

## **STAR-GAZING TRAINING WORKSHOP**

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The Mangrove Foundation is promoting Eco-tourism as a source of livelihood in different villages in all the coastal districts of Maharashtra with an aim to conserve the wild species without affecting the livelihood of these people. Ecotourism has been one of the most effective livelihood options for the villagers.

As part of the Eco-tourism training, a Stargazing workshop was organised for the locals of Raigad, Ratnagiri and Sindhudurg district in January 2020 at Anjarle, Ratnagiri.

Mr Ajay Karnik from Tarangan Education Trust conducted an indoor and outdoor session in the workshop. A batch of 17 participants from Kalinje, Anjarle, and Diveagar villages was training for identification of stars, galaxies and constellations (Nakshatras) and Zodiac signs (Rashi), etc.

Mr Karnik explained various aspects of the universe such as introduction and identification of stars, Globular structures, galaxies etc. during the indoor session followed by observing the same during the night session using a telescope.

The participants also learned about various associations of these constellations with mythology and Vedas.

A month after successfully completion of this workshop the villagers of Diveagar village organised a star-gazing session for tourists from Pune on Feb 16, 2020. During the session, the tourist observed the Pole star, Orion's belt, Gate to Heaven, Pisces zodiac sign, etc.

Apart from these, the locals are also been trained for nature walks, birding, marine walks, Life-saving techniques, boating, kayaking, etc.