

Special Nature Reserve Obedska Bara: Good Example of Organization of Teaching in the Field

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Development of science and technology created a need for a new approach to educational and pedagogical process in schools, especially in the field of natural sciences. There is a need for a modern, new approach that increasingly involves the implementation of active learning, practical knowledge and activating students as subjects of teaching. Vocational training of teaching staff is also necessary for implementation of innovation in teaching and education as well as relocation of classrooms into nature. In 1908, the first classroom in nature was made in the experimental garden of the famous Men's Teacher Training School in Jagodina.

One of the teaching forms in the field is the educational excursions. The task of this type of teaching is to move students from classrooms and the learning of natural phenomena and processes through the text in books. The highest quality knowledge is experiential one to which students come personally, palpable, experienced through the senses and emotions. Educational excursions allow children to experience the phenomena, processes, wildlife in their natural environment, directly, which is the essence of the natural sciences.

The advantage of teaching in the field is that it allows the adoption of educational content through observation, noticing and conclusions in nature. Educational excursions encourage the socialization of students, fostering friendly relations, comradeship, unity, work in a group. Students acquire knowledge about nature, cultural and historical heritage, they are educated to preserve nature and gain proper environmental attitudes. Staying in nature, through work, exercise and learning students are able to strengthen their health and physical fitness and develop work education and habits (Nikolić 1994).

The aim of this paper is to show how educational excursions can and should be implemented in education of primary school children. The paper shows detailed preparation of educational excursion for eighth grade, and also describes possible implementation of one-day excursion for fifth grade (Collection of plants for school herbarium) and sixth grade (Making school collection of insects). Special Nature Reserve (SNR) "Obedska bara" was used as a teaching facility.

Special Nature Reserve "Obedska bara" is located in the southern part of Srem, near the Sava River, at altitude between 71 and 82 m. The total area of the reserve with the highest level of protection is 9820.0 ha. Obedska bara is bounded by the



Figure 1. Location map of the SNR Obedska bara

Sava River in the south, while in the north it stretches across southern outskirts of rural areas of the villages of Grabovci, Obrež and Kupačnik. It is located in the municipality of Pećinci, 45 km away from Belgrade and 35 km from the international airport “Nikola Tesla”. It is 20 km away from regional road Ruma - Šabac, 30 km from Šabac, while 70 km from Novi Sad. Special Nature Reserve in contrast to the narrower space of Obedska bara covers significantly greater area of 16,133.43 ha (Martinović-Vitanović 1996) (Figure 1).

The first administrative measures to protect Obedska bara date back to 1874, when it was protected as a hunting ground of the Austrian imperial family in the Habsburg monarchy while in 1919 it became a famous hunting area of the Karađorđević dynasty. Based on the Ramsar Convention (1977), this area has been put on the list of wetlands of international importance. Obedska bara is also on the list of areas of particular importance for European birds (Tomić et al. 2004).

Special Nature Reserve “Obedska bara” is recognizable by preserved natural values and their diversity. Mosaic shift of habitat conditions contributes to existence of diverse flora and fauna in small area and which as endangered are classified into rare, endangered and vulnerable species (Gajić & Karadžić 1991; Karapandža 1995). The future of Obedska bara is promotion and protection while preserving and ensuring ecologically sustainable and equitable use of natural resources (Besermenji 1999).

Students are trained in the field to actively and independently come to knowledge by observing, noticing, reasoning, connecting the existing knowledge, cooperating among group members and of course by collecting information during conversations with a guide and teacher in the SNR Obedska bara. After returning from educational excursions, students submit reports at school and in the form of presentations they communicate their findings to other students. In the field, specific endangered plant and animal species are photographed, as well as the students

themselves during. These photos can serve to students for electronic versions of herbarium and insectarium, and photo board of field work in the school hall that would serve to other students as an educational and motivational tool. Of course, such panel has aesthetic significance and contributes to the quality of school.

Educational excursions can be applied in different parts of geographical and biological contents at different levels. The paper shows the application in fifth grade when creating biological herbarium, in sixth grade when creating insectarium, and in eighth grade for realization of exercise "Visit to a protected natural area". Particularly great possibilities of application of educational excursions are in teaching of eighth grade, where they can serve for teaching in the field and studying specific characteristics of different types of ecosystems, with emphasis on the degree of threat and protection capabilities. Educational excursions can be introduced also as a form of work in realization of contents planned in biological or environmental section.

Whatever the application of educational excursions is, it is certainly necessary and as frequently as possible. This is a special type of teaching that contributes to the overall high quality mode of development of students and should to replace the traditional form of teaching that is still deeply rooted in the school system of the Republic of Serbia. This way of work contributes to the development of environmental awareness, health, interpersonal relationships and of course the high quality of knowledge acquired in nature, with tangible examples. After educational excursions, students feel pleasure and desire for further research, which is the purpose of scientific research in the open space.

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