

# Everyday Earth Heroes: Raghupathy Prabhakar Rao

"Appreciation for nature is innate. One is born with it or remains indifferent" says Raghupathy Prabhakar Rao. This 55 year old who chose teaching Commerce Profession isn't far removed from his passion for nature and animals as he finds 'Green' makes good business sense.

## How it all began

Prabhakar is a passionate environmentalist but it all started with activism for animals. Pigeons and a female Dalmatian "Lika" were pets. He swears Lika is almost human except she speaks a different language. His involvement for



nature outside home started with volunteering for Crystal Rogers in his college days to save over-laden bullock carts and rescuing abandoned animals, to this day he annually donates to Sanjay Gandhi animal shelter.

## Love for Trees

He expresses his displeasure at the growing insensitivity of people towards trees. "No one would chop or poison trees ten years ago", he says sadly, "Do you know there were yellow and white vented Bulbuls? Partridges too, I haven't seen them for the last eight years." He searches back his childhood moments spent tending vegetables



as a young boy of 6 yrs, he would cycle to the nearby nursery and buy saplings of Cabbage, Mooli (Radish) and Cauliflower for a paisa each! His love for trees drew him to NGO Kalpavriksh in 1972, and he was part of the team that led to the High Court order that gives protection to all urban trees in Delhi from the indiscriminating cementing which impinges rainwater percolation as well as choke trees to death by providing 6 x 6 feet open space around their trunks.

## At work

Prabhakar finds

opportunities everywhere and his college provides a fertile ground to sow seeds of conservation in young minds. A large scale plantation was done few years ago, "a Kadamb tree planted then, is in blossom" he says with voice filled with joy. He started "Ecology Club", his students switch off lights promptly before leaving class and they are attempting to turn their college canteen organic. At home his Spartan lifestyle leaves little room for doing more. Taps at home never left running while brushing or shaving. A bucket is kept in kitchen for collecting vegetables and grains rinse water which is later used for watering plants. Veggie peels fertilize his 20 odd flower pots.

His greatest ally is God. He turns to this supreme source of energy for peace and strength "without this connection with Him it is difficult to take the ravages on earth lightly and not loose heart." says Prabhakar.

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