

## Education Reports

### **Biodiversity education program in Bee Museum, Ooty**

Nilgiri Natural History Society (NNHS) conducted a one-day biodiversity education program in the Bee Museum on 21 July. School students of Irula Tribe from the villages of Vaalaithotam, Chokanhalli and Annaikatti in the Sigur Valley attended. The program started with the introductory game 'Know each other' where the students and organisers were given a slip of paper with a name of an animal.

All the participants then had to mimic the animal on the sheet and find their partner with the same animal, creating a cacophony of sounds from the wild. They then went on to introduce each other to the whole group. Following this Mr. Brawin Kumar, Resource person from Zoo Outreach Organization gave an introductory talk on the Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve and more specifically about its forests and wildlife. Some posters and books were put on display to familiarize the kids with the birds and animals of the NBR. The kids were then given a brief insight into the different life forms using flash cards.

Following this he interacted with the kids in a session called "Animals around us" where the children talked about the last animal they had seen and the one animal they wished to see. After this a short video- "Wangari Maathai- I will be a humming bird" was played and translated to Tamil. A tea break ensued after which the kids learnt about forests and their ecological roles. A video about degradation of our forest was played and was translated to Tamil. The children were then divided into 5 groups and each group was given a puzzle which when solved gave rise to an animal. One kid from each team then had to talk about the animal after discussing with his or her



**Mr. Brawin Kumar leading one of the sessions**



**Animal puzzle activity played by the children**

group. Additional information on the ecological significance of each animal was shared with the group. He then sang a song for the children about some of the species, which the children thoroughly enjoyed. He then showed the kids a poster on pollinators and explained the importance of pollination and also how several unlikely species like monkeys, bats, lizards, rodents, birds in addition to bees and butterflies were effective pollinators. A short movie about

elephants was played before breaking for lunch.

After lunch an energizer game was played with the kids. It was a fun activity that got a lot of laughs and doubled the energy level in the room. For the next activity the kids were again divided into five groups and each group got a copy of the Bat pack-a teaching aid designed by the Zoo Outreach Organization. Then he related many facts about fruit bats and their ecological roles. The groups were given some



**Differently abled kids explained in sign language about elephants**



**Kids explaining the role of bats in the ecosystem**

time to discuss and further read about bats and one member from each group came forward and recounted everything they knew about bats. Three groups with a most number of facts received a poster on bats. A presentation titled the boy and the Apple tree followed after which he taught the children a folk song about the importance of forests. He then talked to them briefly about various topics like the food chain, trees, and pollution. The session

ended with the screening of the movie Save Our Sholas (SOS) and the Children took a pledge to save the environment. 1. I will not litter. 2. I won't hurt any animal 3. I will keep my surroundings clean 4. I will help raise native plants in my region 5. I will live in harmony with nature. Postcards from Zoo Outreach organization were distributed to the participants. The programme organized with the help of Mr. Justin from Keystone Foundation and Mr. Vinod from

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### **Biodiversity and Endangered Species: awareness program**

A biodiversity and wildlife awareness program conducted at Florence Swainson School for Hearing Impaired Students, Palayamkottai, Tirunelveli. More than fifty students actively participated. Mr. Johnson, Headmaster gave brief introduction about the environment and nature. Mr. Brawin Kumar explained about five kingdoms of life. Next, the students were divided into six groups and played "find the animal game". Every team leader explained in sign language about the animal they found. Humming bird video played after that. A small interaction session on "the common animals around us and their behavior" was conducted.

Since the next day was Global Tiger Day (29 June) and this venue is very near to Kalakad Mundanthurai Tiger Reserve, we shared tiger facts and followed by screened Shekar Dattatri's video on tigers. The story of a tree was explained and a tree chart displayed and explained about the importance of trees and medicinal plants. The students actively involved in this session by saying the commonly available trees names. Then animal puppets were showed to them. By using the bat puppet, the students were told about various interesting facts about bats. They raised many questions about animals on the puppet and answers were given. Mr. Venkatesh Babu, Eventura gave a talk on positive attitude and effective self-motivating. He also talked about different kinds of pollution, global warming and conducted interactive question answer session.





**Mr. V.V. Rajan Chellappa, Mayor of Madurai Corporation briefing about climate change and its impacts**



**NGC teachers attending the programme**

Zoo Outreach Organization education posters and greeting cards were used and it attracted the participants very much. Mr. R. Raja, Eventura, Mrs. Selvi and Ms. Daisy, Sign language interpreters and Staff of F&S School were very much helpful to conduct the programme. We received good feedback from the participants.

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### **Climate Change and Biodiversity Conservation education programme at Madurai**

July 2, 2013 was a memorable day to the 45 Eco-club in-charge teachers of Madurai District as

they underwent a training on the theme Climate Change and Biodiversity Conservation. Mr.V.V.Rajan Chellappa, the worshipful Mayor of Madurai Corporation, was the Chief guest briefed about the existing climate and how people are affected. He also added that all the living creatures on earth are directly or indirectly affected on climate change. We the humans must accept and admit the present condition and try to keep our body in healthy by taking nutritious food, which are available locally. He also encouraged growing home gardens. His gave valuable suggestions on how to protect us when animals like elephant's attack. He also said that the Govt.

of Tamilnadu is always encouraging the teachers who are working with innovations. His long non-stop address attracted the audience. Mr. Rajendren, the Headmaster, Ilango Corporation Hr. Sec. School welcomed the gatherings, Mrs. C. Amuthavalli, the C.E.O. of Madurai District appreciated the programme as it serves as a guideline for the teachers to carryout the eco club monthly activities.

After the inaugural function the participants gone through the materials supplied by the Zoo Outreach Organization, India i.e. Frog, Bat, Know your Monkey Manners, Elephant Etiquette etc. from 2002 to 2013 and the list of schools who underwent the training programme. The C.D. on climate change and Species, prepared by ZOO, India was played which was followed by question and answer session. The most interesting thing was Living on Climate Change. Due to shortage of materials photocopies of the "Condition prevails during various speed of the wind" was distributed. The most interesting session seems to be the Eco-song. Lyrics were dictated which was followed by the action song. Lastly as people are experiencing the menace of animal attack, the printed materials on Elephant Etiquette were distributed which seemed more informative. Participants assured to carry out these at their schools. They thanked Zoo Outreach Organisation specially Ms. Sally Walker for her untiring work. Mr. K Muniyandi, the District Eco club coordinator proposed vote of thanks. **Submitted by: Ms. Jessie Jeyakaran. Email: [jesseyjey@rediffmail.com](mailto:jesseyjey@rediffmail.com).**