

**SHRI SHIVAJI SCIENCE COLLEGE, AMRAVATI**  
**DEPARTMENT OF BOTANY**  
**“ECOFRIENDS”**  
(Extension Activity of Department of Botany)

*Aim*

*Environmental imbalance is destroying humanity regardless of race, religion or sex, ideology or belief. Industrialization, modernization and urbanization have begun to exhibit serious tendencies of failure, just when the lofty dream of bringing health and abundance to the people of world seems within reach. Statistics are difficult to evaluate in terms of what might happen to the quality of environment unless some careful planning and careful execution of projects is carried. “ECOFRIENDS” is an association which will intertwine three pillars of our developing nation i.e. Student, Teacher and Parent to construct public awareness of the dangers to health and life inherent in continuation of the present scenario that degrade out our environment. “ECOFRIENDS” will implement three-concept strategy i.e. Planning – Placement – Prevention to preserve environmental quality.*

*Objectives*

- To inculcate acquaintance and interest about Nature and Environment.
- To develop scientific attitude.
- To integrate students with the society and environment.
- To convey laboratory wisdom to society.
- To execute “Plantation programme” with the support of the students, parents and teachers.
- To make environment hygienic by implementing various health related programmes.
- To introduce medicinal plants, their properties and exploit them into routine life.
- Collection, conservation and propagation of medicinal plants to drive them in society.
- To endeavor ways and means to keep environmental balance.
- To exploit wealth of nature in disciplined and economic manner.
- To suggest approved modes of classification, disposal and recycling of waste material.
- To celebrate days related to environment e.g. Environment Day, Pollution Free Day, etc.
- To establish contacts with various organizations working for betterment of the nature.
- To organize nature visit, workshop, gathering, exhibitions, and road shows under the guidance of experts of the respective fields.

Keeping all the above-mentioned objectives in mind, department of Botany commenced the various activities by registering the students as a member of this association. Following demonstrations about several social problems were successfully handled by the department some of the most significant activities are as follows –

- **Matiche Ganpati Abhiyan:** Ganesh festival is one of the major festivals celebrated in our region. Every year Ganesh idols prepared with plaster of paris and chemical colours are polluting our environment hence to reduce impact of plaster of paris and save our water resources from harmful material, Ecofriends is organizing “Matiche Ganpati Abhiyan” since inception of this association. The citizens of Amravati are giving huge response to this campaign every year. Many of them are benefited by this campaign and purchased clay Ganesh Idols from the stall at college campus.
- **Street Play:** To generate awareness amongst school children regarding the hazardous effects of POP and other unhealthy practices during Ganesh festival, Ecofriends is organizing street play in various schools of Amravati. The school authority has given cooperation and school children are insisting their parents to bring clay Ganesha Idol and immerse them in water at home.
- **Guidance by experts:** Students are the future. Their energy and enthusiasm are a great asset to the society. This youthful energy if channeled properly can bring positive changes in the society. An important issue which is facing our society today is the rapid degradation of our environment. We should pass on the information regarding environment protection like judicious use of energy and water, better disposal of garbage, protecting wild life. Moreover, protecting our environment is a huge responsibility and we have a wide range of functions to protect the environment. Environmentalists can share a mission to protect the environment. Therefore, Ecofriends is actively involved in organizing guest lectures by the renowned experts in various fields. So far, the guidance is given by Dr. Dinesh Tyagi, CCF, MTR, Amravati on the occasion of month long paryavaran janjagruti abhiyan, Dr. Anand Ghaisas, HBCSE, Mumbai and Dr. V. T. Ingole during Nature Camp, DR. Jitendra Sangewar, Regional Officer, MPCB, Dr. Nishikant Kale, President, Nature Conservation Society and Mr. Hemant Kumar Mina, Deputy Conservator of Forest, Amravati.
- **Raising Saplings:** For providing beautiful, aesthetic and tranquilizing environment along with conservation of medicinal and economically important plants the Ecofriends unit has raised the saplings of different plant species and maintained it in the net house of college.

They are planted and given to the needy ones every year.

- **Unique way of friendship day celebration:** As students are always very enthusiastic to celebrate friendship day every year on 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of August. Ecofriends has focused on spreading message on “Environment conservation”. The special friendship bands with messages on Environment conservation were prepared by members of Ecofriends. These special friendship bands were tied to the office staff and departmental faculty members.
- **Bamboo Garden visit:** Now a day there is increasing demand for timber and the depletion of natural forest have encouraged the utilization of many less popular species. Bamboos have for a very long time been used as timber. We are fortunate to have the diversified collection of Bamboo plants from different parts of the country at Wadali Forest Garden. It is the second largest bamboo nursery of Maharashtra which exists in Amravati. It is spread over 40 hectares, it has got 110 species of bamboo, some locally

grown and some imported from countries like China, Malaysia, South America and South Africa. The department of Botany has arranged the visit of the Ecofriends to Wadali garden specially to study the species of Bamboos. Mr. Salim the caretaker of this garden has given information about these Bamboo species during this visit. Hon'ble Hemant Kumar Meena, Divisional Forest Officer, Melghat Tiger Reserve, Amravati had also guided the students and asked to register for Green Army.

