



Madras Naturalists' Society

No. 8, Janaki Avenue, Abhiramapuram, Chennai – 600 018
Phone: 98400 90875. E-mail: madrasnaturalistsociety@gmail.com
Web: www.blackbuck.org.in

M. Krishnan Memorial Award For Nature Writing 2027

The Organiser

Madras Naturalists' Society (MNS)

Theme

Life on Drylands

Calendar

1 September 2026 – Launch of the Writing Competition

30 November 2026 – Deadline for submission

31 December 2026 – Shortlisted participants will be announced on the website - www.blackbuck.org.in

15 February 2027 – The award-winning entry and the next two commendable entries will be announced on the website – www.blackbuck.org.in

Theme: Life on Drylands

Drylands ecosystems are land areas defined by severe water scarcity, where evaporation is higher than precipitation. Covering over 40% of the Earth's land surface and supporting more than two billion people, these dynamic regions include not just deserts, but vast grasslands, shrublands, savannas and dry woodlands.

Drylands are also complex ecosystems and support several specialised endemic species that are highly vulnerable to climate change due to changing rainfall patterns and land degradation.

For millennia, drylands have been shaped by a combination of low precipitation, droughts and heat waves, as well as human activities such as fire use, livestock grazing and soil cultivation.

Participants are invited to submit written work that examines drylands. We welcome essays that convey a sense of wonder based on observing nature first-hand and at the same time are scientifically accurate.



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Here are some suggestions for the form that a work could take:

1. A portrait of a particular dryland, focusing on its ecology and natural history at a landscape level.
2. An account of an organism or a group of organisms that inhabit a dryland habitat that describes their/its life history including adaptations to the environmental conditions, behaviour, threats faced due to changing conditions including habitat destruction and climate change.
3. A description of an adventure in a dryland.
4. An elucidation of a dryland's cultural association, e.g., depiction in literature and art.
5. An essay on the threats faced by a dryland habitat and possible solutions to mitigate them and conservation actions that can result in protection of its biodiversity and support local communities.

Participants are required to submit original works, based on personal observations/experiences, that have not been published or presented elsewhere. The works should, in the spirit of M. Krishnan's writings (www.mkrishnan.com), aim to promote an understanding of nature and support for conservation among lay persons.

Rules

All works must be submitted by individuals (collaboration is not allowed).

Each participant may submit only one work.

The competition is open to Indian citizens aged between 18 and 30 years as on 30th November 2026.

Submissions must be made together with the official Entry Form available online.

Submissions must be in English.

The work must be submitted in the .doc format (Open Office and MS Word compatible) or portable document format (PDF). Entries should be in 10 point Times New Roman, 1.5 line space. There should be no text boxes, figures or tables in the document.

The word count of the work should be 2700 - 3000 words. Please check the same before submitting.

The last date for submission is 30th November 2026.



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Submissions must be sent by email as attachments to madrasnaturalistssociety@gmail.com along with the official entry form.

Details of the participant such as the name and address should be provided in the official entry form only. These details should not be provided in the file containing the work.

The file should be named with the first four (or fewer) letters of the participant's surname, followed by integers representing the participant's date of birth in the date-month-year format. For example, a participant with surname Srinivasan and born on 6 March 2001 should use the name 'srin06032001.doc' or 'srin06032001.pdf' for his or her submission.

Each work must be accompanied by a short Summary. Alternatively, an introduction or an extract from the work could be provided. The word count of this Summary should not exceed 200 words. Participants should note that the Summary is an important part of the submission as it will be used by the Jury to make a pre-selection.

If the participant quotes published material or cites a reference, the source should be unambiguously indicated and credited.

The Madras Naturalists' Society reserves the right to publish and to make available to the public the winning submissions.

The decision of the Jury is final and is not subject to appeal.

Submissions will be acknowledged by email. Participants are requested not to enquire about the status of their entries. Shortlisted and Winning participants will be informed by email.

Prizes

1. First Prize – Rs.15,000/-, Citation and a Certificate.
2. Two Commendable Entries – Honourable Mention and a Certificate.