

Education Reports

Advanced Training Refresher Course for WCS's Teachers for Tigers

An Advanced Training Refresher Course Teachers for Tigers was conducted at the Indian Institute of Forest Management (IIFM), in Bhopal on October 6-7, 2005. Teachers from Seoni (Pench workshop 2004 Monsoon), Shimla (Delhi workshop 2004 Monsoon) and Bhopal (Bhopal workshop 2004 Monsoon) registered along with three new teachers from Bhopal. The course was held under the auspices of the Madhya Pradesh Biodiversity Board.

First Day

Inaugural — After a welcome by Dr. Saba Hussain, Mr. R. Marimuthu from Zoo Outreach Organization welcomed the participants on behalf of Z.O.O. and W.C.S. He gave the background of the 'Teachers for Tigers' programme and talked about how it has spread to many parts of South Asia with 11 workshops covering more than 345 participants (60% teachers). After detailed evaluations of the participants and their ability to apply the course to their work, it was decided to conduct refresher courses to demonstrate new material developed and solidify ties with and between the teachers. The trainers for the refresher course were R. Marimuthu from ZOO, Payal Molur from Go Wild Workshops, Amit Chavan from BNHS and Anand Pendharkar from SPROUTS. All have taken and taught in T4T.

Teachers anticipated learning new techniques and were not disappointed. Anand explained a new game called 'Links' in which he started by distributing slips of paper to each group, e.g. **Desert:** Black Buck, Spiny tailed lizard, Great Indian bustard, Sand, Malaria, acacia; **Grassland:** Khus, Rhinoceros, locust, Bengal Florican, Sugar cane, Kaziranga **Evergreen Forests:** Woody climber, Mouse Deer, Draco, Great Pied Hornbill, Heavy rains, Tissue papers **River:** Dolphin, Gharial, Narmada dam, water, reeds **Mangrove:** Mud skipper, sundari trees, turtles, tsunami, swamp. The teams had to associate each word and find the habitat as well as describe how each word links to that area. Vegetation, Mammal, Reptile/ Insect, Bird, Physical/A biotic factor, Problem/ issue, protected area.

Elements of Survival -- Amit started with the Elements of Survival. Participants were divided into 5 groups and a list of elements put on the board. Each group got and they had to take the elements they want to survive. Teams were: Sea turtle, Sunflower, Squirrel, Butterfly and Bat. Elements were: river, bee, soil, grass, tree, fish, flower, nuts, algae, leaves, mountains, sand, sea, clouds, rains, sun, air, water.

The butterfly team was asked whether they wanted tiger. Each team was made into human beings and asked to list the elements they need. The team fought for all the elements. Then Amit explained how whenever we have human we take all elements without thinking but if we take animals we think really hard and question why an animal needs an element. All the elements are interlinked.

T4T and Other Animals

Payal explained how T4T could be easily modified to suit any animal. She displayed the primate book – (People for Primates Action) and demonstrated the Tigers in Our Culture game that had been modified to Primates in Our Culture. She then went on to explain the different items in both the primate packets and played the Threats Musical Chair/ Newspaper game. Then the game Finger Challenge was demonstrated to the participants.

Create your own Critter

Once adaptations had been explained, Anand explained that for half an hour the teachers would get a chance to design their own creature. He gave each group some elements such as trunk of an elephant, claw of an eagle, eye of an owl, ear of a rabbit etc and the participants had to draw their own creature on a large chart. They also had to make up a name for it and explain how it survives using each adaptation.

T4T Key -- Marimuthu gave a presentation on the T4T Key to the Tamil Nadu matriculation Syllabus textbooks. He showed a wide range of contents from various subjects and age groups that are a part of the syllabus and correspondingly the T4T activity that could be played along with the curriculum.

Evaluations -- Marimuthu distributed his English and Hindi evaluation forms and with help from Hindi speaking trainers completed all for this group from time to time during the workshop. The Evaluation forms were scrutinized in the night. Anand, Marimuthu, Amit and Payal went through each evaluation form and discussed the different problems that the teachers had highlighted and Amit prepared a tabular compilation of the constraints and probable solutions. As part of evaluation, at the end of the first day an overnight assignment was given. The teachers had to prepare an activity list done using T4T over the past year with their students.

Second Day

Mask making -- Payal started the day with Mask making – using simple materials – each participant made a tiger mask and posed for the group photograph.

Panel Discussion: Problems and Solutions -- A panel discussion was held with Mr. BMS Rathore, Mr. Shyam Bohre (consultant with MP state Biodiversity Board), Dr. Avinish Kumar, State Coordinator, CEE and Mr. Kapil Sahasrabuddhe (CEE) who studied copies of a compilation of problems using T4T in the schools. There was a discussion between panel and teachers of some of the difficulties. Many teachers had addressed the difficulties with creative solutions. Other teachers could get many ideas from this discussion. Marimuthu put together a concise and well-documented presentation on the results that he obtained from the evaluations done in South India. The teachers were astonished with some of the things that the teachers had been able to do, including, during lunch, a

film made by the Kerala Teacher , “Yours loving the Tiger” was screened.

Dr S.K. Sahoo from Conservation Himalayas gave a short presentation on his work in Shimla using Teachers for Tigers Manual and other innovative teaching techniques. After him four teachers from the Bhopal workshop gave their presentation on their work, Many of them had copied items from the Tiger Toolkits – their students having enjoyed them the most.

Designing a Programme-- The trainers coordinated the 'Designing a Programme' activity. The participants were divided into 5 working groups and each group given a topic to design a 1) one day programme, 2) a 1-2 hour programme, 3) a year agenda for Eco-club, 4) designing an Eco School, and designing school programmes around the eco-calendar. In 25 minutes they had their programmes ready and each presented it on a chart paper to the rest of the group. The teachers were surprised to see that even without funds, time and wildlife not being a part of the curricula they could do so many things in their school. They were also astonished that they had come up with some of the solutions to their own problems that had been discussed in the morning session. The teachers were given guidelines on “Developing a Programme around a species or an Event” taken from the ZOO Ed Book of Z.O.O.

Selected H.E.L.P games -- Payal then explained other games from the Habitat Ecology Learning Program of WCS (HELP) provided in folders, such as Surviving the Seasons, What's happening to our wetlands and Adaptation Match.

Commitment letter and feedback forms -- This time the commitments were done in the manner of a letter. Each participant was given a reply postcard. They were instructed to address the letter to themselves and state what they hoped to do in three months. The letter would be posted back to them in three months when they could read what they promised to do and in the reply card send ZOO a response. Afterwards there was a Validictory.

Some Teachers view about this course — Vandana, Delhi Public School: Curriculum designed for the workshop and

refresher were very good, interactive, games, painting related to environment, excellent material, books, posters, games, evaluation forms were answered. She also highlighted the use of T4T teaching & that she found it great to use the maps.

Narayan Rahagdule, Seoni: Didn't know anything before workshop. It helped him to know so many things. He played activities with the villagers, students who enjoyed very much. Requested for activities and workshops.

D K Srivastava, Seoni: Students were curious to see live tiger after the activities. But since Pench was 100 km far he could not take them there. Requested to send buses to the school.

Suggestion for future courses: – Most teachers felt the course should be repeated once a year or once in two years to learn new techniques and go on increasing and updating their knowledge. Some teachers suggested the programme should always be conducted in the field and some interesting Information about individual animal species (common ones) in the form of booklet should be provided.

Participants replied a question “what did you get from this workshop”. Some of the replies are : Planning an education programme, Water Conservation, New Games and quizzes, Creativity, All animals are important to us, Animals need whatever we need to our survival, Using available props for education programme such as waste paper, Conservation Commitment, Learned to include activities in the curricula.

All participants replied positively to the question “Do you think this refresher course boosted your interest to plan an education programme? All now have plans to conduct programmes in their schools using knowledge acquired during this refresher course. A refresher course is planned in the Mysore Zoo later in November for the teachers who took the course at the Regional Museum of Natural History and from surrounding areas.

Submitted by R. Marimuthu, Payal Molur, Amit Chavan and Anand Pendharkar.

Announcement from Wildlife Conservation Society, International Zoo Educators Association, Zoo Outreach Organisation, and South Asian Network of International Zoo Educators

Dear Conservation Educator,

We in collaboration with Dr. Tom Naiman of the International Education Department of Wildlife Conservation Society USA and IZE are trying to link educators as partners with their counterparts in different countries. In order to qualify for this project, would you please reply the following questions and send the replies back to us along with your name, email address, title or post, and mailing address. We will, in turn, communicate this to Tom and he will contact you if there is a link available.

- 1) Are you interested in communicating and collaborating with a zoo educator in another part of the world?
- 2) Which region would you be most interested in finding a partner? (select from Europe, Africa, Asia, South Asia, Australia, North America, Latin America)
- 3) What languages do you speak?
- 4) What goals do you have for this communication and/or collaboration?

Send your name, email address to <zoocrew@vsnl.net> or post them to : Zoo Outreach Organisation, Box 1683, Peelamedu, Coimbatore 4, TN, India. You can fax it to 0422 2563269.

Thanking you, Sally Walker, Founder/Hon. Director, Zoo Outreach Organisation