

Rainforest

RETREAT

ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

An educational platform to raise awareness about environmental issues, especially the importance of biodiversity conservation and sustainable agriculture.

Nestled in the rainforests of Kodagu district in southern India, we offer unique experiential learning programs especially designed for students to engage closely with the environment through a hands-on approach.

DRS **ANURAG** AND **SUJATA GOEL**

RAINFOREST RETREAT

MOJO PLANTATION, GALIBEDU POST

MADIKERI 571201, KARNATAKA, INDIA

email: rainforestours@gmail.com

website: www.rainforestours.com

91 8272 265636





Some of the Topics covered are:

Rainforest ecology

Various aspects of rainforest eco-systems are introduced, starting with the fragile layer of soil with its millions of microbes and networks of

fungi to plants and trees and the animals that inhabit the rainforest. The interaction and interdependence of various components of this intricate ecosystem are highlighted.



Organic agriculture

MOJO PLANTATION is a certified 20-acre organic spice farm. An interactive farm tour is followed up by discussions about the ecological damage caused by intensification of agriculture and overuse of toxic agri chemicals.





Carrying compost— teamwork helps boost confidence and fun.



Animal husbandry is an important component of organic farming — interaction with the animals is enjoyable for all.

Students participate in all kinds of farm activities which vary by season.

One important activity is to get familiar with the soil (through composting and gardening) which supports all life. Other seasonal activities can include harvesting of crops such as coffee, vanilla, cardamom, pepper, tumeric.



Processing and packaging of crops is an important activity.

Sustainable living

Sustainability is our guiding principle at the **RAINFOREST RETREAT**. Our eco-tourism project is closely linked with our organic spice farm and our environmental education programs and all of them emphasize **SUSTAINABILITY** (recycling, use of alternate energy systems like photovoltaic panels, solar heating, bio-gas, rain water harvesting, eco-friendly design and construction will be demonstrated.





We naturally highlight importance of sustainable agriculture in biodiversity conservation.

Important issues of conservation vs development are discussed.

Demonstration of research methods used for biodiversity estimation: camera traps, transects for bird diversity, bait traps for butterflies and pitfall and light traps for ground and flying insects.

Biodiversity

The Western ghats are home to some of the richest biodiversity on earth and our research and documentation at **RAINFOREST RETREAT** serves as a window to this treasure of nature which is rapidly vanishing due to human activities.

Some schools we have hosted include:

AKSHARA, Bangalore; BVB KODAGU VIDYALAYA, Madikeri; RISHI VALLEY SCHOOL, Madnaphalle; SHLOKA SCHOOL, Hyderabad; STONEHILL, Bangalore; NCBS WILDLIFE PROGRAM, Bangalore; SRISHTI SCHOOL OF ART, DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY, Bangalore; UNIVERSITY OF GUELPH, Canada; WILLIAM AND MARY COLLEGE, Virginia, USA.

Typical 5-day program

This program can be tailored to meet the needs of students from the ages of 10 up to university level.

Day 1:

Check-in /Introductions and Orientation talk over Tea/Coffee, settle into the accommodations.

7:30 pm Nightly Bonfire provided

8:00 pm Dinner

Day 2:

8:30 am Breakfast

9:30–1:00 pm Interactive Plantation Tour and discussions about the Rainforest ecosystem; how the forest ecosystem sustains balanced land use between agriculture and conservation: Sujata

1:00 pm Lunch

2:30–4:00 pm Farm activities or introduction of concept of pest-predator relationships through games and discussions for junior children.

4:00 pm Tea/Coffee

8:00 pm Dinner

9:00 pm Night walk through plantation to see the small creatures (can be repeated, along with stargazing and telescope when weather permits).

Day 3:

6:30–7:30 am Birding with guide for those interested — repeated if desired.

8:30 am Breakfast

9:30 am Trek to Kalur Ridge for overview of the unique shola-grassland ecosystem.



- 1:00 pm Lunch
- 6:00–7:30 pm Slide Presentations at RR : Anurag “**BIODIVERSITY OF THE WESTERN GHATS**”
- 8:00 pm Dinner

Day 4:

- 8:30 am Breakfast
- 9:30 am Demonstration of methods used to estimate biodiversity: line transects for birds, bait traps for butterflies, pitfall traps and light traps for insects and camera traps for mammals.
- 2:00 pm Walk down 3.5 km to Kalur Village (and River) for a half/full day interactive time with a primary school group of children. Dance, songs, puppet show exchange.
- 8:00 pm Dinner

Day 5:

- 8:30 am Breakfast
- 9:30 am Collect results of biodiversity experiments and discuss over tea time.
- 11:00 am Field-related activities (Planting, composting, etc).
- 1:00 pm Lunch
- 2:30–4:00 pm Nature and art workshop on top of a hill.
- 4:00 pm Tea/Coffee

Day 6:

- 8:30 am Breakfast
- 9:30 am Check-out

