



# BUILDING CAPACITY FOR PLANT BIODIVERSITY, INVENTORY AND CONSERVATION IN NEPAL

*A DARWIN INITIATIVE PROJECT*



## REPORT OF THE FIRST TRAINING WORKSHOP, NEPAL MARCH ~ APRIL 2004

### Summary

During March and April 2004 three members of staff from Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh (Prof. Stephen Blackmore, and Drs Crinan Alexander and Mark Watson) visited Kathmandu, Nepal, for the first Training Workshop for the Darwin Initiative project. The workshop was run during nine days spread over 21 days, with the 4<sup>th</sup> National Conference for Science and Technology included between the two main parts of the workshop (workshop participants were invited to attend the conference, and many gave presentations).

Sixteen Darwin Scholars attended the workshop which included subjects ranging from plant specimen collection in the field, data recording methods, specimen preparation and identification, to broader issues relating to the Convention on Biological Diversity, conservation action plans in Nepal. Eight Nepali experts were involved in the teaching as Project Co-ordinators and Resource Persons, and two visiting foreign botanists gave guest lectures. Two Practical sessions were run in the two main herbaria, and for half a day in the field. Darwin Scholars initiated their individual projects by consulting and recording data from the herbarium specimens in the two herbaria. Assessment was also carried out on the general holdings from the two herbaria.

As this was the first major in-country event, the opportunity was taken to hold a formal Inauguration Ceremony with distinguished invited guests and representatives of the national media. A closing ceremony was also held during which the Darwin Scholars were given certificates of Attendance. The following pages give a more detailed account of the events and activities, a breakdown of the in-country costs for the workshop, and some comments on the lessons learned and future work plans.

### Monday 15<sup>th</sup> March, 2004

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**17:45** RBGE staff, Drs Crinan Alexander [CA] and Mark Watson [MFW] arrive at Kathmandu airport to be met by Prof Krishna Kumar Shrestha, (TU-CDB) [KKS] and Dr Kayo Devi Yami (RONAST) [KDY]. Travelled to the Tibet Guest House, Thamel, where there was a short meeting to establish the programme and work plan for the next few days.

### Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> March, 2004

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**10:00** CA, MFW, KKS visit RONAST to meet KDY, Prof Dayananda Bajracharya (Vice-Chancellor RONAST) [DB], Dr Krishna Manandhar (Secretary RONAST) [KM] and Dr Keshab Raj Rajbhandari (DPR) [KRR]. Several meetings were held through the day to finalise the arrangements for the training workshop. As the 4<sup>th</sup> National Science and Technology Conference would be held between the two parts of the Darwin Initiative workshop, forward planning was also essential for the ancillary

meetings and social events. The *Detailed Programme Schedule* was completed ready for circulation to participants.

With the help of The British Council Kathmandu, RBGE posted several boxes of equipment to RONAST in advance. These were unpacked and resorted. Equipment and books to be given to Darwin Scholars and co-ordinators was prepared. This included text books, digging trowels, secateurs, hand lenses, note pads and pens. T-Shirts with a design advertising the project were also included, and everything placed in a small day bag-pack also printed with the project details (see attached design).

**15:30** KKS, CA and MFW left RONAST, met Prof Stephen Blackmore (Regius Keeper, RBGE) [SB] when he arrived at the Kathmandu airport, and returned to the Tibet Guest House. CA, SB and MFW met Dr Christopher Fraser-Jenkins (Pteridophyte specialist resident in Nepal) for discussion over an evening meal at the Krug Thai restaurant.

### **Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> March, 2004**

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RBGE staff spent the morning and most of the afternoon preparing for the start of the workshop the following day.

**14:30** KKS and RBGE staff met Ms. Audrey Chettri of the British Embassy to look at the Embassy Hall and facilities for the days the workshop would be based there. Refreshments would be provided by the Embassy staff mid morning and mid afternoon. KKS and RBGE staff also visited the nearby Him Thai restaurant where the buffet lunches would be held.

**18:30** RBGE hosted an evening meal at the Thamel House Restaurant attended by HM Ambassador to Nepal Keith Bloomfield and Mr Greg Gibson (Third Secretary, Political) of the British Embassy, Mr John Lindon (Assistant Director) of The British Council, DB, KM, KDY, KRR, KKS and RBGE staff.

### **Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> March 2004, Workshop Day 1**

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**10:00** Participants gathered at RONAST for registration, the Darwin Scholars received their day bag-pack containing their books, personal equipment and detailed programme.

#### **DARWIN SCHOLARS**

Mr Sunil Kumar **Acharya**, Asst. Scientific Officer, DPR, District Office Banke

Mr Bhaskar **Adhikari**, Freelance botanist, Kathmandu

Ms. Anjana **Giri**, Asst. Scientific Officer, RONAST, Khumaltar

Mr Umesh **Koirala**, Lecturer, TU PG Campus, Biratnagar

Mr Kamal **Maden**, Teaching Asst. (part time), TU PG Campus, Biratnagar

Ms Vidya Keshari **Manandhar**, Asst. Research Officer, DPR, National Herbarium

Mr Lalit Narayan **Mandar**, Lecturer, TU PN Campus, Pokhara

Ms. Nirmala **Pandey**, Ass. Scientific Officer, DPR Head Office, Thapathali

Mr Ram Chandra **Poudel**, Freelance botanist, Kathmandu

Ms. Sangeeta **Rajbhandary**, Lecturer, CDB-TU, Kirtipur

Dr Lokesh Ratna **Shakya**, Lecturer, ASCOL, Kathmandu

Dr Sangita **Shrestha**, Scientific Officer, RONAST, Khumaltar

Dr Mohan **Siwakoti**, Reader, Natural History Museu, TU, Swayambhu

Mr Naresh **Thapa**, Ass. Scientific Officer, DPR, National Herbarium

Mr Rajesh Kumar **Uprety**, Ass. Scientific Officer, DPR Head Office, Thapathali

Ms Sheetal **Vaidya**, Lecturer, TU, Patan Campus

**11:00 - 12:00** The formal Workshop Inaugural Ceremony was held in the auditorium at RONAST. The Honorable State Minister of Science and Technology, Renu Kumari Yadav was the Chief Guest and Inaugurated the Workshop in the traditional manner by giving the Inaugural Speech and lighting an oil lamp. Other distinguished speakers included Mr Keith Bloomfield (HM Ambassador of the UK to Nepal), Prof. Dayananda Bajracharya (Vice-Chancellor RONAST); Prof. Stephen Blackmore (Regius Keeper, RBGE), Dr. Gita Bhakta Joshi (Registrar, Tribhuvan University), Prof Krishna K. Shrestha (CDB-TU), Dr Keshab R. Rajbhandari (DPR). Dr Kayo D Yami was the programme moderator. In the audience there were many distinguished guests and institutional representatives. Several members of the press also attended, and the event was reported in the national papers.

**12:00 - 12:45** Buffet lunch at RONAST for all attendees of the Opening Ceremony.

**12:45 - 13:30** The formal Opening Ceremony was concluded by Prof. Stephen Blackmore giving a keynote public address, *Biodiversity: key to a sustainable future*.

#### **14:00 - 16:00 Afternoon Session**

Screening of the Darwin Initiative promotional film (from DVD)

SB - *Background to the Darwin Initiative project* [previous Darwin Initiative project (Plant Information for Nepal), the Flora of Nepal project, project formulation]

MFW - *Programme of work for the Darwin Initiative project* [timetable, deliverables and the expectations from Darwin Scholars]

CA - *Introduction to the work of RBGE*

Dr Uday R. Sharma - *Introduction to the work of DPR*

#### **16:00 End of Workshop Day 1**

**18:30** Project social evening meeting at a drinks and snacks reception held at the Him Thai restaurant attended by Darwin Scholars, Organising Committee members and resource persons.

### **Friday 19<sup>th</sup> March 2004, Workshop Day 2**

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The second day of the workshop was held at the Kingdon Hall at the British Embassy. The programme was as follows, including 20 minute refreshment breaks in the morning and afternoon:

#### **09:30 - 12:30 Morning Session**

SB - *Welcome and self-introductions* [group activity]

KKS - *Introduction to the work of TU-CDB*

KDY - *Introduction to the work of RONAST*

MFW, SB, CA - *Herbarium material stakeholder analysis* [group activity looking at who are the users of herbarium specimens and label data, and what are their requirements]

MFW - *Herbaria, the different types and functions*

CA, SB, MW - *Living material stakeholder analysis* [group activity similar to above]

MW briefed the group on the personal project work and requested that people indicate if they have a particular taxonomic group that they would like to work on. Scholars were also requested to indicate their first and second choice for fieldwork training.

**12:30 - 13:30 Lunch Break**, buffet lunch served at the Him Thai restaurant (10 minutes walk).

**13:30 - 16:30 Afternoon Session**

SB - *Introduction to the Convention on Biological Diversity, COP, GSPC and GTI*

Dr Tirtha B Shrestha - *Towards a plant Red Data Book for Nepal, and an introduction to IUCN categories*

Prof. Ram C. Chaudhary - *Nepal's Biodiversity Action Plan*

Dr Puspa R. Shakya - *Experience Sharing: botanical exploration and management of herbaria in Nepal*

General discussions on topics raised

**16:30 End of workshop Day 2**

**Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> March 2004**

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As most office staff in Kathmandu do not work on a Saturday, this was scheduled as a free day. RBGE staff stayed in Kathmandu consolidating the work of the first two days of the Workshop and preparing for the following days.

**Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> March 2004, Workshop Day 3**

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Held at the British Embassy with the same catering arrangements as Day 2.

**09:30 - 12:30 Morning Session**

MFW - *Consolidation of the stakeholder analyses from Day 2*

MFW - *Field data: group discussion on minimum standards and extended data recording* [collector, collector number, date, locality, altitude, frequency, conservation status, habit, habitat, uses, vernacular names]

MFW - *Theory and practice of recording locality data* [GPS, map reading, dead reckoning, local names]

CA - *Theory and practice of recording altitude and aspect* [barometric]

**13:30 - 16:30 Afternoon Session**

MFW - *Equipment for fieldwork and plant collecting*

CA - *Making a representative sample for a herbarium specimen*

MFW - *Record keeping: data management* [field notes, collection books, written and electronic methods, reports]

CA - *Collection methods for special plant groups, living material and other materials* [e.g. bryophytes, fungi, seed, spirit and DNA collections]

MFW - *Herbarium specimen* preparation [field pressing/bagging, final pressing and drying techniques]

KKS - *Nepal Biodiversity Lecture Series: The Flora of the Western Terai*

General discussions on topics raised

### **16:30 End of workshop Day 3**

## **Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2004, Workshop Day 4**

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Held at the British Embassy with the same catering arrangements as Day 2.

### **09:30 - 12:30 Morning Session**

KKS - *Plant identification techniques* [keys, illustrative guides, checklists, floras, herbarium and human resources]

MFW - *Introduction to herbarium specimen mounting* [labels, herbarium paper, capsules, glue/stitching]

CA - *Destructive sampling of herbarium material* [rehydration and dissection]

MW - *Expeditions: participation and organisation* [equipment, transport, regulations/permits, etc.]

### **13:30 - 16:30 Afternoon Session**

CA - *Fieldwork health and safety* [group and personal responsibilities, first aid, altitude sickness, exposure (sun, cold, etc.), emergency cover, insurance]

MFW - *Photographic record* [images to supplement herbarium specimens, illustrated guides, reports and presentations]

Dr David Boufford - *Guest Lecture: Fieldwork in SW China*

Prof. Hideaki Ohba - *Guest Lecture: The Mustang Flora*

General discussions on topics raised

### **16:30 End of workshop Day 4, and conclusion of the first part of the workshop.**

**19:00** Discussions over an evening meal at the Bhoj Chen restaurant with David Boufford (Harvard University, USA), Hideaki Ohba (Tokyo University, Japan) and RBGE staff. David Boufford and Hideaki Ohba arrived today in advance of their attendance of the 4<sup>th</sup> National Conference on Science & Technology. They generously offered to share their experience of fieldwork in the Sino-Himalaya and gave guest lectures at the workshop.

## **Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2004**

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**10:00** The first day of the 4<sup>th</sup> National Conference of Science & Technology started with the formal Opening Ceremony inaugurated by the His Majesty King Gyanendra Bir Bikram Shah Dev. After the inauguration ceremony Prof. Stephen Blackmore (along with Prof. Hideaki Ohba and Prof. David Boufford) joined Prof. Dayananda Bajracharya in a private audience with His Majesty.

**12:30** RBGE staff returned to the hotel for lunch, and spent the first part of the afternoon preparing presentations for the next day conference.

**15:00** SB and MFW visited DPR for a meeting with Drs Uday Sharma, Mahesh

Adhikari and KRR. Discussions covered progress with the first part of the workshop, future plans for developing and enhancing the National Herbarium, collaboration between DPR and RBGE, and RBGE's long term commitment to working with Nepali botanists in producing the Flora of Nepal.

**19:00** Meeting over dinner at the Tibet Guest House hosted by RONAST, attended by DB, SB, Dr Krishna Manandhar, KKS, KKR, MFW, Dr David Boufford and Prof. Hideaki Ohba. Discussions mainly focussed on the progress and future plans for the Flora of Nepal.

### **Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> March 2004**

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**09:30** Second day of the S & T Conference. SB and MFW gave presentations in the first part of the plant biodiversity session: SB - *Plant Biodiversity in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*; MFW - *Herbaria: do they have any relevance in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century?*. Presentations were also given by KKS (*Reconstruction of database package for documentation of Flora and ethnobotany of Nepal*), KRR (*Flora of Nepal: an overview*), and several of the Darwin Scholars.

**13:30** Buffet lunch followed by a visit to TU to present books to the TU Central Library. MFW, SB, and KKR had a short meeting with the Rector, Prof. Mahendra Singh, before joining the honoured guests at the book presentation ceremony organised by the Head Librarian, Mr Krishna M. Bhandary. After the event SB and MFW had an informal meeting with Prof Pramod K. Jha (Head, TU-CDB) to discuss progress and problems over the organisation of the workshop. Problems in communication will be addressed by the broader circulation of emails, and the issue of travel and subsistence for workshop participants travelling from outside the Kathmandu area would be resolved [see comment on 2<sup>nd</sup> April]. This was followed by a tour of the Library and tea.

**19:00** Meeting over dinner hosted by KRR attended by Hideaki Ohba, David Boufford, SB and MFW at the Hotel Vajra rooftop restaurant.

### **Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> March 2004**

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Free day. In the afternoon SB returned to the UK

### **Friday 26<sup>th</sup> March 2004**

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RBGE staff spent the morning making preparations for the second part of the workshop. Arrangements were made for the local fabrication of pole pruner bags and field presses. Meeting with KKS at the Kathmandu Guest House during which the project groups for the Darwin Scholars were finalised.

In the afternoon MFW visited the National Herbarium (KATH) with KRR, meeting Dr Mahesh Adhikari (MA), the Herbarium Chief. Local arrangements for the workshop days at KATH were discussed and finalised. The group toured the Herbarium discussing problems with coping with the large backlog of unmounted and unincorporated specimens, and the shortage of cupboards, paper and experienced staff. The Herbarium building itself is in disrepair and plans need to be made for the long-term safety of the collections. MA showed the new local area network connecting the PC's, and the database system now being used to capture specimen data and images. This will replace the written ledger that has been used to record new specimen accessions.

## Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> March 2004

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Free day, further preparations for the second part of the workshop.

## Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> March 2004, Workshop Day 5

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Start of part 2 of the workshop. A coach was arranged to take participants from the centre of Kathmandu to the National Herbarium (KATH) at Godawari (30-45 minutes drive south of the city). The group was welcomed by MA, who then gave an introduction to the National Herbarium and Plant Laboratories in the Seminar Room.

MFW briefed participants on the revised programme for the second part of the workshop, the taxonomic groups for their individual projects, and the teams for fieldwork training.

### TAXONOMIC GROUPS FOR DARWIN SCHOLAR INDIVIDUAL PROJECTS

Sunil Acharya	Acanthaceae: <i>Strobilanthus</i> [24 spp]
Bhaskar Adikhari	Parnassiaceae [6 spp]; Hydrangaceae [10 spp]; Saxifragaceae: <i>Chrysosplenium</i> [9 spp]
Anjana Giri	Scrophulariaceae: <i>Veronica</i> [15 spp]; <i>Scrophularia</i> [8 spp]
Umesh Koirala	Lamiaceae: <i>Nepeta</i> [6 spp]; <i>Elscholtzia</i> [10 spp]; <i>Mentha</i> [3 spp]
Kamal Maden	Ericaceae: <i>Vaccinium</i> [7 spp]; <i>Gaultheria</i> [7 spp]; <i>Agapetes</i> [5 spp]
Vidya Manandhar	Aceraceae [13 spp]
Lalit Mandar	Acanthaceae: <i>Justica</i> [6 spp], <i>Hygrophila</i> [4 spp], <i>Barleria</i> [2 spp], <i>Thunbergia</i> [4 spp]
Nirmala Pandey	Amaranthaceae [23 spp]
Ram C Poudel	Lamiaceae: <i>Leucas</i> [7 spp]; <i>Scutellaria</i> [7 spp]; <i>Phlomis</i> [6 spp]
Sangeeta Rajbhandari	Verbenaceae: <i>Callicarpa</i> [4 spp]; <i>Caryopsis</i> [4 spp]; <i>Clerodendron</i> [10 spp]
Lokesh Shakya	Orchidaceae: <i>Habenaria</i> [15 spp]
Sangita Shrestha	Papaveraceae: <i>Meconopsis</i> [15 spp]
Mohan Siwakoti	Boraginaceae: <i>Cynoglossum</i> [4 spp]; <i>Heliotropium</i> [3 spp]; <i>Maharanga</i> [5 spp]; <i>Onosma</i> [4 spp]; <i>Trigonotis</i> [5 spp]
Naresh Thapa	Selaginellaceae: <i>Selaginella</i> [23 spp]
Rajesh Uprety	Geraniaceae [15 spp]
Sheetal Vaidya	Lamiaceae: <i>Salvia</i> [13 spp]; <i>Ocimum</i> [4 spp]

### FIELDWORK TRAINING TEAMS

<b>FIRST EXPEDITION</b>	Bhaskar Adhikari	Keshab Rajbhandari
<b>E. NEPAL, MID-HILLS</b>	Anjana Giri	Sangita Shrestha
	Kamal Maden	Rajesh Uprety

<b>SECOND EXPEDITION</b>	Krishna Shrestha	Sunil Acharya
<b>C. NEPAL, LOWLANDS</b>	Mohan Siwakoti	Umesh Koirala
	Sheetal Vaidya	Lalit Mandar
Vidya Manandhar	<b>THIRD EXPEDITION</b>	Ram Poudel
Nirmala Pandey	<b>W. NEPAL, HIGH HILLS</b>	Lokesh Shakya
Sangeeta Rajbhandary		Naresh Thapa

After refreshments the group was divided into two teams:

**TEAM A**

Sunil Acharya  
Anjana Giri  
Umesh Koirala  
Vidya Manandhar  
Sangita Shrestha  
Mohan Siwakoti  
Rajesh Uprety  
Sheetal Vaidya

**TEAM B**

Bhaskar Adhikari  
Kamal Maden  
Lalit Mandar  
Nirmala Pandey  
Ram Poudel  
Sangeeta Rajbhandari  
Lokesh Shakya  
Naresh Thapa

Team A remained at KATH with MFW and MA. Team B travelled to CDB-TU to work in the TUCH herbarium with KKS, KRR and CA.

The purpose of this and the following day was to provide the opportunity for the Darwin Scholars to get to know the KATH and TUCH herbaria, to work with specimens from their own taxonomic project groups, and to help to make an assessment of the holdings in the two herbaria. By working with specimens and recording label data the Scholars learnt the usefulness of good herbarium specimens with complete label data, and conversely the great limitations of poor quality specimens. Two tasks were carried out at the two herbaria:

**Task One**

Working individually the Darwin Scholars counted the numbers of collections in the herbarium for each species in their specialist group(s) and recorded the full label data for five collections of each species (time did not permit the data recording for more than this, the remaining specimens should be recoded at a later date).

**Task Two**

Working in pairs the Darwin Scholars counted the number of collections per species of the families assigned to them for the herbarium assessment exercise.

As a detailed count had already been undertaken in the KATH herbarium, Task Two was only necessary at the TUCH herbarium, and Scholars could dedicate their time in KATH to Task One.

The team at CDB-TU also had practical sessions of the use of the Global Positioning System handset supplied and the use of the extendible pole pruners.

**16:30 End of workshop Day 5**

**Monday 29<sup>th</sup> March 2004, Workshop Day 6**

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Today was a reversal of the previous day with Team A meeting MFW and KKS at CDB-TU at 10:00, and Team B taking the coach down to KATH with MA, KRR and CA.



The TUCH herbarium proved difficult to work in as several areas were out of order and muddled. KKS and MFW started to rearranging the TUCH herbarium, spread it out across the cabinets and leave room for expansion. Fieldwork equipment left at CDB-TU was gathered together in readiness of the day fieldwork.

#### **16:30 End of workshop Day 5**

**19:00** Meeting and evening meal hosted by KRR at Bhojan Griha restaurant with MFW and CA.

#### **Tuesday 30<sup>th</sup> March 2004**

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Chaita Dashain national holiday, so a free day. CA and MFW met Ms Leslie Shackelford to see her carpet factory and experimental area with natural plant dyes using fermentation. Possible areas for collaboration were discussed.

#### **Wednesday 31<sup>st</sup> March 2004, Workshop Day 7**

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**10:30** Participants met at KATH, the coach having been delayed at RONAST awaiting equipment. Refreshments and briefing session before departing for fieldwork training on Phulchoki hill.

**11:00** The coach drove the team to the collecting site and, splitting into four groups, the Darwin Scholars spent about two hours collecting plant specimens with KKS, KRR, CA and MFW leading the groups. Emphasis was placed on good quality plant material collected using the digging trowels, secateurs and pole pruner. Accurate location and altitude was recorded using the GPS receivers, and habitat and habit notes recorded at the time of collection. Most specimens were pressed in the field using the new field presses. Thankfully the weather improved today and the rain showers of previous days kept away. Unfortunately Anjana Giri slipped and landed heavily on her elbow. This later proved to be a fracture needing a plaster cast, and meant that she could not attend the last two days of the workshop and would not be able to participate in the fieldwork training expedition in May.

**15:00** The group returned to KATH for a late lunch in the Field House and work up the collections. The plant specimens were numbered, data recorded into the group collecting book, and plant presses corrugated prior to heat drying. Electric element heaters were used as the heat source and the aluminium drying frame erected over them. Two reflective groundsheets were used to skirt the frame and direct the heat up through the presses placed on top of the drying frame. As we were running out of time today we left the discussion session until tomorrow. In total 30 collections in sets of six specimens were collected.

#### **17:00 End of workshop Day 7**

#### **Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> April 2004, Workshop Day 8**

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**10:00** Participants met at KATH. The presses taken off the drying frame and checked. Methods and criteria for assessing dryness were discussed. MFW and CA gave feedback on what were good specimens, and advice on how some of the poorer specimens could have been improved (e.g. additional material, underground parts, etc.). Those specimens not yet dry were returned to the drying frame. Data recorded in the collecting book were discussed and, where lacking, additional data added in retrospect. A group discussion was held with feedback on fieldwork experience and improving methods of plant collecting and data recording (particularly the importance of recording data in the field at time of collection).

**11:30** Tour of the National Botanic Garden, followed by lunch at the Field Guest House.

**13:30** Darwin Scholars worked in the KATH herbarium to finish data recording for their specialist groups.

**16:00** Refreshments in the seminar room followed by an illustrated lecture by Mahesh Adikhari on the Cryptogams of Nepal.

**17:15** Drying frame dismantled, equipment packed into coach and group returned to Kathmandu.

**18:30** Meeting at the Tibet Guest House with MFW, KRR, CA, Nima Sherpa and Dadoma Sherpa (representatives of our trekking agency, Nima and Neema Trek and Tours Ltd). Arrangements for the first fieldwork training finalised. Because of political instability in Eastern Nepal HMG Nepal advised that it would be safer to go either to Sagaramatha National Park or Langtang National Park. We settled on Sagaramatha National Park and the Solu Khumbu region, and drafted a provisional itinerary.

**20:00** Meeting over dinner hosted by KKS in Patan Newari Restaurant, with Sangeeta Rajbhandari, Ram Poudel, CA and MFW.

### **Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2004, Workshop Day 9**

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**09:30** En route to RONAST CA picked up a second Namaste pre-paid SIMM card to add to the one MFW obtained earlier. Being able to communicate via mobile phones has made a big difference to our time efficiency and to sort out difficulties.

**10:00 -13:30** The last teaching session of the workshop was spent collating the data gathered during the sessions in the herbaria, and the concluding a feedback session. Darwin Scholars completed feedback questionnaires, and a CD of the PowerPoint presentations and other useful files was given to the Darwin Scholars. KRR distributed copies of his *Bibliography of Plant Science of Nepal* and the *Supplement* to the Darwin Scholars.

**13:30 - 14:30** Meeting of DB, KM, KDY, KKR, KSS and MFW to discuss problems and ideas for improving the smooth running of the workshop. Most of the problems related to communication (human and automotive), although there was an unforeseen issue relating to travel and subsistence allowance for participants outside the Kathmandu valley. In the future more people will be copied into the email correspondence, and travel arrangements will need to be better organised. It was decided that a bursary would be given to aid the four Darwin Scholars from outside the Kathmandu Valley. This would give 200Rs per day when in Kathmandu, a one way air fare and a return bus fare.

**15:00 Closing Ceremony**, Chaired by Krishna Manandhar (Secretary, RONAST), and attended by Darwin Participants, the Organising Committee, Resource Persons and guests. Speeches were made by KM, KKS, MFW, CA, Tirtha Shrestha, Umesh Koirala, Nirmala Pandey, and Darwin Scholars were presented with Certificates of Attendance for the first Darwin Initiative Workshop.

**16:00 End of the Workshop.** Team briefing for the six participants on the first fieldtrip to Solu Khumbu. As Anjana Giri cannot participate, Anjana and Sangita Shrestha will be replaced by Vidya Manandhar and Nirmala Pandey.

**18:30** CA and MFW invited to Heem Shakya's house for an evening meal. Bandana Shakya (Heem's wife) is currently studying on the MSc Taxonomy course at RBGE, funded by a Chevening Scholarship. Electric storms and rains cleared the air of pollution and dust, but caused periodic black outs.

### **Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2004**

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The effects of the disturbances and political demonstrations in the centre of Kathmandu ramify outwards causing traffic jams and road blocks in all parts of the city. In the last few days these caused problems with us getting too and from meetings and workshop venues, but today the action has escalated into a general Bandh (strike). Most shops are closed

and there are almost no cars on the usually packed streets. If you are on foot then this is quite a refreshing time, and the rickshaws are enjoying a roaring trade with elevated fares. As CA was leaving today this presented a serious problem of how to get to the airport. At first it looked like CA would need to get two rickshaws to the airport, but eventually we negotiated an unlicensed taxi with "Tourist Only" notices.

In the afternoon CA left and MFW caught up with the financial accounting and workshop administration.

**18:00** Mahendra Subedi (DPR) had discussions with MFW over drinks and snacks.

### **Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> April 2004**

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Free morning. MFW met Sangeeta Rajbhandary to discuss the making of pole pruner bags and field presses, and visit Patan Durbar Square. In the afternoon they visited The Standard Nursery (the premier Floriculture nursery in Nepal).

### **Monday 5<sup>th</sup> April 2004**

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**09:30** MFW and KKS visited the government map office to purchase detailed maps of the likely areas for fieldwork. After this MFW went to RONAST to work on the formal letter of application for the fieldwork training in May, and a letter requesting a multiple entry visa for MFW. Boxes of fieldwork equipment were also sorted and stored.

**15:30** MFW had a meeting with Dr Uday Sharma and KRR at DPR. Future plans for developing the human resources at DPR were discussed and MFW presented the books for the DPR library that were bought through the Darwin Initiative project. MFW later met Dr Mahendra Subedi.

**18:00** KKS met MFW, with Edina Kayastha (an Architect Engineer student) at the Tibet Guest House to discuss plans for a new herbarium building, library and museum facility and botanic garden at CDB-TU.

### **Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> April 2004**

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Today is the start of a three-day general bandh, and there are virtually no cars on the street and many shops are closed. MFW visited the Gulf Air office to reconfirm flights and to try and meet with the Office Manager (Mr Mohammad Jainal). Unfortunately Mr Jainal was out of the country. MFW had been exploring the benefits of a multiple entry visa as he would be travelling to Nepal several times in the next two years. A visit to the immigration office resulted in the conclusion that it would be cheaper and far easier to just get single entry visas each time. MFW spent the afternoon on administration and tourism.

### **Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> April 2004**

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**09:30** Meeting with Greg Gibson (British Embassy) discussing the Darwin Initiative project, the political situation in Nepal, possible funding routes and future plans.

**14:00** Meeting with John Lindon (The British Council) discussing the Darwin Initiative project and future collaboration.

**15:30** Meeting with Dr Eklabya Sharma at ICIMOD office in Patan, discussing transboundary national park issues and possible collaboration and exchange of data for GIS analysis.

**18:30** Meeting over dinner hosted by RBGE with KKS and KRR.

### **Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> April 2004**

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**08:30** Meeting with Nima Sherpa to confirm details for the fieldwork training expedition and to pay the advance of £700. One of the taxis that broke the Bandh was blown up yesterday by the Maoists, and there are noticeably fewer cars around today. Nima generously offered his private car to help me get to the airport later today. Packing bags to leave in the hotel and to take back to the UK took most of the day. MFW left the hotel for the airport at 15:00.

## **SUMMARY OF FINANCIAL BUDGET MANAGED BY RONAST FOR IN-COUNTRY EXPENDITURE**

Newspaper advert for Applications for Darwin Scholars  
Courier postage for short-listed open competition applications  
Day rucsacs with logo printing  
Project T-shirts including logo printing  
Stationery  
Lunches and refreshments during workshop  
Transportation during workshop  
Inauguration ceremony general costs (banner, photos, etc.)  
Miscellaneous workshop costs  
Remuneration for Resource Persons  
Travel and daily allowance for non-Kathmandu Darwin Scholars  
Steel cupboard for storage of Project materials at RONAST  
Desktop PC and printer for RONAST  
TOTAL

## **COMMENTS ON AND LESSONS LEARNED FROM THE FIRST WORKSHOP**

### ***Communication***

We were fortunate to obtain two pre-paid Namaste Simm cards which we could use in our mobile phones. Being readily able to communicate between ourselves and colleagues in Nepal was a great benefit and time saver.

Informal communication between member of the organising committee is generally good, but improvements need to be made. This is especially so where bureaucracy dictates formal communication is required. Personal relationships and understanding are growing with each meeting, and this is greatly improving communication on every level.

### ***Workshop Venues***

The project team is very grateful for the help and cooperation of staff at British Embassy, RONAST, DPR (especially KATH) and CDB-TU, particularly where special arrangement was made to allow access to the facilities out of normal working hours and on holidays.

Feedback from the Darwin Scholars was that the large number who expressed a preference said that they preferred the central location of the British Embassy and the arrangements for the days spent there. They felt that time was wasted in travelling to the other venues, particularly when there were problems with transport. RBGE staff agree with this, and in future we will look to make more use the facility at the British Embassy.

### ***Audio Visual Equipment***

Virtually all the contributors used PowerPoint for their presentations. These were collected together and at the end of the workshop the Darwin Scholars were given a CD bearing these and other useful files. An Overhead Projector was used on occasions, particularly to document the conclusions of the open discussions and stakeholder analyses.

We were very pleased by our decision to take our own data projector and presentation remote to connect to our laptop computer or other laptops people brought in. Apart from the British Embassy, other venues lacked modern, high resolution, bright, digital projectors, and so having our own equipment saved a lot of time altering the configurations. The Darwin Initiative projector was also used during the Science and Technology Conference.

The RBGE Darwin Initiative laptop and projector were also used to screen the Darwin Initiative promotional DVD in the RONAST auditorium on the first day of the workshop. Ram Poudel kindly helped set up some PC speakers in the auditorium to broadcast the soundtrack.

### ***Follow-up work***

The results of the Stakeholder Analyses, Herbarium Holdings Assessment Exercise and the feedback from Darwin Scholars' questionnaire survey will be summarised and reported on prior to the next Darwin Workshop in October 2004. Suggestions for improving the organisation of the workshop will be discussed and acted upon for this next workshop.

Summary sheets of the topics covered during the first workshop sessions will be prepared before the next workshop, and go towards forming the final Training Manual.

Information resulting from these activities will be made available on the project website.

### **PROJECT LOGO USED ON T-SHIRTS AND DAY RUCSACS/BAG-PACKS**

