



GOOD PRACTICES IN STEM EDUCATION

Title	Out-of-School Activities: carrying out field trips to local woodlands
Brief description	<p>Students from Portuguese schools, for three school years, got involved in a project with the title “A Woodland Near You” that invited them to carry out field visits to local woodlands ecosystems under the coordination of Ciência Viva and the support of a scientist.</p> <p>The groups were offered advice on the choice of woodlands, help in the identification of species, worksheets for the field visits. The support also included workshops for teachers. Local science centres, environmental groups and authorities supported the groups in the project. Preparing the field trips involved creating curiosity in the pupils and getting them familiar with the tools to make observations, identify plants and animals and collect specimens. The field trips were followed by further observations and activities in class that allowed students to consolidate their learning.</p> <p>The work of all the groups has been compiled in a book with an online version published on the project website.</p>
Site	www.cienciaviva.pt/bosque
Level	Elementary and secondary education
Advantages Why is it innovative/ attractive to students?	<p>The project activities opened up opportunities for engaging pupils in autonomous activities that promote initiative and collective decision-making, e.g. the definition of strategies to disseminate information about the ecosystem in the local community.</p> <p>Students got involved in activities, which created situations for problem solving, experimentation and observation.</p>
Teachers’ opinion	Teachers reported that the project activities carried out outside of the classroom were highly motivating and helped



	children learn about natural ecosystems, namely the importance of woodlands for air quality, provision of food, medicines, and the geo- and biodiversity of woodlands for the prevention of erosion.
Students' opinion	Students reported that they learnt about a part of their city they had never visited. As a consequence of this project, some of them did field trips with their parents.
Difficulties	Finding time to work with the groups.
Further information / Case Studies	
Partner / author	Ciência Viva, Portugal César Garcia, Lisbon Botanical Garden