

Recent Education Reports from ZOO's Education Network

Conservation education programme in Namdapha

The Nature Conservation Foundation organized conservation education activities with schoolchildren from Miao with the help of a local NGO, Society for Environmental Awareness and Conservation of Wildlife (SEACOW) in April 2005. About 30 children (Class 3 -5) and 4 teachers were invited for this programme. We used wildlife masks and other educational material developed by Zoo Outreach (we also made our own). They were asked to identify them and say what each of them ate. Each child was given a mask and they formed several food chains (eg. tiger-deer-leaf, leopard-hoolock gibbon-fruit, snake-toad-butterfly-flower etc) and then asked to catch their prey. We later took them to the small Miao zoo. We told them that animals in the zoo should not be teased or poked. In another activity the children were asked to paint their favourite animal. We gave away prizes to the kids for the games, and all the kids were given something from the materials produced by Zoo Outreach to take home. The kids were also taken to the Museum maintained by the Project Tiger authorities .

The same evening, 17 boys (Class 6 to Class 9) came from the Government Secondary School to the SEACOW office. We started by asking them what they knew about hornbills. They were all tribal children who go to the forest. A favourite pastime among these kids is hitting birds with catapults. It was amazing how much most of them knew about hornbills. For instance, they knew it was a bird, and its Assamese name, they said hornbills mainly ate fruits and snakes, and that they nest inside a tree hole, they even named one of the nest tree species, 7 of them had seen hornbills in the nearby forests. They thought that there were 3 kinds of hornbills in India (based on what they saw in their area). I then asked them to sit in 3 groups of 5 and read and look at the hornbill poster (of the 5 NE species) we had made. The SEACOW youth sat with each group to help them read and understand. Afterwards, I asked them more about hornbills and they had learnt more about hornbills.

In the evening a wildlife film on tigers shot in Bandavgarh, MP was filmed to a group of boys in the evening at the SEACOW office. None of these kids had been inside Namdapha, although it is just 26 km from Miao. Several of them told me that tigers were hunted for their skins (they said it was for decoration) and for medicinal value. We gave them some of the Zoo Outreach wildlife education material and asked them to make their own posters/drawings of hornbills and give these to SEACOW youth a week later.

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World Environment Day and Van Mahotsava Day Report

As part of the celebration of the World Environment Day and Vanamahotsav Day, an array of programmes were conducted in the ANJA College campus. A special Guest lecture was organized on 01.07.2005 in which Mr. Avudai Sangu, Forest Range Officer, Srivilliputtur, Grizzled Giant Squirrel Sanctuary, delivered a lecture on "Importance and Conservation of Plants". In his address, the Chief guest narrated the field experiences of conservation and the various strategies adopted by the Forest Department to conserve the forest. The meeting was attended by well over 100 students. A tree plantation programme was also organized in which ten different species of trees are planted by the dignitaries.

Apart from the special lecture programme, and tree planting, quiz contest on the nature and environment with special focus on four plants enlisted by the Zoo Outreach Organisation was conducted in which nearly hundred students participated.

Besides this, Rakhi tying and Mask wearing programmes were also organized to make wide publicity about the World Environment Day and Vana Mahotsava Day. At the end of the session informal feedback were obtained from the participants to ascertain the success of the programme. And it is astonishingly found that nearly 90% of the participants were found to be ecstatic and enjoyed the programme as novel, innovative and informative.

Dr. S. Sevagapandian, Principal, Ayya Nadar Janaki Ammal College, Sivakasi 626 124 TN

WED '05 - Report, Babasaheb Ambedkar Marathwada University, Aurangabad

The camp was conducted in the Department of Botany, Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Marathwada University, Aurangabad, Maharashtra that was attended by post graduate students, teachers and gardeners. After having discussion on the literature that we received from Zoo Outreach Organisation, the packets, T-shirts were distributed to the candidates who attended the camp and at the end we took the plantation programme. We are highly grateful to you and your institute for encouraging us by providing the material free of cost.

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Detailed Report on observation of 51st Wildlife Week 2005 executed by APOWA

This year we have been celebrating wildlife week in a different manner through out the week. The programme was more colourful, interesting and learnable with inputs of educational materials provided by Coimbatore based Zoo Outreach Organisation.

The Week long programme was inaugurated by Advocate Bijaya Kumar Kabi Rout, President of APOWA at the office premises of APOWA. On this inaugural ceremony, Chief advisor of APOWA Prof. G. C. Tripathy OES, Retd. stressed on the conservation and protection of endangered species & Wildlife

On the eve of Gandhi Jayanti Ahimsa Diwas a meeting was arranged in the office premises of APOWA. On this August occasion the volunteers staffs, Guests & others tying rakhis each other with promise to protect wildlife. The animal print rakhi has provided by Zoo Outreach Organisation, Coimbatore and a rare photo exhibition on wild life was displayed.

On the occasion of 3rd day celebration of wildlife week and the day for wildlife was observed by APOWA at Ucha siksya sram Arua Kadaliban. In his respect an eloquence competition was organized on the topic "Wildlife of Orissa". About 31 participants attend the competitions and also a short play was displayed by the students of Karuna Club U.S.A.K. High School. In this respect a meeting was organized in the school premises. Mr. G. Behera, HM organized the meeting with active co-operation of APOWA volunteers & Staff.

On the eve of the 4th day celebration of wildlife week and World Animal Day a rally was organized by APOWA with the participation of Baktarpur High School students at Pattamundai Town. The students staging rally with wearing mask and holding placards. A drawing competition was held among students of Baktarpur High School.

The 5th day celebration of wildlife week 2005 was inaugurated by Sri Rabindranath Roul, H.M. of Chandiagadi High School under Aul Block. On this occasion various competitions such as essay writing, quiz, bat count competition were held among schools students who came from 15 schools of Kendrapara district.

In the session of prize ceremony chief guest distributed prize articles of APOWA & T-shirts provided by Zoo Outreach Organisation to the students winner. Mr. Alekha Chandra Kund gave vote of the thanks to the guest & participants.

On the sixth day various interesting games were organized to educate about wildlife at Keshpur M.E. School children wearing big T-shirts & walk on the road. The game like "Fire in the forest: - "My daily life Wildlife", Amphibian art & activities, "Turtle size and shapes activity" were conducted among students.

The valedictory function of wildlife week 2005 was organized at the conference hall. President of APOWA, volunteers and, local club members, village headman were present. Everyone appreciated the educational materials provided by Zoo Outreach Organisation. This was most informative, interesting and attractive for school going kids. It was found that the responses were satisfactory.

Some comments about the programme

- Celebration of wildlife week is very important & useful
- Education materials of Zoo Outreach Organisation, Coimbatore was most informative, attractive & interesting
- Educational materials for students must be in regional language for easy understanding.
- School and college should be informed well before the wildlife week observation by the state forest department
- Eco & kindness club should be given most important

Bijaya Kumar Kabi, Director of Action for Protection Of Wild Animals At. – Hatapatana, P.O. – Kadaliban, Via-Chaudkulat, Dist – Kendrapara 754 222 Orissa

Observance of Wildlife Week - A Report

On 2nd October 2005 at Saumar Jyoti Vidyalaya, Tinsukia we organized a day long education programme with 40 students from four different schools. To start with students were asked to draw an endangered animal of their choice with a time limit was 45 minutes. After the completion of the drawing we organized two games based on primates.

The packets received from ZOO was distributed to the students and they were asked to tie the Rakhi's and wear the primate crown. They pledged to save and conserve wildlife. Two resource persons Mr. Ranjan Das an environmentalist and lecturer in the department of Geography Tinsukia College and Mr. Pankaj Sharma, Ranger officer of Dibru-Saikhowa National Park gave lectures.

Mr. Ranjan Das explained about different conservation issues in very lucid language. Mr. Pankaj Sharma explained about resource management and sustainable development emphasizing on biodiversity with special reference to Dibru – Saikhowa National Park. Certificates were issued to all the participating students. At the outset we thankfully acknowledge the receipt of educational material containing primates and vulture posters

Dr. Rishi Das, Secretary "Ed-en", A Society for Environmental Education, K.K. Path, Professor Colony, Rangagora Road, Tinsukia 786 125 Assam.

World Environment Day Celebration

In connection with the World Environment day an education programme for school students were arranged at museum auditorium in Thiruvananthapuram. Students from St. Thomas High School, Mukkolakkal, and Government U.P. School, Chala, Thiruvananthapuram participated in the function which was started on 5th June 2005 and lasted upto 08.06.2005.

As a part of the activity envisaged by 'Zoo Outreach' a rakhi fastening ceremony was arranged. They were also asked to take an oath of nature conservation. After this ceremony, masks were supplied and

students were asked to find out rakhi-mask matching students. The first five winners were given T-shirts.

The five posters were wrapped around the tree trunks in the botanical garden of the zoo and museum. Each and every students were asked to identify them. Garden superintendent took a botanical demonstration.

The programme include a workshop on making articles using thrown away plastic wastes and live demonstration of plants and animals of zoo and museum. The four T-shirts were given to four group leaders. Each one of the students were supplied with masks and greeting cards. Posters were also used for enlightening students through play. The awareness programme conducted by Kerala Forest Department through Forestry Information Bureau, was very effective.

The materials received from Zoo Outreach were suitably designed to fit the theme, and was very useful in conducting this year's World Environment Day programme in a different manner.

V. Gopinathan, Chief Conservator of Forests (WL), Office of Chief Wildlife Warden Forest Head Quarters, Government of Kerala, Vazhuthacaud, Thiruvananthapuram - 695 014, Kerala

"World Environment Day and role of Plants" by School of Students in Botany, Jiwaji University

'Rakhis', provided by ZOO Coimbatore were tied on the wrists of Vice-Chancellor, Registrar, other dignitaries and to school children. Posters supplied by ZOO were displayed at various places in the University Campus.

Van Mahotsava was celebrated on 1st July 2005 with following activities: A good number of saplings were planted in the university campus. Some plant species multiplied and propagated through "Ex-situ Conservation" in the botanical garden were transplanted in the forest area. A new small orchard named "Amliki Vatika" was inaugurated by the Collector Mr. Rakesh Shrivastava in the Campus. 200 hybrid saplings of "Amla (*Embllica officinalis*)" were planted in the Vatika. On this occasion several dignitaries like Supdt. Of Police Mr. M.S. Narang, Additional Collector Mr. R.K. Jain, Joint Collector Mr. Vinod Sharma along with teachers and other people graced the occasion by their presence and took part in plantation.

A team from forest Department Gwalior including forest officers and forest trainees were invited to visit botanical garden and Medicinal Plant Garden of the University. On all the occasions the Zoo Outreach Organization was acknowledged.

Prof. Ashok Kumar Jain, School of Students in Botany, Jiwaji University, Gwalior 474 011, Madhya Pradesh.

Plants for Life Programme in Himalayan Botanic Gardens, Nainital -- Report 4 July 2005

A 'Plants for Life' programme was conducted in the Basic Primary School, Narayannagar, the main village situated within the Botanic Gardens. The programme was under the auspices of *Van Mahotsav* Week of the Uttaranchal Forest Department through its Research Wing called the Silviculturist, Uttaranchal who is responsible for developing the garden.

The programme consisted of interactive sessions with the school children on uses of trees and forests, herbarium preparation, plant identification and solid waste management. It was followed by the students planting Chinara (*Plantanus orientalis*) trees in their school ground. The materials for the programme were sponsored by Zoo Outreach Organisation, (ZOO) and Botanic Gardens Conservation International (BGCI).

Press releases were made regarding brief description of the

programme, participants, etc. The matter was published in different Hindi and English newspapers after editing.

I on behalf of the staff, students and villagers all at Himalayan Botanic Gardens, Nainital thank the Zoo Outreach Organisation for providing us the materials for conducting the 'Plants for Life' Programme during Van Mahotsav 2005. I also thank the sponsors for the programme, viz., Chester Zoological Gardens, Botanic Gardens Conservation International and Wildlife Information Liaison Development for making the programme a success.

Manoj Chandran, IFS, Dy. Conservator of Forests, Silviculturist, Fairy Hall, Tallital, Nainital, Uttaranchal 263 002

Go Wild Workshops - Teachers for Tigers in Coimbatore & Bangalore

Go Wild Workshops conducted two Teachers for Tigers programmes for 62 teachers. The first was held at the Air Force School at AFAC, Coimbatore from the 15-17th of April 2005. The second workshop was conducted at the Air Force Training Command with representatives from 4 participating AF Schools around Bangalore from the 26th – 28th of April 2005.

In coimbatore the chief guest was Mrs Rita Dayalu, President AFWWA (Local) and in Bangalore, the chief guest was Mrs Gokhale, Vice - President AFWWA (Regional).

The first day began with the ice breaker – the teachers made flags describing their names, their professions their hobbies and their favourite animal. In both the workshops most loved gardening and butterflies.

After a brief introduction the importance of feedback was discussed. The teachers then learnt other assessment techniques - they drew their own concept maps of the tiger. In both the workshops, most of the teachers found the tiger magnificent but terrifying.

The participants were split into groups and given a themed drama on tigers (hunting, courtship, parental care, poaching) and asked to prepare a live drama in 20 minutes. The performances mobilized the teachers not just in learning about Tiger biology but also showed how team work, creativity and action-based learning can be utilized in teaching.

Then an exercise on tiger ranges (100 years ago and now) was conducted based on the maps provided in the Manual which participants had to assemble and extract information. The feedback on this exercise was very positive, particularly the geography and English teachers.

On the second through a series of fun exercises participants learnt about tiger habits, features and behaviour (hunting, teeth pattern and functions, running, camouflage etc.).

Then the idea that the tiger as a symbol of courage, strength and beauty is used in almost all walks of life: literature, art, culture, mythology and advertisements, was explored in Tigers in our culture. The participants read stories on tigers and interpreted them, analysed paintings on tigers and listed out the places where tigers were symbolised like songs, poems, sports, advertisements etc.

A series of dates (with some significance about tigers) was given to participants and they had to present it as a poster, and at the same time learn about them. The final products were displayed in the chronological sequence as an exhibition of the Tiger Timeline.

Participants were given various roles to play in relation to tigers like, biologists, farmers, song-writers, marketing people, etc. They had to present their views as creatively as they could.

The teachers soon realized that regardless of the subject they teach in the classroom, or the age group of their children, the activities and teaching techniques could be adapted to suit their needs. Teaching, wildlife conservation and the school syllabus hand in hand.

The day ended with a walk through the wild areas around them looking for living things with spots or stripes in them.

On the last day of the workshop various methods of censusing tigers, the pugmark method and usage of camera traps, were explained by a demonstration. An area on the ground was prepared with three soil types: Wet, dry/sandy and hard. Teachers wearing shoes were asked to step into each of the soil types. It was immediately clear that the prints were varied and even indistinct in some cases.

Nagarahole citizens' debate: A hypothetical situation about tiger human conflict was given to each working group which they had to enact from their own perspective. The debate was heated and very vocal.

The workshops also provided a platform for the teachers of Coimbatore to meet and interact with wildlife conservationists in the field. Mr Sanjay Molur, the Dy. Dir. of Zoo Outreach Organization, who gave an overview of biodiversity. For the Bangalore teachers, a movie on tigers was screened.

After Lunch the teachers held an International Conservation Strategy Meeting for Tigers. Interestingly most of the teachers felt that although education was important, wildlife research came a close second in conservation priorities.

Inspired and motivated at the end of the workshop the teachers tied symbolic rakhi's as friendship bands on each other to show their commitment to wildlife conservation and that they are now friends of the forest and the tiger. Each teacher took a pledge to spread the word of conservation and teach their kids to love and care for wildlife.

Feedback Sessions: Separated subject wise in Coimbatore and School wise in Bangalore the teachers then sat in working groups to brainstorm on how they could utilise "Teachers For Tigers" in their classrooms or Schools. The primary school teachers said that they would start by giving tiger marks and faces instead of stars for grades on the report card, building up the idea of a tiger being the best and magnificent in all it does. Almost all the teachers found the Resource round up activity very apt and doable. The English and Political Science teachers showed a marked interest in the Citizens Debate and the International Tiger Conference methodologies of teaching. The games master, Science and Maths teachers expressed their interest in little cats to big cats and the Art teacher in the Tiger timeline. The teachers also filled out new concept maps and were astonished at the change in their knowledge.

Conclusion: This dynamic outreach educational program had a dual benefit as some of the teachers would move to different AF bases and therefore would not only teach the children in the root school but would also take the knowledge with them to other parts of the country.
Payal Bhojwani Molur, 'Gowild workshops', Coimbatore, TN

Gandhi festival

On "Gandhi festival" we had several children enacting as Gandhiji gave the message of compassion for living things. Children were divided into Bat/bears/primates and trained teachers conducted related workshops with them and give the packets away. The grouping was done by wearing masks and finding their respective groups.

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