



GreenFriends-Europe
Living in harmony with Nature

THE 2010 ECOLOGY MEETINGS

Experience week

International workcamp in *la Ferme du Plessis*

Restoring a
traditional
dovecote

Building a
seed-dryer

Building an
astronomy
observatory

A photograph showing the interior of a dome structure covered in a mosaic of small, irregular tiles in shades of brown, orange, and yellow. A central light source, possibly a lamp or a small fire, is visible, casting a warm glow and illuminating the mosaic. The dome's structure is dark, and the light creates a pattern of bright spots on the mosaic.

From Friday, July 23rd to Sunday, August 1st 2010

Origins

A path of joy and meaning. That is what we experimented during the BABEL project, that took place in the *Ferme du Plessis* with the support of the European Commission from December 2008 to March 2010. The bee-sanctuary, inaugurated in early April 2010 along with the GreenFriends-Europe network, is a living proof of this common endeavour that has built strong ties among us.



Many of us have found a profound meaning in this project, and have developed strong relationships with other participants that were a few months before complete strangers. We wanted to keep this fire burning, and to enable others to join. Many youth throughout the world have heard of BABEL, and were expressing their desire to join the adventure. By launching this experience week, GreenFriends-Europe is now reaching out to the world.

This experience week is an opportunity for all of us to experiment what it really means to live in a community, with a common purpose. It addresses many aspects of life, be it on the practical (self-sufficiency in food, eco-construction), social (living in a group, relation to the others), artistic (dance, theatre) or spiritual (meditation, singing) level. The strength of BABEL was the vision, the purpose underlying the project. All the activities undertaken were linked to the construction of the bee-sanctuary.



This one-pointedness is essential to develop a strong cohesion in a group. This year, the participants will have to choose among three core projects (see page 4 to 6), and will dwell during the week in the chosen subject.



The three different projects proposed approach the ecology issue from different angles. Brought back together, they will give us valuable insights on the relationship we can develop with nature. All the participants will share a few common interactive conferences where they will be able to discover and discuss GreenFriends' approach of ecology. From this base, they will be able to deepen their specific subject through dedicated exchanges, conferences and artistic sessions.



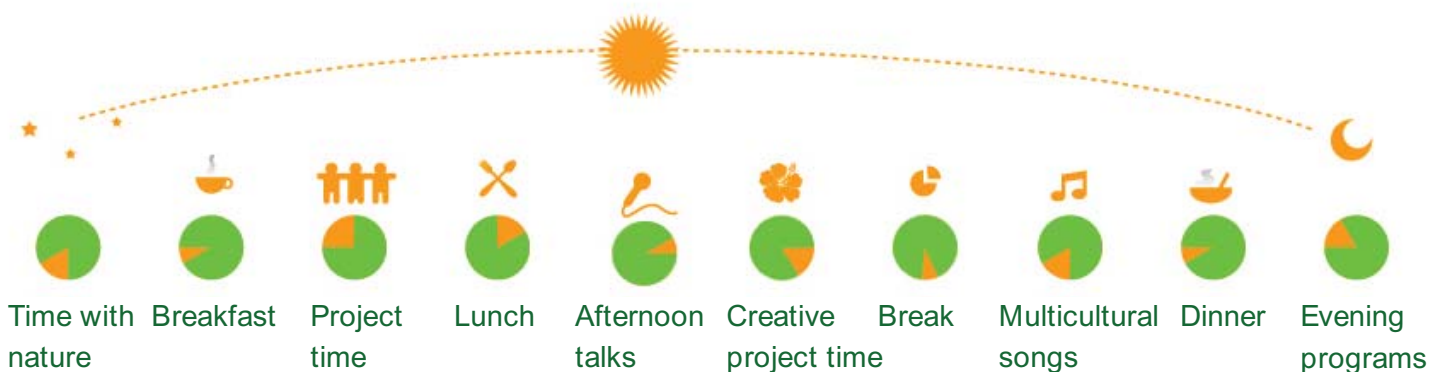
Programme



MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
19	20	21	22	23 Arrival day	24 Introduction to the camp	25 Projects
26 Projects	27 Projects	28 Living with Nature	29 Projects	30 Projects	31 Projects	1 Departure day

General day structure (modifications on Sunday, Wednesday, Friday and Saturdays) :

- 7h30-8h50 : Breakfast
- 8h50-9h00 : Morning meeting on the project site
- 9h00-12h00 : Project time
- 12h00-14h00 : Lunch break
- 14h00-15h00 : Conference time
- 15h00-17h00 : Creative workshops linked to the project
- 17h00-18h00 : Afternoon break
- 18h15-19h30 (optional) : Multicultural singing
- 21h00-23h00 : Sharing time, parties (optional), ...



The first Saturday is dedicated to a general introduction to the week and its participants.

On wednesday, participants will go out for a « day with nature » in the forest. The programme includes: group games, silent walk and Nature art...





Renovating a traditional dovecote

Participating in eco-restoration of heritage. At the center of the *Ferme du Plessis* stands a 10-meters-high tower which has been a dovecote for centuries. But this wonderful heritage is now falling apart, like the 2 other dovecotes along the East Wing of the farm. In the process of creating a model ecological living place, GreenFriends-France aims at renovating this traditional heritage. Pigeons are living inside but their living conditions are not adapted.



Being introduced to a long-term project. This week sets the beginning of a long-term project. The renovation of the main dovecote will take at least 2 years, starting from this workcamp. The old wooden frame will be restored during future camps and this wonderful heritable will become a living place inside the Farm's sustainable community. By renovating one of the 2 other dovecotes using traditional and ecological techniques, we will be able to move all the pigeons in a single tower and offer them living conditions suitable for their ecology.

A multi-task work. During the experience week, youth will renovate the small dovecote, providing decent living conditions to the pigeons. The youth will build the nest boxes using local straw and clay techniques. We will then carefully move the pigeons from the main tower to their new home.

We will then clean the main tower to set the ground for the future renovation work. We will start working with the youth on the architectural project of this traditional building.

The work will include theoretical sessions on the ecology of pigeons and doves and on the eco-construction techniques for traditional heritage dovecotes.





Growing seeds towards self-sufficiency

Meaning The seeds represent the culture and the people who grow them. They reflect their opinions and their choices. Thus, preserving seeds is not only preserving future plants, it is also choosing a way of life. In the past, farmers were viewing themselves as custodians of the agricultural diversity. They were the unknown champions of biodiversity.



Project This project was officially launched in October 2009, during the visit of Mata Amritanandamayi, the founder of Embracing the World, in Paris. The first seeds planted were : romane lettuce, maramnde tomato, 'grand vert' basil, Milan green zucchini, Colmar carotte, coriander, carentan winter leak, Milan cabbage, mustard. The land used was fertilised with the Ramial Chipped Wood applied during the BABEL project. It has been prepared during the winter and the sowing process started during spring.

Purpose This project aims at sensitising its participants to food issues. The final aim of the project is to lead the Center to self-sufficiency in seeds, and eventually contribute to the development of the GrowIn' project: www.ayudh.eu/growin. The technical know-how linked to seed conservation will be formalised to be easily transmissible.



Programme Participants in this project will be involved in the whole process of seed conservation. They will set up systems to prevent the species hybridation and will take care of the existing plants. The main practical work will be the construction of a seed-dryer.

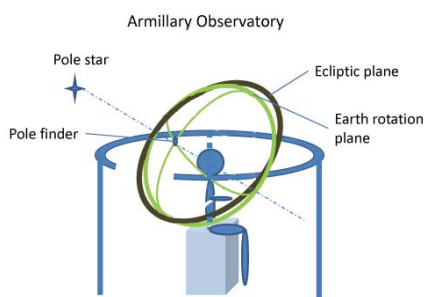
Dominique MUNOZ, founder of the NGO « Les jardins de l'histoire », is expected to contribute her expertise in seed conservation. She will explain the evolution of seeds following the development of agriculture. The participants will take part in reading sessions to discover the traditional myths that were associated with seeds and germination.





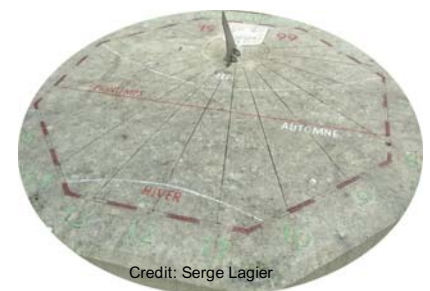
Astronomy project : linking the earth and the skies

Meaning Astronomy is somehow an alchemy, as it brings together the most advanced technologies with the most ancient myths and traditions. The stars and the sky have been a matter of wonder throughout the history of man, and a dear source of inspiration to the poets. Studying the movement of the stars enables us to question our place on earth and to deepen our relationship to the world that is surrounding us.

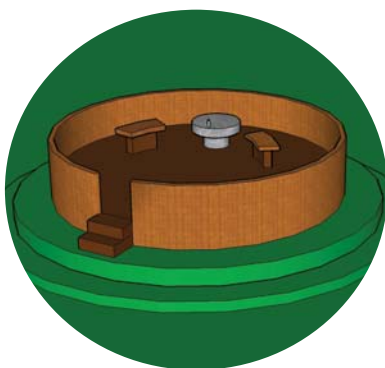


Project Many informal astronomy sessions took place in the *Ferme du Plessis* over the two last years, for two of GreenFriends-France members were passionate about this subject. The “Reflét” project started in 2009 with the construction of a *gnomon* (example below), to follow the cycles of the sun throughout the seasons. This construction demonstrated the interest to set up physical tools to provide people with keys to understand the movement of the stars and planets.

Purpose This project will provide keys to visitors to locate themselves in time (solar cadran, armillary) and space (cardinal directions, movement of the planets and the stars). It will introduce its participants to the intangible heritage linked with astronomy. It will lead later on to the organisation of astronomy sessions for visitors and the local population.



Programme The practical part of this project will be focussed on the construction of an open observatory, where three main tools will be displayed : a stone-carved solar cadran, an armillary (see diagram above and left) and a sky map. In addition, this observatory will link the site with the surrounding environment. It will display the cardinal directions and will create a bench for visitors to stop and watch the sunset. The construction work will enable the participants to discover traditional crafts such as metal and wood work or stone carving. Participants will be offered poetry and photography workshops linked with the stars.



REGISTER NOW !

<http://www.greenfriends-france.org/chantierinternational10.htm>

(deadline: June 15th, 2010)

We request all the participants to be present for the full programme. This stay constitutes a global experiment. Early departures or late arrivals may disturb the process.

This event is intended for participants from 18 to 30 years old. All are welcome! Please fill in our online registration form to apply. We will send you practical instructions about the experience week by end of June. Accommodation will be under tents. Please let us know if you can bring your own tent.

The financial contribution for the stay is 80 €. It covers the food and camping costs. This participation will have to be paid cash in Euros during arrival registration. French participants can send a cheque (ordered to "GreenFriends-France") at the following adress :

Experience week, GreenFriends-France, Ferme du Plessis, 28190 Pontgouin.

Please join your name and contact details. If you have financial difficulties, please get in touch with us.

The participation to the organisation and activity costs is left to your appreciation. A donation box will be at your disposal on site.



www.greenfriends-france.org

Contact us at : experienceweek@greenfriends-france.org

GreenFriends-France,
Ferme du Plessis, 28190 Pontgouin

