

Educator feature - S. Mamatha of Mysore teaching elephants, tigers and primates

Introduction :

We appreciate all of our educators who order and utilise the educational materials produced and methods espoused by Zoo Outreach Organisation. With this issue we are starting an occasional feature to highlight some of the more active ones.

We will start with Ms. Sathanarayana Mamatha who is a B.Sc in Chemistry, Botany and Zoology with an M.A. in Hindi literature and a B.Ed in Natural Science and English. She is a teacher at the De Paul International Residential School, Mysore since June 2006 where she teaches Environmental Science and has conducted workshops, seminars and summer camps for school children and public for the last ten years during the period from 1996-2006 as an Assistant teacher in Lions West Sevanikethan School. Her special interests are Zoo education, experimenting innovative creative ideas, bird watching, trekking, traveling, traditional painting, art & craft.

Mamatha has been selected as the first in this series for her many qualities that make a good educator, good communication skills, creativity and innovative, willing and enthusiastic in all works, loyalty and leadership skills. She is the recipient of several awards for excellence, such as Appreciation award, NATURALIST, National Child-Care Award, New Delhi, India, India Development Education Award, New Delhi, India and Zoo Educator Training Award, WCS, New York.

She has participated in the following ZOO/ Environment Education Programmes

- ZOO/SANIZE, Coimbatore
- Center for Environment Education, Ahmedabad
- Regional Museum of Natural History, Mysore
- Sri Chamarajendra Zoological Garden, Mysore
- Mysore Amateur Naturalist, Mysore
- Central Board of Secondary Education, New Delhi
- WCS Fellowship program, New York
- WCS / Teachers for Tigers Training workshop, Mysore
- WCS / Teacher for Tigers ADVANCED Technique refresher course, Mysore
- Habitat and Ecology Learning and TFT Evaluation workshop, Coimbatore
- Trainer for ZOO's Ed training programme - Three workshop on Getting along with Elephants (HECx) in Northern West Bengal.

In Zoo Outreach Organisation we have enjoyed Mamatha's creative use of our materials and have even taken some of her reports and edited them for inclusion in our various educator guidelines. She has been a very industrious Intern Trainee in our 3-day active learning and skills training workshops. She is an outstanding teacher and human being in every way and ZOO is happy and proud to have her as an associate.

A selection of Mamtha's recent programme reports

Getting along with Elephants HECx

About 50 De Paul school Interactors as part of their community service and Education programme, visited Viveka Tribal center for learning along with their Teacher coordinator Ms. S. Mamatha and conducted activities. The group also visited the Kabin back water where one can surely sight herds of



elephants. This programme was conducted 15 November 08 on the theme HECx, Human Elephant Coexistence for a target group aged 12-18 years.



The programme took place at Vivekananda Residential Tribal School. Just a fence separates school, the Tribal colony and Bandipur National Park. It is 93 km away from De Paul school.

Materials used were an **Ele-kit** and **Elephant Drama kit** for the purpose of teaching some rules and principles of Elephant Etiquette, understanding today's elephant's problems; appreciating elephants beauty, presence, and need for saving, to share the Tribal pupil experience and to adopt HECx to the extent possible.



The **Elephant Friendship band** was utilised with each participant facing another pupil, they tied elephant wrist bracelet and exchanged greetings. They also expressed their commitment towards conservation as Eco-soldiers!!!

A **Quiz** was an ideal activity to begin using the Elephant Etiquette booklet. With the help of



the booklet an Elephant quiz for students living in elephant area and in the cities, was conducted. The quiz activity created an opportunity to interact and to learn more

about history of elephant, tales, myth, culture and so on. Further in the programme the organizer made the session interesting by recalling the content of elephant etiquette.

Pupil participants enjoyed **GAMES !**, playing "grazing, browsing, and giraffing!"

Using the Elephant Drama kit with masks, DPIRS pupils presented a small drama to depict death stories of elephants in the recent days. The Drama touched the souls of every individual present out there and led to a promise to themselves towards conservation. Holding the **Placard**, pupils of Vivek Tribal School and De paul school said "NO" to animal products and promised to be part of elephant conservation in their own way. Kids love stickers and took it the training **Sticker** with them as an event remembrance/souvenir.

Finger puppets: both the group pupil presented puppet conversation on following topics"

- Mysore zoo - elephant and Bandipur elephant.
- Who and what causes the elephant problems?
- A sad elephant's story, which lost her friend due to electrification.



Elephant Masks

attracted the junior pupil and soon after elder's activity, whole lot of tribal kids wore elephant masks and took out a small rally by making trumpet all through. It sounded

like as if big herd of elephants expressing their gratitude for having concern towards them and having programme on HECx!!!!

While conducting this programme to Tribal pupil, I could update more information from them. I personally enjoyed using Ele-kit and Elephant Drama kit, the programme has given me 100% satisfaction.

As an organizer, my sincere thanks to US Fish and wildlife service, coloumbus zoo Elephant family, Twycross zoo, and Schonbrunn zoo.



Editor's note : Those of you readers who use our material for education note the difference in these two HECx programmes conducted by our featured educator. They are quite different although they use the same material. Changing the programme is a good way to stay interested in conducting educational activities to many different groups. Note the differences in the programme above and the one below:

Getting along with Elephants HECx –Program Report 2

About 20 Bat club students of Hebbal Tuition Center took part in this HECx education programme. These children visit Mysore palace frequently during *Dasara* Festival time just to see the elephants and adore their beauty! The programme took place on 9th December 08 at V V School campus, Hebbal on the theme Human Elephant Coexistence for a group of students of age 10-15 years.

Material used with the **Ele-kits**, Xerox copies of Elephants stories from manual and Elephant Drama kit and objectives were also same as previous workshop. During course of programme children played games such as

1. Trunk: In pairs tired to pick up the coin on the floor. Through this game children learnt all about Elephants trunk structure, strength and its uses.

2. Communication: As per the rules given in the manual, children played, enjoyed this game and understood that Elephants communicate using sense of smell, visual, chemical, sound and touch signals.

3. Writing name on the air! It was fun for students to stretch, twist, and spell their name aloud!

Elephant Friendship band: Happy movement leads to the strong relationship! Students chose friends to tie friendship band, facing each other they tied elephant band and exchanged greetings. Students liked the elephant band very much. First item of the packet had stolen their heart. Band is very pretty.

Elephant Etiquette booklet: For an organizer, Quiz is a brilliant evaluation tool to check out their own teaching! With the help of booklet elephant quiz was conducted. Quiz activity created opportunity to interact, learn more about history of elephant, tales, myth, culture and so on. Further, organizer made the session interesting by recalling the content of Elephant Etiquette. Children took some time to read every page of Etiquette booklet and got cleared their some of doubts about elephants through questions.



Elephant stories: To make the session more interesting "The Elephant and the Jackal" story from the manual was chosen and xerox copy was used. Students read out the stories to their fellow mates and narrated the stories from their knowledge too.

Elephant Drama kit: For a change, organizer gave the news paper cuttings which had the Elephant's death stories.



Children using mask presented the incidents in very effectively and also on their own tried to express the possible solutions to avoid such elephant deaths in future. Their appeal

to the public who had gathered there to watch them was to save living *Ganesha*, their beloved deity.

Mask and Placard: Children wore their mask and with placard they went around the school campus saying "live and let live" "say no to animal products" "let's preserve existing animals to our future generations" etc... Children closely observed and identified the Elephant skin pattern on the placard background.

Sticker: Students liked the sticker very much and wanted to know the place where it is shot and also told me that animation has made the group photo.



Finger puppets: organizer presented a puppet show to give an idea. Later students put on finger puppets, had wonderful time with little pretty puppets. Kanna, a 2nd grade boy presented puppets talk with his modulated voice.

Presentation was appreciable. His talk was based on a mahout's story. This little boy likes elephant very much and October is the favorite month since herd of elephants from Nagarahole Wildlife Sanctuary comes to attend Mysore Dasara Festival. This little Kanna told the people not to use or buy the elephant hair or any other



animal parts for their use.

As an organizer, my sincere thanks to US Fish and Wildlife Service, Columbus Zoo, Elephant Family, Twycross zoo, and Schonbrunn zoo.

Other recent programmes by the productive S. Mamatha of Mysore !

"Zoo week" celebration! A programme report

These activities were conducted on account of Zoo week in which 5-7th grade students had

programme on theme "**Wildlife an Asset**". In the morning school assembly, school Head boy delivered a talk speech on the day's theme "Wildlife an asset".



In his speech he said, "The most beautiful gift that god has given to nature are the wild creatures. They embellish the natural beauty by their unique way of existence. Wildlife in India is the cultural and social asset of our country. Destruction of wildlife disturbs the balance in nature..... Later, 5th grade students using Zoo Outreach Organisation **Primate Drama Kit**, presented a drama on the theme "no good food here", highlighting the problem of Human/Monkey conflict and its origins. Students tied **primates friendship bands** and the smiles on their face ensured that they have understood monkey manners and its Rules!

South Asian commensal monkey's poster: Pupil of 6th grade had set up class-exhibition using Zoo Outreach teaching materials like posters, placard, stickers, and masks of different species.

A second drama

was conducted using Zoo Outreach drama kit. Seventh grade pupil enacted a drama on the topic "circus animals grieve" in which through play pupils tried to



convey the Wildlife Protection Act. The story was mainly based on the two rescued elephants from a circus company recently in Mysore. Afterwards the 5th grade students with mask took oath before the school. They promised to be the part of wildlife conservation movement. Finally students signed **Amphibian Ark** petition form. *Thanks to ZOO outreach, WILD, Primate Network IUCN/SSC Primate, IZE for their kind sponsorship.*

"Tiger awareness" programme report

About 35 students of AVK School along with their principal and teachers were on their two days nature camp at Western Ghats. The camping place and enthusiastic students group gave an excellent



opportunity to hold a programme on the Theme 'Teens for Tigers'.

Objectives were to :

- Understand what is protected area?
- Understand major threats to wildlife.
- Understand Project Tiger.
- Encourage to take role in the protection of wildlife.

Session started with the Game 'cross the line'.

This game helps the organizers to know the attitude and interest of the students. T4T participant Mr. Mohan, through manual activities made the students to understand the objectives of the programme. Students observed the ancient scripts and drawings engraved on the cave rocks related to Tribal.

Tiger stories in the past. This was interesting to students who just learnt about Tigers and their conservation. Students along with their Principal



and teachers promised to take up their role in the mission "wildlife conservation" in their possible method.

My Heartfelt thanks to Sally and her

dedicated team for bringing out a novel Tiger-kit, which plays main role in imparting knowledge. My sincere thanks to WCS for their kind sponsorship. Submitted by, Ms. S. Mamatha, Mysore. mamtha_57@yahoo.com.

Tamil Nadu Agricultural University Awareness Camp on Wildlife Conservation

An awareness campaign on Wildlife conservation was organised by the 4th and 5th (Tamil Nadu) Battalion National Cadet Corps wing at Tamil Nadu Agricultural University, Coimbatore on 23.11.2008, as part of the NCC day celebrations. Around 104 NCC cadets took out a rally emphasizing the importance of conserving WILDLIFE. Slogans on Wildlife conservation were raised and Placards highlighting the importance of wildlife conservation were taken by the cadets inside the TNAU premises. Dr. K. Vanangamudi, Dean (Agriculture) presided over the NCC day celebration and inaugurated the rally on Wildlife conservation. Dean (Agriculture) stressed that "It is the responsibility of the NCC cadets to highlight the ways and means to disseminate the ideas to overcome the evils prevalent in the society which destroys the wild animals. He emphasized the importance of Wildlife conservation to the cadets and necessary steps to be taken by them during the future course of their career.



Dr. K.M.Sellamuthu, NCC Officer, 4 (TN) BN NCC, TNAU, Coimbatore briefed about the conservation of Wildlife to the NCC cadets participated in the rally and distributed the materials on Wildlife conservation sponsored by Zoo Outreach Organisation, Coimbatore. Dr.Lt. S. Manonmani, NCC Officer, 5 (TN) BN NCC, TNAU, Coimbatore briefed about the importance of Wildlife and their role natural ecosystem. The students were highly enthusiastic and get motivated in learning about wild animals, amphibians etc. We acknowledge the Zoo Outreach Organisation, Coimbatore for the supply of study kits for the NCC cadets. **Submitted by: Dr. Sellamuthu, Assistant Professor, Tamil Nadu Agricultural University, Coimbatore. Email: kmsella75@yahoo.com**