

Project Update: October 2017

After all lion guards teams had their warming up when given environmental education during the Children's Bushcamp in April 2017, all teams were ready to give their first sessions of environmental education in May 2017. For the sessions around Bénoué NP, the park conservator asked to add two eco-guardians. They were added to the team in order to involve park staff even more in the project. Those two eco-guardians also received an extra small training to inform them about the content of all environmental education lesson that will be given over the year.

The first lesson started with short introduction of the lion guards about their work. After, the children had to fill in a short test. This test will also be given at the end of lesson three, so that their progress can be monitored. It seemed that I estimated the level of the children to high and most children were not able to fill in the question sheet, because they were not as literate as I had expected. They had lots of difficulties with reading, understanding and answering the questions. In the future, a different method to measure the knowledge of the children is preferred.

The first lesson that was given concerned the theme 'animals' in the broadest sense. The lesson started with a class discussion (question and answer) about which animals the children already knew. They were asked about the differences about domesticated animals and wild animals. Moreover, they were asked which animals the children had seen in their life. A list was made on the chalkboard. During the second part of the lesson, the guards explained about the diversity of the animal kingdom. Which types of animals do exist, their specific characteristics and how to recognise them? Lots of pictures have been used in this part. During the last part, there was a creative assignment. Children had to colour a mask in the form of an animal. This mask will be used later in lesson 3, when children have to do some theatre. This all, was quite a new concept of for the children but they really enjoyed it. It turned out that the children had some difficulties with cutting out the masks, but help was provided by the lion guards.

In conclusion, everybody was very enthusiastic and thus the first education session was very successful. The environmental education will continue with its second session after the summer holidays in September.



Left: Children make test. Right: Children have coloured their animal masks that will be used in lesson 3



Left: One of the classes around Benoue NP that received environmental education.
Right: Lion guards makes list on animals on the chalkboard.