

RCE Coorg initiatives

RCE Coorg have conceived a partnership programme involving the students and teachers of the educational institutions of Coorg district for fulfilling their commitments to conservation and transforming themselves into being true **“Green Citizen”**. The programme is a partnership programme of Kodagu Model Forest Trust (KMFT), Coorg Wildlife Society (CWS), College of Forestry (COF), RCE Bengaluru and World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF).

Focusing on environment education the **“Green Citizen Nature Club”** is aimed at sensitizing young people and motivating them to participate in conservation action. The Nature Club proposes to organize **“Green Events”** like Nature trails, Camps, Screening of Films on environment, Talks by eminent persons working in the field of environment conservation, Workshops, Competitions such as Painting, Quiz, Essay writing, Photography, Capacity building and other related events during the **“World Environment day”**- June 5th and **Wild Life Week** –October, every year.

Green Citizen Nature Club Launch Programme:

The **Green Citizen Nature Club** was launched at the College of Forestry, Ponnampet on the 28th of February, 2014. The Programme was launched by Dr. Malathi Priya, IFS DCF, Virajpet. The Welcome address was given by Dr. Ramakrishna Hegde followed by the overview of this Nature Club by Shri. Sherry Subbaiah, the Programme Convenor. Eminent speakers like Dr. Narasimhan, a renowned bird expert and Col. C.P. Muthanna, President of Coorg Wildlife Society and Secretary KMFT shared their views on the importance of nature. Mr. Santosh Sutar, Programme Coordinator, CEE South, Bangalore spoke on the importance of creating awareness on nature and natural resources among the teachers which in turn reaches to the child and from one child to another, then parents and finally to the community. Dr.N.A. Prakash Dean (Forestry) assured that he would extend all support that the club needs from College of Forestry, Ponnampet. He also urged the need towards the studies of wild edible fruits, mushrooms etc., which are enormously available in the district.

On this occasion College of Forestry, KALS and Lions School, Gonikoppal exchanged MoUs for installing the Green Citizen Nature Club in the respective colleges and schools.



World Environment Day and World Forest Day:

On the occasion of the World Environment Day which is celebrated on the 5th of June, the Green Citizen Nature Club was formally launched at the Karumbaiah's Academy for Learning and Sports (KALS) School. This launch program also witnessed some interesting talks about the nature and wildlife. The International Day of Forests/ World Forest Day was celebrated by the Green Citizens Nature club at the College of Forestry, Ponnampet on the 21st of March, 2014. The day was celebrated by conducting quiz competition among the students which aimed to create awareness on forests and wildlife. The programme was also marked by planting saplings of native tree species by the dignitaries at the butterfly park in the College of Forestry.



RMFN Asia Board meeting:



Small contribution towards Swachha Bharat Abhiyaan:

Taking a step forward towards becoming a true green citizen, the Green Citizen Nature Club organized an essay competition on Swachha Bharat Abhiyaan. Later this campaign was conducted at the KALS School on the Children's Day i.e. the 14th of Nov. 2014 which made the children feel proud about their duty as a citizen of our country. Many dignitaries including the MLA encouraged and thanked the students for taking up this initiative and inspiring their fellow citizens. Ms. Shruti Singh from RCE Coorg said a few inspiring lines addressing the need of keeping the environment clean.

Sejahtera Art Project Initiative:

As a partner of the Green Citizen Nature Club, RCE Coorg encouraged the students of the KALS School to be a part of the Sejahtera Art Project with AP RCE Cities. Regional Centre of Expertise (RCE) is a network

of existing formal, non-formal and informal education organizations, mobilized to deliver education for sustainable development (ESD) to local and regional communities. This Project is a joint initiative of RCEs in Asia-Pacific to find the alternative path towards sustainability, within the unique traditional culture of Asia Pacific region with emphasis on the coexistence. Coorg district being one of the RCE, requested the students of the KALS to participate in the Sejahtera Art Project wherein they were given small differently sized wooden blocks on which they had to paint and depict the rich traditional culture of the district. The students indeed put up a marvelous work by clubbing the blocks together that represented the traditional costume and symbol of Coorg district, the state bird and animal of Karnataka, the major river Cauvery which originates at Talacauvery, Coorg and the traditional fruits, crops and spices grown here.



Nature Education Camp:

RCE Benagluru also conducted a 2 nights 3 days Nature Education Camp at Coorg for the students of BGS National Public School, Bangalore from 24th to 26th October, 2013. Through this camp the students were exposed to the beautiful unfolding mountainous terrains of the Western Ghat, a biodiversity hotspot. They trekked through the Koodlu teertha falls. This on the way surprised them with a lot of diverse species of reptiles, insects, arachnids and flora. The students were accommodated at the **Seetanadi Herpeto Camp** and witnessed the beautiful sunset at Agumbe Ghats. They were taken on a visit to the Talakaveri, the origin of the River Cauvery, the Abbe falls and the Iruppu falls where the students had a bath in the lap of River Cauvery. Here they were explained the importance and the role of the water bodies in an ecosystem. The water bodies also brought in some beautiful butterflies which sunbasked on the huge rocks. In between the various eco-games, nature trails and trekking; the students had powerpoint presentation cum interactive sessions which addressed the topics of Forest – importance and threats, Wildlife, Snakes,



Birds, Conservation etc. The Camp ended with a visit to the Brahmagiri Wildlife Sanctuary and the Nagarhole National Park which offered everyone an opportunity to see the mammals viz. Gaur, Spotted Deer, Asian Elephants etc. The students also paid a visit to the Golden Temple at Kushalnagara which rightly describes the cultural and traditional diversity housed in India.

DevaraKadu (Sacred groove) project:

In the year of 2015 the new project on Devarakadu in Verajpet has been proposed by the Shankar P, DCF of Virajpet. The RCE Bengaluru have taken up the project and currently working on it. The main aim of the project is to bring awareness among the school children as well as the people about the importance and benefits of the Devarakadu.

Devarakadu is a **Sacred groves of India** are forest fragments of varying sizes, which are communally protected, and which usually have a significant religious connotation for the protecting community. Hunting and logging are usually strictly prohibited within these patches.

There various traditional as well as Modern uses of the Devarakadu. In traditional these are the main source of medicinal plant, fruits and honey. They also have ponds and streams and meet the water requirement of locals. In modern uses they have become the biodiversity hot spots. These groves often contain a plant and animals that have become extinct in the neighboring areas. Besides this, sacred groves in urban landscapes act as "lungs" to the city as well, providing much needed vegetation cover.

Threats to the grove include urbanization, over-exploitation of resources (like overgrazing and excessive firewood collection), and environmental destruction due to religious practices. While many of the groves are looked upon as abodes of Hindu gods, in the recent past a number of them have been partially cleared for construction of shrines and temples

RCE Coorg joining hand with the Forest department of Coorg wants to bring awareness among locals and the tourists on the Devarakadu by following below methodologies

- Developing way side panels, booklets, signage boards and posters as a different source of communication materials
- Teachers training programme and children camp: camp is one of the direct mode to address teachers and children on the project issue. Hence a one day camp for teachers in their respective head quarter and one day camp for children in their respective schools have been organized.