

NOTE ON TRAINING PROGRAMME

“JUNIOR RANGERS- CONNECTING STUDENTS WITH NATURE”

INSTITUTE OF FOREST GENETICS & TREE BREEDING, COIMBATORE

Environmental education, awareness and training plays a significant role in encouraging and enhancing people's participation in activities aimed at conservation, protection and management of the environment, for achieving sustainable development. Ministry of Environment & Forest & Climate Change (MoEF&CC) has accorded priority for promotion of non-formal environmental education and creation of awareness in all sections of society through wide and varied programmes. National Green Corps (NGC)/Eco-Club - a National programme was launched in 2001 with objective to educate children about their immediate environment and impart knowledge on the ecosystems, and their interdependence by instilling spirit of scientific inquiry into environment problems and involving them in the efforts of environmental preservation. Since 2001, under this programme, nearly 1,20,000 Eco-clubs have been established in the country.

In similar lines, Indian Council of Forestry Education & Research (ICFRE) and Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan (KVS) had entered into long term cooperation and mutual understanding in areas of awareness, education and extension through a student-scientist connect programme called 'PRAKRITI'. Both the organizations have signed a Memorandum of Understanding on 15.10.18 to support programmes on making the younger generation aware of the environment, forests, forestry research and related topics to make them knowledgeable citizen of the country.

In this background, as lead activity 'PRAKRITI', Extension division of IFGTB imparted 2 day (26-27th December 2018) training on the theme “*Junior Rangers - Connecting Students with Nature*” for students of Kendriya Vidyalaya (KV), Sowripalayam, Coimbatore. The main objective of the training was to develop nature and environment consciousness, and impart action oriented learning methods, hands on activities and exposure visits to the students. This training programme was exclusively organized for students from 6th to 9th classes. The two day module attended by 20 students included inputs on role of forests and its conservation, Wetland biodiversity, Birds & butterflies and activity based learning. The participants also visited Gass Forest Museum in IFGTB and Insect museum of TNAU, Coimbatore to learn importance of Natural History as education tool.

Dr. Mohit Gera, Director IFGTB interacted with students by moderating a video on “Smokey Bear”. He narrated the story of the Smokey Bear-its arduous struggle in wild fires of US and its journey to become the icon of Nature Conservation for US Forest Service. He also narrated the importance of being a Junior Ranger and the role they can play for the society and to the fellow students in raising awareness on nature education. Interactive films and videos based learning formed a key module in this training programme.

Speaking on the occasion, Dr. Mohit Gera emphasized on the “need to adapt creative pedagogy and teaching methodologies for the students to make nature education more

attractive to the students. He also stressed that all the trained students to become ambassadors to effect change and inspire other students in the KV school”.

“*Talk to Scientist*” module was arranged during programme, wherein the students had a chance to interact with Dr. B. Nagarajan, Scientist G of IFGTB on the role of forests & its conservation. Dr. Mohan Prashanth, Expert on butterflies spoke on the butterflies-their role and significance as pollinators. The “Junior Rangers” also released a “Butterflies-Calendar 2019” designed by Dr. Mohan Prashanth during the occasion.

An exclusive field trip to Singanallur Wetland in Coimbatore was organized as part of training to impart wetland conservation and its pivotal role in landscape ecosystem. The multi agency coordinated approach of Coimbatore City Municipal Corporation, Center for Urban Biodiversity Conservation & Education (CUBE) and Institute of Forest Genetics & Tree Breeding (IFGTB) in wetland conservation was highlighted to the students during the exposure visit. IFGTB is giving its technical expertise in setting up the Herbarium for Singanallur Lake, first of its kind for a wetland in Tamil Nadu. Dr. C. Kunikannan explained to the students on the wide variety of herbs, shrubs, Trees, climbers and medicinal plants in the Singanallur wetland. Ms. Kalaivani, Researcher CUBE took the students on stroll for 1.2 km nature trail to observe the biodiversity and learn from the interpretive signages developed by CUBE as part of their nature education strategy.

The training also included a group activity, wherein four groups were formed to work on themes viz., Seed Art, Wetland modeling, scrap to wealth and Leaf art for activity based learning outcome. Students were exposed to collection methods, preservation techniques and trained for creating small projects on nature conservation. Students presented their group activity explaining the theme, methods used, experiences and actions they would initiate in future. “Nature Quiz” was organized for the students on the lessons learnt and prizes were given to the winners. A certificate, saplings of indigenous trees and booklets on plants, birds, reptiles and amphibians published by IFGTB was distributed to the students.



Dr. Mohit Gera, Director IFGTB interacting with Junior Rangers – outdoors of Gass Forest



Students of Kendriya Vidyalaya, who were trained as 'junior rangers', were taken on an exposure visit to Singanallur lake recently.

When students turned as 'junior rangers'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
COIMBATORE

As many as 20 students from Kendriya Vidyalaya were trained as 'junior rangers' by the Institute of Forest Genetics and Tree Breeding Programme IFGTB.

National Green Corps (NGC)/ Eco-Club, a national programme, was launched in 2001 with the objective to educate children work towards environmental conservation. Since 2001, nearly 1,20,000 eco-clubs have been established in the country.

In similar lines, the Indian Council of Forestry Education & Research (ICFRE) and Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan (KVS) launched Prakriti, a student-scientist connect programme.

As a lead activity, IFGTB provided training for students of Kendriya Vidyalaya, Sowripalayam, as 'junior rangers'. The main objective was to impart action oriented learning meth-

ods, hands on activities, exposure visits and create environment consciousness. Over 20 students were chosen from class six to nine.

The students were explained the role of forests and its conservation, wetland biodiversity, birds and butterflies. They also visited Gass Forest Museum at IFGTB and insect museum at TNAU.

Mohit Gera, Director IFGTB, interacted with students. The 'junior rangers' also released a Butterflies-Calendar 2019 designed by Dr. Mohan Prashanth.

A trip to Singanallur wetland was also organised as part of the training.

Kalaivani, a researcher at the Centre for Urban Biodiversity Conservation and Education, took the students on stroll for 1.2 km nature trail to observe the biodiversity.

A quiz programme on nature was organised and winners were given prizes.

KV students undergo training, become junior forest rangers

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Coimbatore: Twenty students of city-based Kendriya Vidyalaya attended a two-day programme organised by the Institute of Forest Genetics and Tree Breeding (IFGTB) to become junior rangers. They are expected to create awareness about nature and become ambassadors of change.

The initiative was part of the student-scientist connect programme called 'Prakriti' of the Indian Council of Forestry Education and Research, and Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan. "The programme, which was conducted on Wednesday and Thursday, included visits to the Gass Forest Museum in IFGTB, Tamil Nadu Agricultural University's insect museum and a 1.2km walk along Singanallur lake to learn about its biodiversity. IFGTB is developing a herbarium near the lake," IFGTB ex-



MISSION GREEN: There is a need to adapt creative pedagogy and teaching methodologies to make nature education more attractive, IFGTB director Mohit Gera said on Thursday

tension officer Rajesh said.

The students also interacted with IFGTB scientist B Nagarajan on butterflies and learned about their role as pollinators.

IFGTB director Mohit Gera told students how Smokey

Bear became the national symbol for the prevention of wildfires in the US. "There is a need to adapt creative pedagogy and teaching methodologies for the students to make nature education more attractive," he said.



Junior Rangers – taking active part in outdoor classroom activities



Field visit to Singanallur Lake to study Urban Wetland biodiversity



Junior Rangers – making presentations on the group activity based learning



Dr. Mohit Gera, Director IFGTB interacting with students and handing over certificates