

## EXPERIENCE IN ESTABLISHING REGIONAL GUIDED TOURS FOR SCHOOLCHILDREN IN THE URBAN PARK

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**Abstract.** This article highlights practices in developing and conducting regional guided tours devoted to spring birds, being favorite characters of the natural historian writer M. Prishvin. This article is aimed at underlining advantages of the practice-oriented project in cultivating all skills required for future workers of the tourism industry, to reveal benefits of interaction between schoolchildren and students as mentors.

**Key words:** regional guided tour, species, ecological consciousness, field study, professional competencies

The main problems of training tourism managers in Russia include the lack of practice in most disciplines, the lack of access to a customer audience, where we can test theoretical positions [7]. The proper and effective functioning in the sphere of tourism requires practice-oriented interdisciplinary projects that form a higher-level educational field.

The third-year students of the NSTU prepared a number of regional guided tours devoted to various subjects (geographical, historical, literary) that were held in different schools in Novosibirsk. The ornithological excursion "Ptitsparad" (Parade of birds) about park birds of the "spring light" (according to M. Prishvin) held within the framework of zoological regional studies shows us a multifaceted educational and pedagogical effect of interaction between students and schoolchildren in this format. The project was implemented in the second half of March 2018 in the Victory Park of the Leninsky district. The guided tour route is due not only to the fact that several species of bright birds are available at the same time and place, but, first of all, due to the tour ideology which is based on the ideas of M. Prishvin on nature as a source of morality, and on birds as bearers of spirituality, symbols of world linkages and possibility to rise above routine and mundanity [6].

Presentations of the park ecosystem show ecological behavior principles, that is, the park played the role of a kind of social instrument, the designer of the ecological consciousness of young people. [2, 3, 4]. The concept of the guided tour is to show park spring birds and to demonstrate standards of eco-efficient behavior at all stops on the guided tour route. The development of respect for the birds – hard workers and travelers, who cross thousands of kilometers, build nests and take care of their offspring every year, has proved to be especially pertinent and relevant in the subject "Zoology" among seventh graders. At this age, schoolchildren are often indifferent or even harmful to nature - they break down trees, tear down park flowers, use slingshots to shoot stones at birds, destroy their nests, spoil their feeding troughs [5]. On the eve of receipt by new citizens of the main document, i.e. passport, it is important to foster a sense of responsibility to the environment. The distant goal is also to raise the interest of the new generation in ecotourism, the main principles of which are preservation and transformation, rather than consumerism [1]. The ornithological tourism, as is known, is one of the types of ecotourism, which is successfully growing today throughout the territory of our country, especially in Kamchatka, along the coasts of the Lena River and Lake Baikal.

The guided tour objectives are as follows:

- to acquaint schoolchildren with characteristic species of the park spring birds, such as: waxwings, snowbirds, titmice, bullfinches, woodpeckers;
- -to learn how to identify these species by plumage, behavioral features, voice ("song", invocatory, protective sounds, comfort sounds);
- to ignite the desire to take care of different kinds of birds;
- to develop skills required to conduct field research, especially when observing cautious and mobile objects, such as: self-discipline, attentiveness and teamwork skills.

Preparatory stages:



1. The guides studied the territory of the park, identified attraction points for birds of different species, related them to places where vandalism acts were committed against the ecosystem, determined group routes by enhancing places of display stops with bird feeders supplied with food preferred by different species of birds;

2. Development of two kinds of guided tours - 1) emphasizing the rules of conduct in the park for first-class children studying birds in the subject "The World around"; 2) emphasizing the skills of field research and the formation of ecological consciousness for children of the 7th grade studying birds in the subject "Zoology".

The guides met with pupils of the 1st and 7<sup>th</sup> grades of the gymnasium in zoology class, where they were introduced to the ornithological tour project. A mini-lecture was held where pupils learned about principles of this tour, the rules of careful attitude to nature, to birds, in particular. Pupils were told about travels of the writer M. Prishvin, his fascination with bird watching, as well as main points of his philosophy related to the way of birds life. Peculiarities of the bird as an object of watching, its symbolism as a phenomenon of world culture, were presented. Also the trajectory of travel of birds, which currently in spring stay in the park located in the immediate vicinity of the gymnasium was demonstrated. The pupils listened to the records of sound reactions of waxwings, titmice, bullfinches, woodpeckers and snowbirds, which were accompanied by the presentation and narration of their species. Also, ways of constructing feeders preferred by different kinds of birds were shown, and other ways of taking care of them were demonstrated.

Particular attention was paid to the rules of conduct during ornithological tours, such as: early meet (by 8.30), comfortable clothes and shoes in inconspicuous colors, guides are ahead of the group, which listens and follows their instructions. The group members shall not split off in different directions, run towards the seen bird, conversations between tour members are unacceptable. 1st and 7<sup>th</sup> grades were divided into three parts (9, 12 and 8 pupils for the 1st class), (11, 12, 7 pupils for the 7th class) as the group of the ornithological guided tour shall not be numerous. Thus, six park tours in total were implemented.

3. As the guided tour is dedicated to M. Prishvin, in whose works the birds act as souls of people who once lived on earth, messengers of paradise (for example, the story "Old Woman's Paradise"), schoolchildren were given the task to familiarize themselves with his works, as well as with the history of the park of Victory.

After the tour with the first-graders, there was a conversation, i.e. an exchange of impressions, and a contest of drawings was started. And with the 7th grade there was a discussion of the information received during the tour; each group singled out the main idea following the tour. The first group considers that sometimes the most interesting things are next door and there is no need to go far to learn something new; and the second group - that it is possible to help nature with tiny actions every day, and the third group considers that the most important was information about eco-efficient consciousness. These thoughts formed the basis for practice-oriented projects of three groups - "City Eco-paths", "Small things for Small Motherland" and "Ways of saving urban fauna". During the whole month students together with schoolchildren worked on their projects, which were followed by a scientific and practical conference, where the projects were made public.

The main benefit of this comprehensive project for students is the development of their skills to arrange and conduct a regional guided tour, which develops research skills of pupils, as well as the basics of their environmental consciousness. The project consisted of three components – preparatory phase (meeting with schoolchildren before the tour, lectures); the tour itself and then the preparation and conduct of a scientific and practical conference which confirmed the usefulness of the chosen educational and pedagogical format for interaction with children. The students were asked for the knowledge received as a result of mastering a number of disciplines, such as: tour guidance, event management, tourist design, speech culture, and animation technologies. Thus, we can speak about mutual benefits of cooperation between the university and the schools of the city: once acquiring professional competencies in practice, the students of the "Tourism" direction provide schoolchildren with new knowledge and behavior patterns. As a result, the guiding principle of the Novosibirsk State Technical University "Docendo discimus" - "Teaching, I study myself" is transformed into practice.

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