

# Entomotourism

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## INTRODUCTION

Insect focused tourism is referred to as 'entomotourism'. Travelling to watch and observe insects in their natural surrounding engender entomotourism. It is a subcategory of wildlife tourism particularly focused upon insects. It is an estimated multi-million industry which provides employment to thousands of individuals serving millions of visitors globally. Each year millions of people visit insect museums, butterfly pavilions, pollinator parks and beekeeping museums. Tourism that provides direct contact with wildlife creates a strong and positive educational message. Entomotourism provides employment opportunities, revenue through their visitors as well as securing long-term conservation of wildlife and wildlife habitats. Insects are being recognized and used in recreation activities by

all generations and creating a positive cycle of change where insects are not neglected and tolerated but they are given importance for their diversity, adaptability and utility. In India, Insect museum was established in Tamil Nadu which has extensive collection of various insect orders for display. This in turn promotes entomotourism in the country. Visitors travel to North America and Asia to view fireflies while others visit the butterfly sanctuaries in Mexico, South Africa and Taiwan. Dragonfly Kingdom at Nakamura, and the dragonfly awareness trails at the KwaZulu-Natal National Botanical Garden in Pietermaritzburg, South Africa attract thousands of dragon hunters from around the world.





## AIM OF ENTOMOTOURISM-

Protecting the various insect species and monitoring their habitat by imparting education and importance of insects is the main aim of entomotourism. Entomotourism enhance visitors' awareness and cause positive inclination of visitors towards insects for their visit and promote conservation of insects in various settings.

## EXAMPLES OF ENTOMOTOURISM :

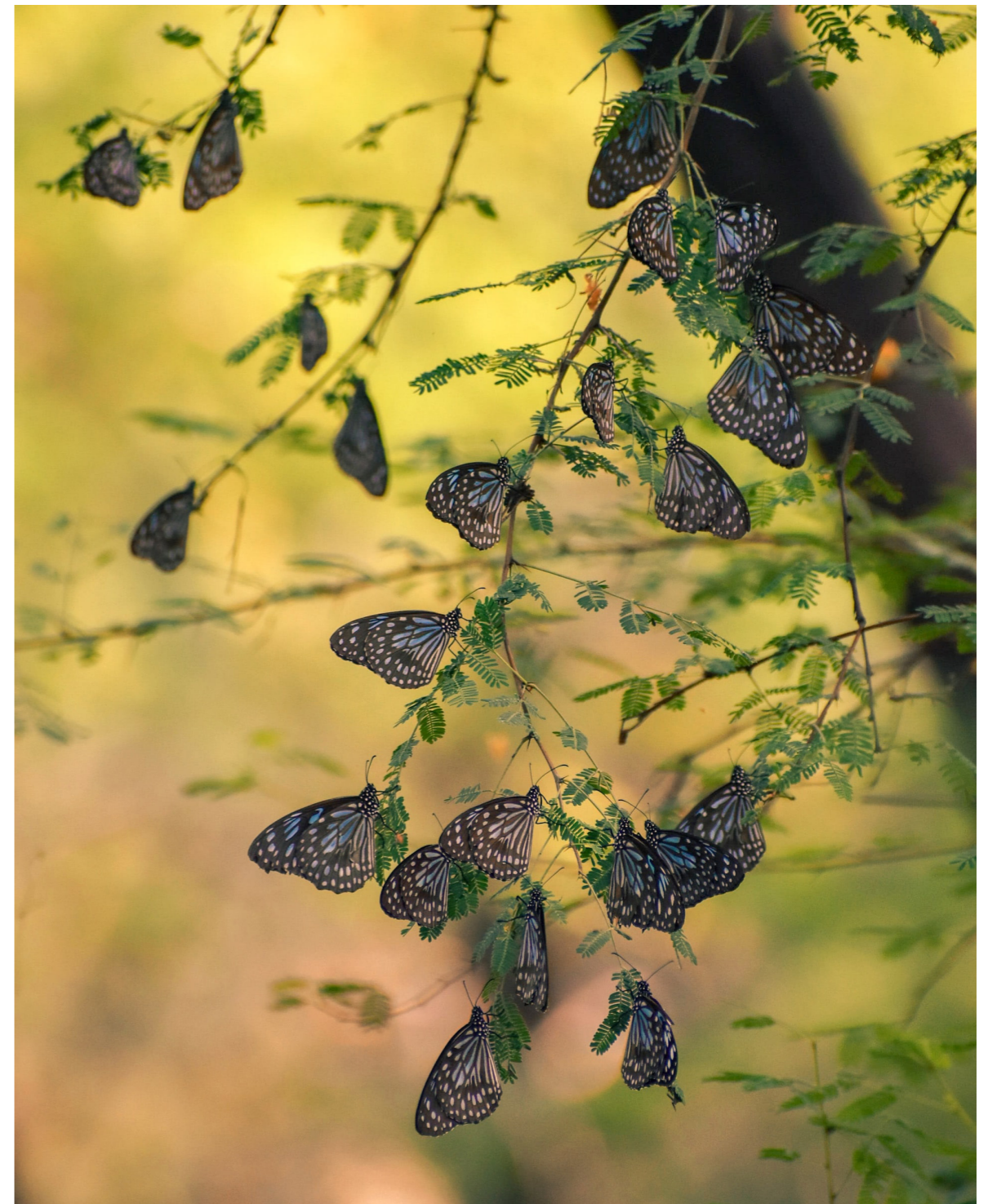
- ❖ **Firefly tourism:** Interest in fireflies has been growing in India and around the world. As number of firefly tourists in Malaysia have been increased from 24,000 to 40,000, while in Japan, firefly festivals Santo Hotaru festival provides opportunities for Japanese enthusiasts to interact with fireflies. Yelavali village inside Bhimashanker wildlife sanctuary are illuminated by glowworms. Fireflies have empowered rural tourism. Villagers have built cottages for tourists to stay and watch fireflies. This helps in generation of income for rural people which in turn improves local economy.



## ECONOMIC BENEFITS OF ENTOMOTOURISM

Entomotourism provides employment opportunities, revenue through sales of arts and crafts, and regional economic diversification strategies for the local population. Insect education and knowledge needs to be imparted to society for the conservation of insects. As insects not only caters the entomotourism by visitors but also play crucial role and importance in food and feed (i.e., entomophagy) and used in medicines (i.e., entomotherapy).

- ❖ **Butterfly pavilions:** Butterflies and certain types of moths are permitted to fly freely and interact with visitors in well-lit, open areas. These are meant for public education regarding importance of butterflies. Butterfly gardens are also meant for the conservation of butterflies which are pollinators of crops.



- ❖ **Insectariums:** They feature stick insects, cockroaches, praying mantids, and spiders. These insects reside in specialized enclosures or terrariums. As museums they focuss on education and entertainment. National Bureau of Agricultural Insect Resources, Bengaluru has insectarium which display several insects of different orders.





- ❖ **Bees museums:** Bee enthusiasts learn more about bees and art of apiculture by visiting bee museums, special zoos and pollinator parks. In India, Honey bee museum is located in Ooty, Tamil Nadu where information regarding indigenous honey bees and traditional method of harvesting of honey from hives are displayed.
- ❖ **Api-tourism:** *Apis mellifera* is the focus of api-tourism. It facilitates and connects beekeepers with visitors interested in learning more about importance of pollination, taste different types of honey and find about other bee products. Introducing apiculture museums, open air museums of bee keeping can also be offered as api-tourism. It benefits the community and apiculture farmers to sustain and uplift their economic standard. It also helps in conservation of wild honey bee colonies of *A. laboriosa* and *A. dorsata*. In India, Panchmarhi and in Nepal, Pokhara are the potential centres of api-tourism.
- ❖ **Meli-tourism:** form of tourism being developed in Mexico, in which visitors interact with stingless bees. Since these bees are stingless, visitors can listen to the sounds of worker bees returning to their hives, visitors smell pollen, honey and taste honey. Medicinal, health, beauty products and some food and beverages are incorporated with melipona honey.

## CONCLUSION

Entomotourism is an estimated multi-million industry employing thousands of people and attracting millions of visitors around the globe. It has made significant contributions to conservation by leading to the creation of protected areas and the establishment of pollinator parks, bee gardens, and dragonfly ponds. Entomotourism holds promise, particularly in the educational realm, by helping the public gain a better understanding of insects, human-insect relations, and ways to contribute to their conservation.

