

Project Update: December 2014

In December 2014, I with my colleagues visited public schools in Akhaltsikhe district to give seminars about threatened ants and ant-associated butterflies. The seminars were given to the pupils from VII to IX forms in the I, II, III, IV and V public schools of Akhaltsikhe. The pupils were informed about the importance of threatened ants (*Formica pratensis* and *F. rufa*) and butterfly (*Phengaris alcon*) as good bioindicators and talked about the categories of IUCN red list. Besides, we gave information about the importance of red wood ants (*Formica aquilonia*, *F. pratensis*, *F. rufa*) as they are main biocontrol agents against pest insects of conifer trees and appealed pupils to protect their nests. During our presentations we talked about *Phengaris alcon*'s interesting life cycle, including its vital associations with *Myrmica* ant species. Our presentations provoked interest with pupils and teachers. We hope that this project will help local school pupils to choose professions associated with biodiversity. After the seminars the pupils were taken to the excursions.



Left: presentation in Akhaltsikhe N1 School. Right: discussion after the presentation.



Left: active pupil of Akhaltsikhe N 1 School. Right: In Akhaltsikhe N2 School.



Left: during the presentation. Right: pupil's participation in talks. Bottom: presentation in Akhaltsikhe N5 School