

## HECx Follow Up.....Programmes done by the participants



*Mini drama on elephants being performed by students*



*Marching for elephant conservation with masks and placards*



*Students welcome the resource persons and guests wearing masks*

### **Human Elephant Coexistence HECx participant's programmes**

ZOO conducted HECx education programmes for the trainers in Rajapalayam and Ooty. US Fish and Wildlife Service sponsored these trainings. At the time of training the participants pledged to conduct any of the two activities in their locality within six months of time. We heard from the following persons.

#### **Chinmaya Vidyalaya P.A.C. Ramasamy Matric Hr. Sec. School, Rajapalayam, Tamil Nadu**

On 20 October 2012, our school Science Club as its first activity celebrated National Wildlife Week. The guests were Dr. Kalaivanan, the Elephant Specialist and T. S. Subramanian, Secretary of WAR-Wildlife Association of Rajapalayam. All the students of the Science Club wore the elephant masks and carrying other items from the ele-kit packets lined up the pathway to welcome the guests. The Principal welcomed them. The children welcomed them by raising their hands and trumpeting like an elephant as they walked past them to the venue! The programme started at 9.30 am. G. Roja gave the welcome address and the compere was P. Suja.

As the first activity, the students of 6-9 Std played mime mini dramas on elephant poaching, preserving elephant corridors and elephant etiquette. After each drama the compere shared the message contained within the dramas. The science club members watched the dramas with a lot of interest.

After the drama, Dr. Kalaivanan gave an informative talk on why we should conserve forests? He talked about the food and natural cycles of the earth and the elephant's role in it. He said even minute creatures play a major role in the ecosystem. He spoke about biodiversity, extinction of endangered species like vulture, and sparrows and extinct species Dodo and the need to preserve our wildlife, to grow trees and to save the earth.

Mr.T.S. Subramanian shared interesting information from Dr. Kalaivanan's works on elephants and his dedication to elephants. He also shared the history of the famous elephant veterinarian late Dr. Krishnamoorthy, popularly known as Dr. K.

A procession was led by students with the elephant masks and other items from the ele kit, around the campus shouting slogans to conserve wildlife and to save the earth. The procession

started from the library. Many students participated with enthusiasm and many joined us during the procession. It was a cheerful experience cherished by CHINMAYANS. We enjoyed taking our first step and our best step to spread awareness, which may save our earth. The programme ended with the vote of thanks.

Our Science Club conducted another similar programme on 8 November 2012. Mr. Roger Mann of Be As One Foundation, Mr. Surendra Varma, Research Scientist, Asian Nature Conservation Foundation, Bangalore, Mr. T. Sekar Neeraj, Conservator of Forests, Mr. Ashok Kumar, Wildlife Warden, Srivilliputhur, Mr. Balasubramaniam, Ranger, Rajapalayam and Ms. Madhumitha, Freelance Journalist on Environment Conservation and Wildlife were the speakers and guests.

The Principal welcomed guests. The Children welcomed them in the same way they did in first programme. Students from 6-9 std played mini dramas on elephants. All the guests gave a talk and welcomed questions from the students. The students put forth a number of doubts, which they patiently answered. The 9 std students gave a presentation to the guests and they were impressed with the students' overall activities. Mr. T. S. Subramaniam, Secretary, Wildlife Association of Rajapalayam (WAR) helped to conduct this programme. **Submitted by: V. Latha, Librarian. vasudevarajalatha@yahoo.in.**

### HECx programmes in Ooty Schools

The first HECx programme was conducted at Government High School, Emerald, Ooty. It was a two-day programme held on 30-31 October 2012. Seventy students of class 9 & 10 and 9 teachers participated. The second programme was conducted at Government Higher Secondary School, Ithalar on 28-29 January 2013 and 90 students of class 9 and 11 with eleven teachers participated. The agenda of the programme was same in both places.

At first the participants were given very detailed information about the programme. It lasted for half an hour. They were explained about different assessment tools to pre assess the participants knowledge on the subject and how it is important to measure the knowledge level increase after the programme. Two assessment tools were tried with the participants viz., concept map and attitude assessment. A sample concept map on the subject food was taught to them. Then they

were asked to do concept map on elephants. Following this attitude assessment was done by using the statements from the Elephant Teaching Guide.

The participants were told about the difference between the Asian and African elephants and they had not known most of the differences earlier. They were very much interested getting to know about both kinds of elephant species.

Before lunch, the students were divided into four groups to play mini dramas. Instructions were given about dramas. Then each group was supplied with a drama script and asked to prepare and rehearse the drama. Enough time was given. Then each group played the mime dramas. When one group played the drama, the other group members were the audience. The audience watched the drama very carefully as at the end of the drama, the audience had to summarize what they had seen and what was the theme of the drama. The dramas they played were on the themes : Human Elephant Conflict, poacher and the elephant, why does my village attract elephants and rescuing elephants. The drama portrayed the reasons for HEC, the elephant poacher became a conservationist, how to keep away things normally liked by elephants and what steps to take when elephants are in distress.

Then students and teachers put on elephant masks and carrying elephant placard had a marching rally from the school to town and back to make the public aware of coexistence with elephants. Post assessments were done. Thanks to the Head Master, teachers and students. **Submitted by:**



**'Rescuing elephants' a mini drama by students**



**The elephant conservation rally from school to town**

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### HECx programmes in Tirunelveli District, Tamil Nadu

On 31 August 2012, an Environmental Awareness Training Camp was held at Gandhigram Shanthi Deaf and Dumb School in Sivasailam, Tirunelveli district for the differently abled persons. Department of Environment, Tamil Nadu and National Green Corps organized this programme. Mr. Saravanan, Head Master welcomed all. About 75 persons including the students, teachers of the school and from other schools, forest personnel and others participated. Dr. H.



**Ecology and Conservation of Elephants talk by the HECx trainers**



**HECx trainees performing a mini drama on HEC to the NGC teachers**



**Poster designed by HECx trainers**

Malleshappa IFS, Director, Dept. of Environment was the chief guest. He released two handbooks on global warming and climate change.

In this camp, there was an introductory talk about elephants which covered human elephant conflict and coexistence with a list of DO's and DON'Ts to the people living near to the elephant habitats. Next a mini skit on HEC was enacted. Mrs. Ramalakshmi and Kanchana teachers of the school

explained to the students by sign language. The students enjoyed the drama very much. Mr. Durai, District President, EXONORA, Mrs. Vijaya Lakshmi, District Coordinator, NGC, Mr. Joseph and Dr. Selvin Samuel spoke on the camp.

International Day for the Preservation of Ozone Layer was celebrated on 14 September 2012 at Environment Information Dissemination Centre, Florence Swainson Hr. Sec. School for



**An article about the event in a local daily**

the Deaf, Palayamkottai. National Green Corps and Department of Environment, Tamil Nadu supported it. Dr. Selvin Samuel had arranged this programme. About 100 NGC teachers from Tirunelveli district attended the programme. Human Elephant Coexistence (HECx) was the theme.

A powerpoint presentation on ecology and conservation of Asian elephants was given and it helped the teachers to understand the overall present status of elephants and its conservation problems. The next talk was given on the subject Human Elephant Conflict HEC or Human Elephant Coexistence HECx where the focus was on the need to coexist with elephants. And they were also given tips on the do's and don'ts in elephant habitats in order to save their lives. Following this, to learn about past and present distribution of Asian Elephant the map activity was done. At the end of the activity they came to know that elephants were present in 17 countries in 1900 and population was 200000 but now they are found in 13 countries with the population of only 35000. So the Asian elephants numbers have been reduced by 87% in the last 100 years.

Then the organizing team (Rajan, Marimuthu, Sudalai Kannu, David and Vella Pandi) played a mini drama to the teachers on the theme "Human Elephant Conflict". This drama made them understand that HEC mostly occurs as a result of habitat loss and fragmentation. **Submitted by: P. Rajan, St. John's College, Palayamkottai, TN. Email: rajanbmg@gmail.com.**