

## *Selfie with nature*

*Summer camp for school children - 2018*

*in this green campus of RIVER*

### **SENSING THE SLICE OF NATURE - Experience of the Children**

“Nature” is where all we belong to. The settings of nature changes from region to region, time to time and with technology advent. Whatever it may be the soil, plants and animals are extremely important in the existence and development of humans. So wherever we are, understand nature, help preserve it and hand over a sustainable planet to the next generations. This is the theme on which the summer camp for children was organized, when Rajiv Gandhi Institute of Veterinary Education and Research (RIVER) opened the sprawling, serene, green campus to the young children from school to see and feel the surprises of nature and share the joy of it. This was done in collaboration with the Dept. of Tourism, Govt. of Puducherry. The campus gave the opportunity for children to see and learn through the above animals in the farm, birds of diversity, plants, herbal garden, fish pond, veterinary hospital, PONLAIT and Krishi Vigyan Kendra. It was actively dominated, knowledge through fun mode which the school children enjoyed a lot.



The quiz and drawing / painting activities conducted at the end of the two days camp added worth to the joy of realizing what the young kids have learnt about the nature and their responsibility to preserve them.

At a time when the world talks of welfare measures for animals, preserving birds, animals and aquaculture, promoting herbal plants this was straight enthralling

experience for children of two days of “Selfie with Nature” said Prof. S. Ramkumar, Dean, RIVER. We were not keen on getting more numbers, but whomever who have participated from more than 15 schools – had one of their memorable experiences of nature in their life. The fish pond with geese and ducks was one of the favourite spots of children, who tried a hand on fishing and learnt about the aquatic ecosystems and its importance in day to day life.

The children planted saplings of medicinal plants and while doing so felt they are also doing a job of propagating herbal plants. RIVER has more than 170 varieties of medicinal plants.

The Anatomy museum of the institute turned to be a final “jig-saw” puzzle play for children when they were asked to fix the bones on the outline of the cow drawn on floor. And the children learnt about the *femur* and *humerus* bones which carries the weight of a 400 kg cow. The processing of milk and packing it to various products for the children of Puducherry, like the peda, ice-creams, ghee, kulfi was an exciting experience in PONLAIT. From the farm from outside, they had the opportunity of seeing the unseen world of micro-organisms through microscope in RIVER and tissue culture in Krishi Vigyan Kendra.

Every child was a transformed one committed to the cause of nature by the time they received their certificate, a mug with their photo and a pack of organic vegetables grown in the RIVER campus. The summer camp was a different experience to RIVER, with student volunteers from graduate studies and faculty, closely monitoring and spending time with students. “The happy involvement of students and the twinkling eyes of satisfaction and questions they asked was a remarkable and memorable experience for all of us” said Dr. R. Kumar, Coordinator of the Summer Camp. Dr. Bhanu Rekha, faculty mentioned “the coordination of activities linking the complex concepts of science that the institute specializes was challenging”.

It’s satisfying when the children say how much they learnt in the camp. “This doesn’t look like a college, but a place where I can enjoy more. I like the campus very much and don’t want to leave the campus. For that I would like to become a Veterinarian”, said a student from Primrose School, Puducherry. For the first time I

could see closely how a veterinarian treated a dog. Though I was a bit afraid, it was really interesting said Sri Hari, Velammal Vidhyalaya, Chennai. Twisha Dash of Aditya Gurugram said the two days we enjoyed much. We came to know the farm animals, how they live, multiply and develop. Fish pond was a happy and different experience.

“Catching the fish and leaving it back”, “Touching the bones and arrange them as a model drawing”, “the multiplying cell seen under the microscope” all were examples of the excitement quoted by many children.