EVErything in nature has evolved into its best version and this is what Darwin’s mighty Doctrine of Theory of Evolution by Natural Selection and Survival of the fittest states too. Futuyma, an eminent evolutionary biologist, said that Natural selection is a simple concept, but it nevertheless works in many and sometimes subtle ways and is the only mechanism known to cause the evolution of adaptation. And these adaptations enable better survival and reproduction of organisms.

There are a vivid spectrum of adaptations that occur in nature, like the sutures in the skull of young mammals which aid parturition, changes in the leaf forms to regulate leaf temperature, differences in beak shapes and sizes of the birds to enable feeding a specific type of food like the Island finches on Galapagos Islands.

Nature has manifested its ingenuity by devising rational and innovative ways of adaptations. It has made people believe in the magic of nature and has unfurled a laudable synchrony between function and design of its genesis. It appears as if nature has chiselled the existing harmony around.

The beauty of nature is underlined by admiring the beautiful hidden art, designs, imprints, motifs in the finest hues and on the perfect templates of nature. But why do these patterns occur at all? Do they have some significance or are they just a piece of visual treat?

Robert F. Kennedy said, “The purpose of life is to contribute in some way to make things better.” Therefore, every little mark, a speck or a hue in nature definitely has a worth; had it not, nature would have not spent its ardour on it.

Be it the sparkling dazzies on a sunny day or scarlet maple leaves in the fall, or the sporty waves striking the sea shore or the Calathea lancifolia leaves bounds us to contemplate the adroitness of mother nature. The gorgeous looking plant embellished with green embroidered leafy pattern on a leaf makes it a spectacular blend of function and design. This certainly brings out the theme of “life imprints on life”, where a leaf is carved upon another leaf with a brilliant architecture and utmost fineness, apparently painted by the artiste’s brush. Nevertheless, science has hitched these beautifully crafted leaves of Calathea as a means to increase the photosynthetic efficiency and light capturing efficiency as they happen to be the understory plants in tropical forests.

Nature’s beauty lies in the little dancing gleeful penguins holding the orange poles with both their tiny hands and merrymaking. These happy faced creatures are embossed on the bodies of a caterpillar, Malacosoma disstria. So, a hearty penguin riding on a caterpillar’s back makes it another instance of “life imprints on life”!

It appears as if the caterpillars have tattooed their favourite penguins on their bodies or the buoyant penguins are parading on the cushioned caterpillars. Science says that patterns are nature’s inadvertent acts of mimicry, but the shape of these little adorable penguins is a coincidence and not an adaptation. But somehow, it’s a warning sign to the predators that the caterpillar will not taste especially nice. This beautiful “life imprints on life” is one of the craziest
and charming pieces of nature’s art, which might have a scientific significance but is definitely mesmerising from the eyes of a nature lover.

Nature has devised wonderful ways for its own refuge in order to maintain harmony and balance in the ecosystem. And in doing so, phenomenal colours, patterns, structures, shapes, angles develop in the lap of nature. Some changes are majestic, some are beautiful and attractive, few are hard-featured, and some are real scary ones.

One of them is the scary eyes of the Owl butterfly, which again exemplifies “life imprints on life”! These eye-shaped motifs on the wings of the butterfly appear spooky. But then, their presence and existence have a purpose, it keeps the butterflies protected by mimicking the scary eyes of a predator.

There is another strange and mystifying creature, a moth larvae of Narosa sp. belonging to the Limacodidae family. It was spotted in the Cambodian rainforest, with tangerine yellow body and long giant appendages crawling on the leaf surface. The sight of this arthropod instantaneously reminds one of a plant, Maranta leuconeura which has very identical imprints of the larvae on its leaf surface. The leaves of the plant appear to be a perfect template on which the arthropod had left its mark, a reflection which has been totally embedded onto the leaf surface. It appears as if on one sunny day, the larvae took a walk on these leaves and stained them. This unique and brilliant association pattern exemplifies life on life imprint finely.

There might be countless examples of life imprints on life, which may be hidden, undeciphered yet, in the dense rainforests, on the ocean floor, on the mountain peaks or may be in the home gardens or in our own backyards, lawns, roadsides which might happen to be overlooked, disremembered or passed by unnoticeably.

Look around for more such lively patterns hailing “Life imprints on Life”!

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