

BUTTERFLY GARDEN

The Department of Zoology at St. Thomas College Ranni has taken an initiative to create a Butterfly Garden within the campus premises. This project aims to provide a suitable habitat for butterflies by planting host plants, which are essential for their lifecycle. BSc Zoology students actively maintain the garden, ensuring the availability of food and shelter for butterflies. BSc Zoology students, under the guidance of Dr. R Aruna Devy, HOD, Department of Zoology, selected a diverse range of host plants that serve as food sources for caterpillars and nectar sources for adult butterflies. The Butterfly Garden serves as an educational platform for understanding of the importance of butterflies in maintaining ecological balance.



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VERMICOMPOSTING UNIT

The Department of Zoology has been actively maintaining four vermicomposting units on campus for the past ten years. These units were designed to facilitate the decomposition of organic waste materials using earthworms. Earthworms, *Eisenia foetida* were introduced into the vermicomposting units. These worms actively consumed the organic waste, breaking it down into nutrient-rich vermicompost through their digestion process. BSc Zoology students took responsibility for the regular maintenance of the vermicomposting units. This included providing optimal conditions for the earthworms, such as maintaining appropriate moisture levels and temperature, and regularly turning and aerating the compost. Once the compost reached maturity, it was carefully harvested from the vermicomposting units. The students ensured the removal of any remaining worms and sieved the compost to obtain a fine texture. The vermicompost produced is finally harvested, packed, and sold to both teachers and students at a competitive rate of Rs 20/kg. The main objective of the vermicomposting initiative is to promote sustainable waste management and produce high-quality organic compost for the campus. Additionally, the project aims to raise awareness among students about the importance of recycling and environmental conservation.



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APICULTURE UNIT

The Department of Zoology at St. Thomas College Ranni has established and maintains an Apiculture Unit as an integral part of the syllabus. The Apiculture Unit provides training to students under the guidance of trained personnel, enabling them to manage the apiary effectively. The objectives of the Apiculture Unit are - To study honey bee behaviour, To understand the ecological significance of honey bees and their vital role in pollination, To train students in beekeeping techniques, colony management, and sustainable practices, To promote awareness and appreciation of honey bees and their conservation. By integrating theoretical knowledge with hands-on experience, students develop a deep understanding of honey bee biology, colony management, and sustainable apiculture practices.



