

Lets go - learning outdoors !!!

Zeljka Jeramaz

Srednja skola Metkovic, Ulica kralja Zvonimira 12, 20350 Metkovic, Croatia (zjeramaz@yahoo.com)

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Since the school system in Croatia is almost solely theory based I have decided to show my students a different approach to studying.

I am working in secondary vocational school with students fifteen to nineteen years of age. They are usually bored inside the classroom and often don't see a connection between theory they learn in school and the everyday life. One of the main goals of Geography class is introducing students to the importance of sustainable development and ecological issues. Metkovic is situated in the traditionally agricultural area and students need to understand how the agricultural production can affect the ecosystem.

Metkovic is the biggest town situated in a Croatian part of lower stream of Neretva river, 22 km from the rivers mouth to the Adriatic sea. This is very unique area which has both karst and alluvium characteristics.

Metkovics oldest part is situated on the lower part of Predolac hill which is mainly built of limestone and has various karst relief forms. Newer parts of the town are situated on the banks of Neretva which is alluvium area. This contrast provided forming of ecosystem which is unique in Croatia.

I took students for an outdoor class to the Predolac pit which is situated on the outskirts of Metkovic at the bottom part of Predolac hill.

Predolac pit area has an outdoor educational center which has three parts: the pit itself, Congeria educational center and the Congeria room.

In Predolac pit students could see various karst relief forms, fossils on the walls of the pit and the small lake at the bottom of the pit. In this area they were introduced to basics of underground waterflow in karst areas and how the water dissolves the rocks and makes such unique forms. They were also informed on how the pollution of the water in karst areas can be much bigger problem than it appears since most of the water flow is underground.

In the Educational center Congeria they got to know about underground life and its role in everyday human life.

In the Congeria room they saw parts of pit fauna, main features of overall area and Dinaridi underground shellfish Congeria which is a living fossil and tertial relict.