

HISTORY OF CONSTRUCTION OF NATURAL SCIENTIFIC EDUCATIONAL SCHOOL GARDEN IN ECOSCHOOL ZBIROH

Our elementary school was engaged into a multinational program called "Ecoschool" in 2008. A coordinator of EVVO (Environmental education) involved herself in the Czech-German project "Ecological education in school garden". A civic association "Ametyst" participated in that project with Bavarian LBV- "Zentrum Mensch und Natur". Thanks to information from that project a construction of our natural scientific educational school garden could start.

In 2009/2010 pupils of our school started not only to propose particular components to the garden but also to gain money and after that to build the components up themselves. The first great action was the gaining money by collecting paper. It was used for buying fruit shrub and trees to the permcultural edible forest. Schoolchildren also created a natural recognition center with a touch pathway, a cone place and a bark place. It serves for an identification of cones and barks. There was also a meteorological corner and an outside classroom with a board and blocks of wood for sitting. Everything was acquired for money that was got for collection of paper and admission for Ecoshow.

Following year our school was successful in a program called „School for Sustainable Life“. Thanks to the project "Garden for Everybody- Everybody for Garden" and the money we got we could install playing element with a slide, a horizontal bar and a mini climbing wall. It was made especially for children from maternal center, kindergarten and from after school club. The aim of it was to attract even our youngest fellow citizens and their parents. Children founded a waste cemetery on the school land and they also bought a semiprofessional meteorological station which recorded basic data about weather. They founded a herbal spiral bed and they widened an edible forest together with a group of environmentalists. In this school year pupils have started to sell the products on farm markets. This activity still continues and the gained money are used for improving the school garden and for another environmental actions.

In 2010/2011 schoolchildren with a help of their parents and grandparents prepared, to already builded stands, instructional elements that were good and suitable for watching animals. Nowadays, they often watch visitors in an insect hotel, hedgehog house, lizard and beetle houses and also in nesting boxes for birds and bats. Thanks to "Foundation Partnership" and supported project "Bioinformational Center Goes to Meet Citizens" we have gained massive oak tables and desks to our outside classroom this school year.

In the following school year our project was significantly supported by Pilsen district. It was called "We are so lucky we can enjoy our garden". In cooperation with scouts pupils weaved a willow fence. They also staked off an analemmatic sun clock together with a director of Pilsen astronomical observatory and as well they marked out different measures of length and an axis of evolution. It was newly made a bed for medical herbs and stands, for example "A secret of wood" and "A forest detective". A geological path was quite hard to build up but at the same time it was a very nice stand for children where they could recognize particular rocks, familiarize themselves with a development of paving roads and they could specify plants in different three biotopes. In cooperation with "Debrujars" from Canada a stand called "Floods and revitalisation" was created where pupils could illustratively try how to revitalise brooks.

In 2013/2014 final work was done in a project “ We are so lucky we can enjoy our garden 2“ and the garden was decorated by a popular tent of prehistoric hunters, known as “Bison“ and painted with prehistoric themes by our schoolgirls. Another stand was build up- “And how far can you jump?“ , so children could compare their jumping abilities with abilities of animals. Thanks to the support of programs “Ecoschool“, “Forrest at school“ and “Association TEREZA“ a newly equipped Bioinformational center could be established . There was a background for products of nature used in teaching in our school garden. And some of the techaing elements were renewed as well. For example, schoolgirls painted a tool shed everywhere with their own designs (there is an ecosystem all over all sides). A web was renewed by schoolgirls who made it three years before and they also filled an earwig pots. Schoolboys newly builded up the touch path and a run for animals.

In this school year schoolchildren are preparing a printed “Guide for school garden of ecoschool Zbihroh“. Naturally, there will be under way never ending work in the garden like an upkeep and revitalisation of individual teaching elements. Also, we will surely get some more inspiration with our schoolchildren for building up another stands.