

## Education

### Schools declare war on invasive plants - 28.05.2009

**To celebrate this year's International Biodiversity Day (IBD), schools around the country joined the Department of Environment and other organisations such as Tourism Eco-Society for Seychelles (TESS), District Administrators and Jj Spirit Foundation, to eradicate invasive plants, especially creepers, in their communities.**



The formal ceremony was launched at Beau Vallon Secondary School in the presence of the principal secretary for Environment, managers of Beau Vallon primary and secondary school and their students, as well as representatives of the Ministry of Education, Environment, District Administration and Jj Spirit Foundation.

After the official launching by Environment principal secretary Didier Dogley, who talked about the dangers of these invasive species on our unique island's biodiversity, the members of the Dolphin Wildlife Clubs started to attack invasive creepers which were engulfing other plants next to their school.

At the same time, school children from Anse Boileau secondary school were also eradicating creepers at Barbarons. They too were being assisted by the Jj Spirit team and the Grand Anse administration office.

On the same day, but in the afternoon, Cascade school and Bel Eau school also gave a helping hand to eradicate creepers next to their schools. Bel Eau was also assisted by their district administration office. Apart from wildlife clubs, other school groups which took part were the heritage clubs, environment clubs, eco-school team and Friends of Vallee de Mai.

On Saturday it was the Anse Royale district under the leadership of TESS, which grouped together different teams from the district. They concentrated in a wetland area which is being devastated by these invasive creepers.

On Praslin the three schools met at Vallee de Mai where a record of 34,181 invasive seedlings were uprooted. It was under the local theme 'Koste Seselwa' that the work was done and it was one which was described as very successful.

International Biodiversity Day is celebrated on May 22 every year. The Convention of Biodiversity Secretariat encourages all parties to the Convention (to which Seychelles is a signatory) and all organisations that deal in some way with the issue to organise activities and events to celebrate the IBD and to take advantage of it to raise public awareness and showcase their work to prevent and manage invasive alien species.

This year's theme was Invasive Alien Species, species of plants, animals, pathogens and other organisms that are non-native to an ecosystem, and which may cause economic or environmental harm or adversely affect human health. The Convention on Biological Diversity and its members recognize that there is an urgent need to address the impact of invasive alien species.

Article 8(h) of the CBD states that, "Each contracting Party shall, as far as possible and as appropriate, prevent the introduction of, control or eradicate those alien species which threaten ecosystems, habitats or species" Seychelles has for a long time been a signatory of the CBD and every year activities are organized locally to celebrate this special day.

The Ministry of Education would like to thank all its partners for their assistance, especially the Department of Environment, Jj Spirit Foundation, district administrators, Seychelles Islands Foundation and TESS.

