

Students Fall in Love with Wildlife

By : Dasheer Noh - 20 February 2008

They learn to plant saplings the correct way. About 100 primary and secondary students in Langkawi fell in love with the wildlife after spending their weekends jungle-trekking on the island with naturalist Irshad Mobarak. And this went for six months.

Nurul Nayli Hashim, 12, from SK Kedawang said the nature programme provided her with a deep knowledge of the ecosystem. "We were thought to identify the different types of trees and how to plant saplings the correct way. We also learnt about the birds and their behaviour.

Mohd Afifi Rahim, 11, from SK Seri Negeri said he had acquired a passion of for the environment after his walk through the jungle. "We learned about the jungle and how to conserve. We will spread the word around so that others too will be aware of how important it is to take care of our jungle," he added.

The two were among those selected to undergo a nature awareness programme led by Irshad, 49, who is tagged "The Jungle-Wallah of Langkawi" under DiGi's Amazing Malaysians programme.

Twenty years ago, Irshad was smitten by the island's lush greenery after visiting it. He resigned from his bank job in Kuala Lumpur, headed for Langkawi to become a jungle naturalist and had never regretted his move.

The nature conservation children's programme jointly launched with the Malaysia nature Society in June last year was sponsored by DiGi Telecommunications Sdn Bhd.

The students were divided into three groups-the tree doctors, wildlife rangers and nature's scribes.

The programme culminated with the launch of the Interpretive Centre in Gunung Raya by Kedah princess Datuk Seri Tunku Intan Safinaz Sultan Abdul Halim and a beach party at Pantai Cenang.

