

Project Update: April 2009

August 2008: Compiled checklist of bibliography.

September 2008: Identified areas for sampling in the oak forest and dry forest.

October and November 2008: Could not do anything relating to survey due to logistical problems and health. Reviewed literature and digital maps.

December 2008: We trained local stakeholders, mostly youths from Soatá, to carry out bat monitoring surveys. The training covered bat survey protocols, data recording, and use of equipment.

January to February 2009: Began the sampling of oak forest and dry forest xerófitico.

January to March 2009: Basic environmental education seminars were held for community members in all Veredas in the Soatá. Project team members visited primary schools to help raise awareness of the bats among students:

- Piedesecho School: located in oak forest (vereda Molinos).
- La Costa: located in the dry forest xerófitico (vereda La Costa).

July 2009: End of sampling and also the environmental education activities.

ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION PROGRAMME

We worked in the region with the teachers and children's of two primary schools in the Veredas La Costa and Piedesecho at Soatá. We focused on the project conserving bats and about the environmental modules that aid teachers in incorporating environment concepts in teaching and ecology.

We have observed the gradual change of perception of the rural communities about the bats. Since they have gradually transformed their knowledge for the community benefit; we have been talking to adults and children with educational workshops focusing on them visualising their environment and the biodiversity and ecological wealth it holds. Thus, the rural communities can appropriate their own land and protect it.

Now children and adults know about their land, their forests and the ecological importance of bats that are in the balance of nature.

