

Project Update: August 2009

An educators' training took place in June 2009 where three teachers from other schools in Pune attended to start similar workshops in their respective school. The first two workshops for this year (April 2009 – March 2010) took place at Terungun and Tokawade Ashram schools on 11th and 12th August 2009 respectively.

Since this was the first session after a long summer vacation, we began with a recap of all topics covered last year. In one of the schools, there was a meeting with the principal, MAM (our local collaborators) and it was decided that the children would with the help of MAM set up a medicinal plant nursery in the school premises. The school assured us that they would help with the monitoring. MAM would supply the pots and saplings. The children would also be encouraged to get recipes of medicines used traditionally in their homes, whenever they visit their homes. MAM is also supplying guava saplings which will be planted by the kids in the school campus.

The activities that took place were a quiz including questions based on visuals of birds, a discussion on birds in general and some species found in the area, a word-box puzzle where hidden bird names had to be found, a game which had several cut-outs of species living in different ecosystems and pictures of those ecosystems, where the children had to match them with each other. This was followed by a session introducing biodiversity.

This year there has been lot of change in the personnel working on the project from both the organizations. There was also a discussion to see how the Tribal Department could be involved in helping to expand the programme to other schools, involving teachers etc. A few meetings are planned in that direction. In the meantime, training with current educator and the school workshops as well as the material development.

We also realize that for the whole process of setting up a self-sustaining system for environment education, two years may be too short a time period (and this could be envisaged only after a year's experience of work). It might require another year of intervention from our side till it becomes self sufficient.