

Activity Report for the period August 2004 to November 2005

Activity related to our Training Programme:

Academic Year 2004-2005:

In October 2004, Himalayan camp was organized for Pune and Mumbai batch.

In February 2005 the seashore camp was organized for Pune batch students. Likewise the forest camp focusing on the study of a group of sacred groves took place near Mulshi in March 2005.

In March 2005, Forest Camp was organized for the students of Mumbai batch at Karnala near Panvel.

Sunday weekly course for the year 2004-2005 has been successfully completed on 28th August 2005.

Convocation:

On 30th October, 2004 convocation of the 6th course took place. Certificates were distributed at the hands of Shri Girish Sohoni, Executive Vice- President of BAIF.

Academic Year 2005-2006:

The 8th course has started from 15th July. 17 students from various educational backgrounds have enrolled this year.

About 15 enquiries have come for the Sunday weekly course to be continued for this year.

This year the Mumbai course began on 16th August 2005. 12 students have enrolled for this course.

Himalayan camp for the Pune and Mumbai batch (2005-2006) was organized during October 2005 and Grassland camp took place during 12th to 15th November 2005 at Phaltan.



Grassland Camp



Himalayan Camp

The Ecological Society has applied to Maharashtra State Board for Technical Education (MSBTE) for recognition of its one year diploma course in Natural Resource Management. The process of recognition of this post graduate diploma course by

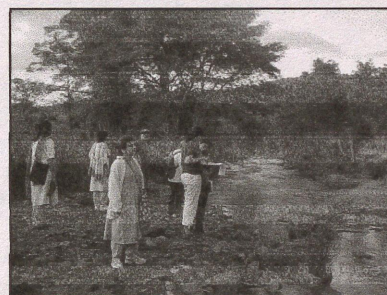
MSBTE is continuing. This recognized course is expected to commence in the year 2006-2007. In anticipation of this recognition, weekly practicals are being conducted for the present batch.

Faculty Development Programme:

Two faculty training camps were organized during September 2004 and February 2005 respectively.

The past students participating in this programme went through the drill of making presentations on various topics. A training camp was also organized for them at Khanapur 20 Km west of Pune where model lectures were presented to them & they were asked to make their own presentations also.

An intensive faculty development course was organized from 15th April to 31st May. 14 Past students had participated in the course. They prepared and delivered lectures under the guidance of experts and also attended the field camp. Training in how to handle practicals was also given during this field camp. A year-round Programme of practicals with its detailed syllabus was also developed.



Field Work at Khanapur

List of Participants: ✓

Smt.s Sandhya Rajeshirke, Purnima Phadake, Swati Jukar, Bharati Kelkar, Ketaki Ghate, Dr Medini Dingare, Ushaprabha Page, Pallavi Datar, Pallavi Joshi, Sayali Gokhale, Kirti Amritkar, Sarita Bhavalkar, Shabnam Lakra, Janhavi Kale, and Mr. Niranjan Upasani.

Prof.Gole, Dr. Mrs. Swati Gole and Shri M. Rajwade conducted the Faculty Development Programme.

Some of the participants of this programme delivered lectures and conducted practicals for the 2005-2006 batch.

Other Educational Activities:

A one day seminar was organized on introduction of eco-schools as an alternative system of education on 20th March, 2005. This was prompted by the recent decision of central & state governments to make environmental education compulsory for all levels, from primary to post-graduate. Various people from the field of Education had participated in this workshop and they shared their views about the seminar topic. (A report of this seminar has been already sent)

This was followed by another workshop on 8th May, 2005. During this workshop, two separate teaching patterns for urban and rural areas were discussed. A workshop for orientation of urban teachers was planned.

On 24th July, a one-day **Teacher's training workshop** was organized at Panshet for secondary school teachers from Pune (Urban area). 8 teachers from schools in Pune participated. As Environmental science has become a compulsory subject at all levels, teaching of this subject was discussed with teachers. Certain

tips were offered. Field visit to Ecological society's restoration site was also arranged during this workshop. They were shown some ecosystem features and field techniques were demonstrated.



Panshet- Teacher's Training Workshop

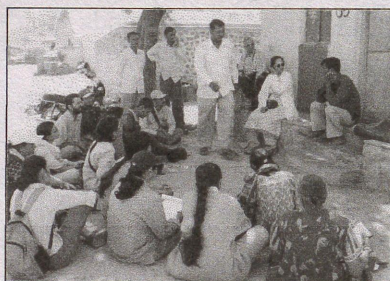
A series of 13 programmes focusing on Ecological Society's work and its significance, each lasting 15 minutes was broadcast on AIR, Pune during April, May and June 2005. It consisted of presentations of case studies based on the Society's work and interviews of past students.

Ecological Society had organized a workshop on 4th October 2005 on "Role of Ecology in water Management" in collaboration with The Institution of Engineers for their engineer members. A Booklet titled "**Environmental Water Management**" was published during this workshop.

Expanding network:

All Maharashtra Bird-watchers' Meet was organized on 5th and 6th June in which about 150 bird watchers from all over Maharashtra participated. This was mainly organized to develop networking with kindred organizations from all over Maharashtra.

Dialogue with the participants of "**Art of Living**" course is started with respect to spreading the 'holistic approach to life' as developed by Ecological Society and also to introduce the concepts of nature conservation and management of natural resources in their discourses.



Visit to "Kapshi" Village

A visit was organized to Kapshi village, Taluka Phaltan, Dist. Satara, during November, 2005. After being motivated by "**Art of Living**" course, the young people in this village are successfully developing arrangements for self-sufficiency of the village, cleanliness, sanitation and energy efficiency and would also like to initiate environment-friendly development of the village. This village has already become a role model for other villages. Our volunteers tried to motivate them to undertake certain ecological interventions such as stream management, grassland development etc.

A half day demonstration on "**Grassland Development**" was organized on 14th December, 2005 on our grassland site at Phaltan in which volunteers from "Kapshi" and students from Mudhoji College, Phaltan participated. During this workshop, grassland development on village commons of Kapshi and on certain sites around Phaltan was discussed.

To Develop and propagate the idea of Eco-schools, a dialogue was held with

Gram Manqal – an institute which runs schools in Thane district tribal areas as also in urban areas. The exchange of ideas is continuing and it is decided to organize the next workshop on 23rd December 2005.

Rural Training Facilitation:

Panshet:

Between July 2005 to November 2005, seven visits were made to the Panshet secondary school. A class of 7th standard students was selected for taking the sessions on environmental education. At first students were shown a slide show on birds and a discussion regarding the subject "Environment" took place. This was followed by sessions about history of Earth, Evolution of life, and Pollution during Diwali festival etc. The concept of food chain and food web was explained to them through a game. Students were asked to collect information regarding local birds and vegetation. Activity of seed collection of native trees is introduced to them. Students have also shown interest in collection of leaf litter from school campus and its composting.

Ambi:

In July 2005, the primary school in Ambi was approached. The school is run by Zilla Parishad and has four classes from 1st to 4th standard. Each class has about 15 students. Teachers were informed about Ecological Society's activity. A talk and interaction with students of 3rd and 4th standard, showed that students were enthusiastic about education in the field. In the next visit, a song describing the hydrological cycle and food chain, was taught to them. Students actively collected information regarding naturally growing and cultivated varieties of vegetables. Students were made aware regarding the pollution during Ganpati and Diwali festivals. A field guide describing snakes in the vicinity of villages was distributed to school children.

Smt. Sandhya Rajeshirke and Smt. Purnima Phadake carried out these activities for Ambi and Panshet.

Other Activities in Rural Areas:

Lady Sarpanch at Ambi has shown interest in Ecological Society's rural development activity.

We organized 2 medical camps at Ambi village – one for the children & one for women in August & September 2004. Response was overwhelming. A record of patients was prepared for further reference. Medicines were distributed free of charge.

Work with women's group is continuing. Information about the time spent in fetching water, fuel wood & working on farms was collected to prepare a time budget & movement map of different groups. Information about trees that are considered useful in the vicinity of the village was also collected. Women were given saplings of economically important plants such as Kadhi-patta for nurturing. They have taken this activity seriously & are taking good care of plants.

Karanjgaon (near Kamshet):

Some of the past students of the Society led by Smt. Ushaprabha Page in association with a leading NGO, Community Aid & Sponsorship Programme (CASP), have started imparting environmental education to the 8th standard students of

Golden Glade School at Karanjgaon village near Kamshet. Mr Rajeev Pandit, Mr Anand Datar, Mrs Sai Kodollikar are part of this educational programme.

They have conducted sessions (Classroom and field visits) covering following topics:

- 1) Introduction to Ecology & eco-systems, natural resources & their use
- 2) Origin & Evolution of planet Earth, structure of earth, lithosphere, rock types & rock cycle
- 3) Origin & evolution of life
- 4) Biodiversity
- 5) Visit to Raikar Farm (organic farming)
- 6) Local water resources and their conservation
- 7) Nursery training
- 8) Cleanliness of the surrounding environment
- 9) Slide show on snakes
- 10) Information about Himalaya (its formation, culture and society)
- 11) Livestock information about their villages
- 12) Organic farming and animal rearing
- 13) Dam building and its effects
- 14) Field visit to study stream ecology



Karanjgaon School

Students have given positive response to this activity and they are actively participating in all the sessions.

Developments on field stations:

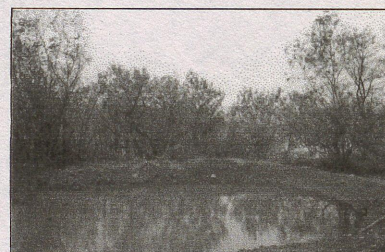


Students engaged in activity

Regular monitoring with respect to collection of scientific data of the study sites at Panshet and Phaltan is done by past students.

On wetland field station at Panshet, nursery development is progressing. Seeds collected in Mulshi area during the forest camp have been planted in nursery bags. Some of these seeds belong to rare & endangered plants from Western Ghats. Their successful propagation has begun a new conservation activity. Some of these saplings are planted at forest regeneration station, Panshet. Work regarding laying of water pipeline has started.

At our forest regeneration station, Panshet, the work on water storage tank is completed. To prevent percolation of water, clay was spread over the substratum of the pond. Dormitory was covered with plastic sheet as a protection against heavy monsoon rain. (50 feet by 25 feet).



Pond at Panshet



Dormitory extension at Phaltan

At the grassland station near Phaltan, a hand pump has been installed on the bore. This has made possible raising of a nursery of semi-arid region plants on the site. Work regarding dormitory extension and seating arrangement for students and wetland management was carried out.

Equipment purchased:

1. Two binoculars
2. Compound microscope
3. Simple microscope
4. Laboratory oven
5. Scientific calculator
6. Temperature and hygrometer
7. Dissection box
8. Two emergency lamps
9. Two Torches
10. A Digital Camera

Equipment purchasing under process:

1. Soil Analysis Kit
2. Water Analysis Kit