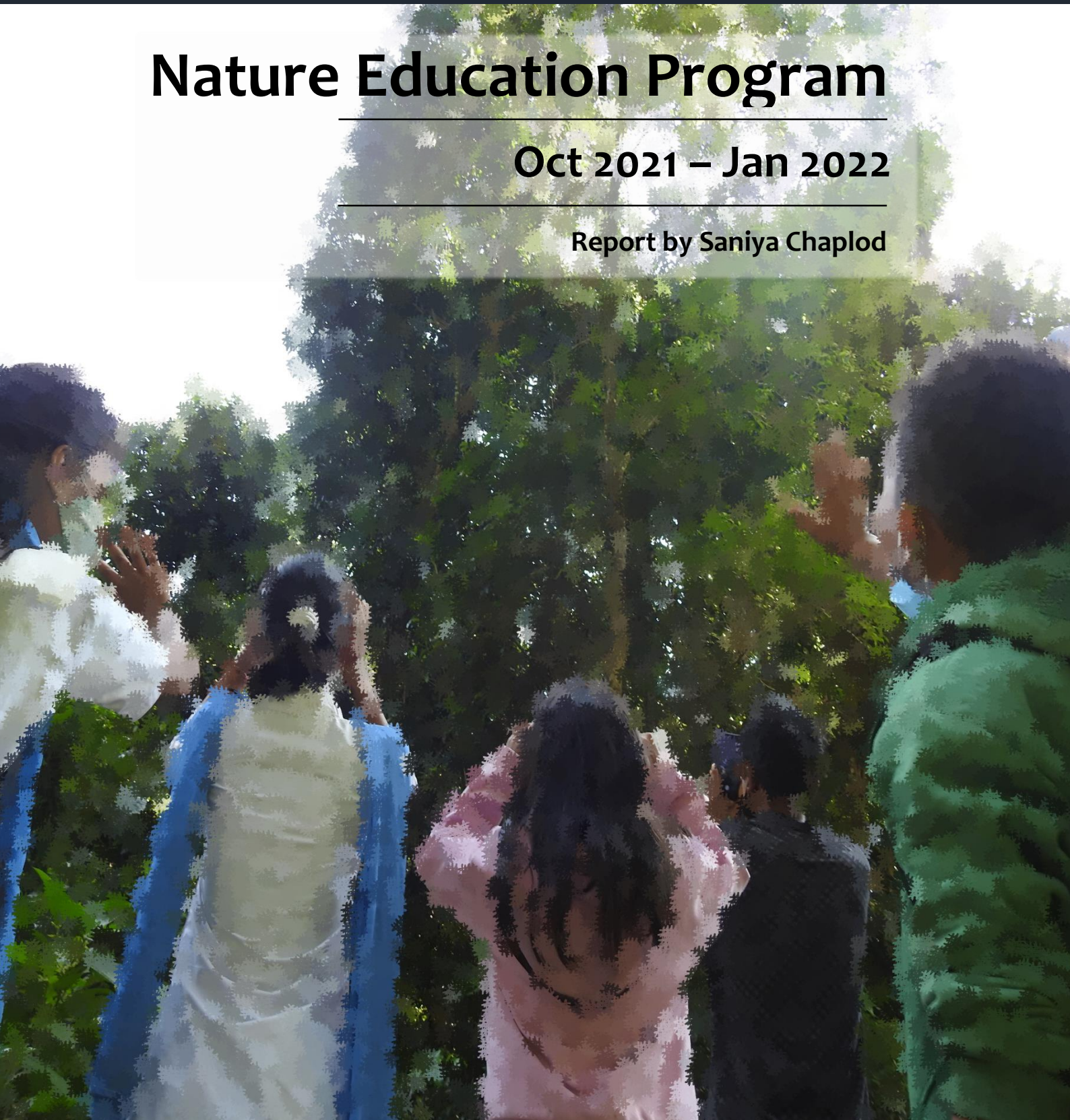


Nature Education Program

Oct 2021 – Jan 2022

Report by Saniya Chaplod



**nature
conservation
foundation**



DTCC

Background

In 2017, we began our formal Nature Education Program and set up nature clubs (called Pakke Nature Clubs) in seven local schools (5 government, 2 private) in villages around the Pakke Tiger Reserve.

The main highlight of this program is the annual nature camps inside the Pakke Tiger Reserve. Every year, we conduct three-day and one-day camps in November-December for the students of these seven schools registered with us. This is done in partnership with Arunachal Pradesh Forest Department.

The objective of these nature camps is to immerse the local children in nature and help develop a sense of pride and connectedness with their natural heritage. This is a long-term program where we aim to engage with the same students, more than once and in different ways to gradually strengthen their bond with the natural world rather than making it a one-time experience. This also helps us better evaluate the impact of the program.

These nature camps are based on three different modules which are carefully designed according to the age of the participants and regional context.

The first module, '**Bhelu Bolta Hai**' is a one-day module for kids from Classes 5 – 7. Bhelu is the local name for *Tetrameles nudilfora*, an important nesting tree species for hornbills in this area. By structuring the module as a treasure hunt for messages that are tied to different activities, we create interest and excitement in the students by bringing in an element of magic and wonder.

Paga's Present (Paga is Nyishi word for Hornbill) and Tiger's Tale (based on an old Nyishi folktale) are both 3-day modules. The aim of these two modules is to understand and appreciate the inter-relationships between different forest creatures, how we are part of the same ecological processes that sustain life on earth and how these are operational in Pakke.

Since 2017, we have engaged with around ~1000 students through the camps and other yearly activities like nursery visit, bird walks, nature art sessions, and other events on important days (World Environment day, Wildlife Week, or the Pakke Paga Hornbill Festival).

Due to the ongoing Covid-19 Pandemic, our Nature Education Program in Pakke was on hold for many months from the start of the first lockdown. Our engagement with the students was limited to online nature games in December 2020 and a few on-ground events in January 2021 with some of the schools.

In October 2021, we started off with a few on-ground events in Seijosa:

Wildlife Week Celebration

2nd October 2021: Celebrated 'India for Tigers - Rally on wheels at VKV schools Seijosa organized by MOEFCC and State Forest Department of Assam and Arunachal. There was a brief event where the students were addressed by Rangers from Namdapha Tiger Reserve, Nameri Tiger Reserve and Pakke Tiger Reserve about the importance of Tiger conservation. It was followed by a pledge for Tiger protection. This was organized by the Pakke Tiger Reserve park management.



5th – 6th October 2021: Introduction to the world of birds through various games and activities in two schools:

VKV school, class 6 & 7 (27 Students), A2 government school, class 2 to 8 (27 Students)

The students were first introduced to the basics of bird watching. This introduction was followed by a game called 'Bird Fact or Fiction' where the students learn some basic facts about birds through a fun game. Each of us then made a bird zine and noted down details of birds that we watched during a bird walk. The students from A2 School were taken to the river behind their school campus while students from VKV School watched birds from their corridor because of rains.



7th October 2021: Nature Interpretation Centre, Tippi visit by St. Xavier's School, Class 8 (34 students). The students were given a tour of the Tippi NIC and informed about the importance of Pakke Tiger Reserve and its wildlife through the interactive panels and posters inside the NIC. This was followed by a short activity to end the session. This event was organized by the APFD, Tippi Wildlife range.



Image by Saniya

Pakke Annual Nature Camps, Seijosa

In November 2021, we conducted five one-day camps with five schools in Seijosa. Due to the ongoing Covid pandemic, we have shortened the duration of these camps to one day, instead of the 3 day camps this year. These camps were conducted in the Seijosa range of Pakke Tiger Reserve in collaboration with the Forest Department. The list of schools attending the camps is given below.

School	Class	Date	Number of students	Total participants
Niti Darlong govt. Middle School, Niti Darlong	7 & 8	17 th Nov 2021	14	23 (1 teacher)
Darlong Govt. Secondary School	9	18 th Nov 2021	15	27 (2 teachers)
Nivedita Vihar VKV Secondary School	8	20 th Nov 2021	25	35 (1 teacher)
RWD Colony Govt. Middle School, Upper Seijosa	8	23 rd Nov 2021	19	32 (3 teachers)
A2 Block Govt. Middle School, A2	7 & 8	24 th Nov 2021	18	28

The students were taken for a trail from west bank to Sukha nala where they participated in various activities and games based on the one day module.

They made leaf museums, visited hidden places in the forest, played games like the scavenger hunt to collect treasures of the forest, learnt about the hornbills of Pakke and made art. There were also sharing sessions in between to reflect upon their learning throughout the day.



Students collected different leaves from the forest floor to make leaf museums. This activity helps them appreciate the diversity of leaves and trees – their sizes, shapes, textures and colors.

A surprise visit to this pond inside the forest where the students get to make sound maps (tracing different sounds of the forest by standing still with their eyes closed for a few minutes) followed by a small session on hornbill nesting and breeding behavior by the nest protectors themselves.





Students reading a message hidden at the Bhelu tree introducing them to the forests of Pakke and giving them challenges for the rest of day in the form of games and activities.

Students using the magnifying glass to appreciate the smaller less-noticed creatures of the forest and draw them after observing them.



A simple yet powerful activity to build an emotional connect to the forests by hugging giant rainforest trees.

Work Expansion/new beginnings:

In January 2022, we registered with four more schools from Bhalukpong and Tippi (another range of PTR). Since this is a new site for our nature education program, we conducted a two-day teacher's orientation workshop for the teachers to understand the importance of nature education and this program. A total of 16 people attended the workshop including teachers from five local schools, Forest department staff from Tippi range and NCF staff. This workshop was conducted by Dr. Pranav Trivedi who has also designed and conceptualized this program.



Image by Poro Natung



Image by Saniya

Teachers and forest department staff participating in activities themselves that they would later conduct for their students.

This was followed by one-day nature camps for the registered schools inside Pakke Tiger Reserve.

School	class	date	No. of students	Total participants
Navjyoti Royal Heritage School, Bhalukpong	5	11 th Jan 2022	18	30 (2 teachers)
Government Middle school, Bhalukpong	5,6 & 7	14 th Jan 2022	16	27 (1 teacher)

Note: Because of increasing covid cases in Bhalukpong and changing school guidelines, three of the camps got cancelled.

We followed the same module, 'Bhelu bolta hai' for these one-day camps and the students spent an entire day inside the tiger reserve learning about its inhabitants and connecting with the forest through various activities and games.

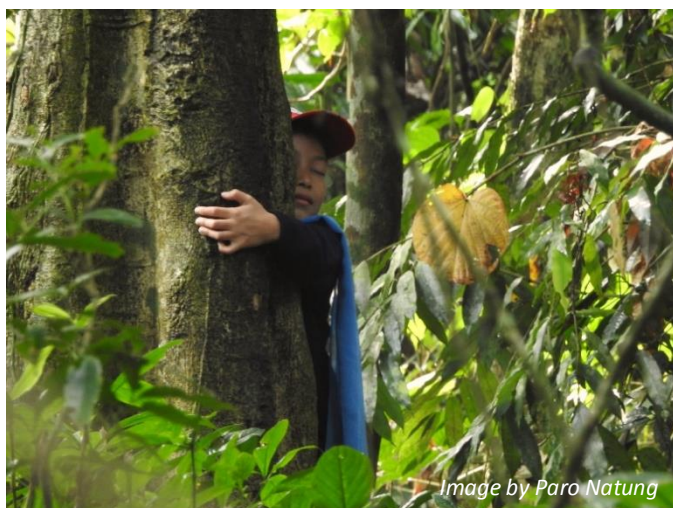
Given below are images from some of the activities from the camps.



Students collecting treasures of the forest. An activity that activates all their senses and helps them be more observant in the forest.

Students spending some time in solitude at the end of the day to reflect upon their learnings and experiences from the day. This session helps them put their thoughts together. The students then share their feelings with the entire group.





Nature Education module: Developed and conducted by Pranav Trivedi

Nature Education Program Co-ordinator: Saniya Chaplod with guidance from Pranav Trivedi. Aparajita Datta provides overall supervision.

Local Co-ordinators: Tajik Tachang, Khem Thapa

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