



Geetha Shishu Shikshana Sangha (R)

# GSSS SIMHA SUBBAMAHALAKSHMI FIRST GRADE COLLEGE

(Affiliated to University of Mysore, Mysuru, Recognized by Govt. of Karnataka)  
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## The Mysterious World of Snakes and Reptiles

### A special lecture by Snake Shyam

*“Kallanagara kandare halanere embaru*

*ditada nagara kandare kolleambarayya!*

*Umba jangama bandare nade embaru;*

*unnada lingakke bonava hidiyambarayya!*

*Namma kudala sangana saranara kandu udasinava madidade*

*kallu tagida mitteyamtapparayya.”*

Sri M S Balasubramania popularly known as “**Snake Shyam**” was addressing the students of SSFGC, who had gathered for the special lecture on “The Mysterious World of Snakes and Reptiles” on 5<sup>th</sup> August, 2019.

Snake Shyam has caught more than 11,000 snakes and is the most wanted man whenever people sight a snake. He has an association with snakes for more than 25 years and no one can understand snakes better than him. He was speaking on the occasion of Naga Panchami, the most popular festival among the Hindus where the snake gods are worshipped religiously by offering milk, honey, water, kumkum and turmeric. He dispelled all blind beliefs that were related to snakes like snakes drink milk, havenagamani in their anthill also attack with vengeance. He advised all devout Hindus to worship snakes as silver idol or stone idol. The offerings made in the form of water, milk etc. can make the anthill soggy and snakes can't move freely, the incense sticks lit near the anthill can suffocate the snake.

The snakes prey on rats, lizards, frogs, bats and sometimes other smaller snakes also as per Charles Darwin's theory of Survival of the fittest. “They are cold blooded animals living in anthills most of the summer and come out to warm up during winter season. Snakes usually do not harm anybody, they attack only when they sense danger to their lives. They do not have ears or nose but with the help of their split tongue which acts as antenna, they can smell the pheromones on the skin of frogs and rats and prey on them. They can prey on animals which are 10-12 times bigger than their head. They have expandable jaws to swallow their prey wholly and then slowly digest it.

Majority of Snakes are Oviparous or egg laying usually lay about 45-50 eggs, living in warmer climates which helps incubate their eggs for 45-60 days after which the eggs are hatched. Viviparous or live-birthing snakes are Viper, Green vines and Sand Boa. Snakes lay eggs in the ant hill where they are incubated until hatched. King Cobra is the only specie which builds a nest of leaves and lays its eggs in the nest.

Among the snakes found in India, smallest snake is the Blind snake or Brahminy Worm Snake, non-venomous and parthenogetic – can spawn young without males and the largest snake is the Indian Python. King Cobra, Indian Python, Indian Rat snake, Indian Cobra and Common Krait Snakes are the largest snakes found here. Younger Snakes shed their skin about 8-10 times yearly and older ones shed 3- 4 times in a year.

All over the world we find around 3,000 species of snakes and of these we find about 275 species living in India. Every year 2- 4 new species of snakes are discovered. Snakes are classified as venomous and nonvenomous. In India we have only 4 types of venomous snakes –they are Indian Cobra, Common krait, Russell’s viper and the Saw scaled viper.

According to the latest survey almost 1,00,000 people the world over are bitten by snakes , and 50,000 people succumb to it. Most of the people die due to shock and not because of the poison in the snake bite. He advised that the persons bitten by snake should be counseled well, wound to be properly washed with soap and water and moved to the nearest hospital as fast as possible .Snakes usually bite children’s fingers or their legs up to their knees when they are playing outdoors. Most of the snakes bite without injecting the venom so the person with snake bite can be saved with proper medical care.

Snakes are’ Farmers friend’ as they prey on rats, bats, crows, squirrels which eat up food grains fruits and vegetables. They can flush out the rats in the rat hole and eat them. The land where the King Cobra is found is said to be the most fertile land and most suited for agriculture.

Mr.Subramania summed up his talk by advising the students to protect the flora and fauna by planting trees and plants and not panic at the sight of snake. The PPT presentation on the various types of snakes, the effects of snake bite was very informative.