

Mount Emei Rhododendron Study Tourism Teaching Design

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Abstract: This paper provides a framework for the Rhododendron study tour in Mount Emei, Sichuan. Study tourism teaching is an innovative method. The teacher assigns students a Rhododendron study tourism teaching task in the tourism environment course. Rhododendrons are woody flowering plant that grows at altitudes of 500-1,200 meters in mountain shrubland or under pine forests. They are a typical acidic soil indicator plant in south-central and southwestern China. The Rhododendron study tourism teaching selects Mount Emei areas at an altitude of about 2,500 meters as the destination. Students view the Rhododendron and investigate and analyze the ecological environment of Rhododendrons. Students submit a report of about 1,200 words, based on which the teacher qualitatively assesses the results.

Keywords: study, tourism, course design, tourism environment, Rhododendron.

1. INTRODUCTION

College tourism specialties offer a tourism environment course. This course encompasses the natural tourism environment and scenic tourist spots. During this course, teachers set aside time for students to go on a study tour. Rhododendron study tourism can allow students to understand the ecological environment of Rhododendrons and think about how to protect rare Rhododendron resources while developing tourism.

We define study tourism as 'tour, study, and research.' Rhododendron study tourism teaching is an innovative method combining classroom and off-campus teaching in the tourism environment course. In viewing and appreciating Rhododendrons, students can improve their knowledge of the origin, evolution, ecological environment, species, and geographical distribution (*Britannica*, 2023). Also, students can cultivate awareness of the protection of Rhododendrons. After the teacher assigns the Rhododendron Study Tourism task, students can complete the course teaching task. collectively or individually. Teachers complete the assessment of the research reports submitted by students for the Rhododendron Study Tour.

This paper presents the Rhododendron Study Tourism design framework in a tourism environment course. It shows the theme, destination, routes, contents of the study tour and how to assess the study tourism.

2. STUDY TOURISM FRAMEWORK

2.1 The theme of study tourism

(1) Ecological environment and geographical distribution of Rhododendrons. Rhododendron is an indicator species in the moist acidic soil of the Himalayas and Southeast Asia. In China, it is widely distributed in Sichuan, Yunnan, and Tibet (*Zhuang*, 2012). Rhododendron grows at an altitude of 500–1,200 meters under mountain shrubland or pine forests. It prefers acidic soils; accordingly, soil scientists regard Rhododendron as an indicator plant for acidic soils. Rhododendron prefers cool, moist, and ventilated semi-shaded environments (*Vetaas*, 2002). The optimal growth temperature is 12 °C to 25 °C (*Xia et al.*, 2021). Rhododendron prefers weak light intensity. In Winter, azaleas need cold protection measures.

- (2) Rhododendron species in Mount Emei.
- (3) The tourism resource advantages of Mount Emei azaleas.

2.2 Destination of study tourism

Mount Emei is one of China's four most famous Buddhist mountains. The Buddhists in Mount Emei call Rhododendrons Alderwood. From April to May, Emei Mountain azaleas bloom brilliantly. Mount Emei has more than 30 varieties of azaleas, and some rhododendron varieties can reach a height of about 10 meters. Many rhododendrons are Mount Emei's specialty and rare types unique to China. The area around Lei Dongping, 2,300-2,600 meters above sea level in Mount Emei, is an alpine rhododendron reserve where azaleas are most concentrated and are the best place to view the flowers (Ng & Corlett, 2000). Thus, the tourism environment course selects Mount Emei as the destination for Rhododendron study tourism.

2.3 Contents and targets of study tourism

The ecological environment of Rhododendrons: soil conditions and nutrients, topography, light, temperature, precipitation, and humidity (Fy et al.,).

The evolution and geographical area of the Rhododendron.

Species: Compared with other parts of China, Mount Emei's Rhododendrons have unique characteristics (Tian et al., 2011).

Rhododendron significance for tourism.

Developing students' ability to collect data and information and find and explore issues.

Exercising students' organizational and communication skills.

Expanding students' knowledge horizons.

Cultivating the concept of ecological environment protection and sustainable development.

2.4 Routes of study tourism

Students use extracurricular time or weekends individually or in groups to take the high-speed train to Mount Emei. They must enter the Mount Emei World Natural Heritage Site and the 5-A Level Scenic Area, then by bus or climbing the stone steps, reach the azalea distribution area at an altitude of about 2,500.

2.5 Evaluation of study tourism

Teachers assess the Rhododendron study tour based on the short report submitted by the students. Reports must be on a given theme. The theme does not require exhaustiveness; for example, "Temperature for the growth of Rhododendrons" is preferable. The report is around 1,200 words. Rhododendrons' pictures are inserted in the report. The language must be scientific. The evaluation result is excellent, good, medium, pass, or fail.

3. ORGANIZATION

After receiving the teaching task assigned by the teacher, students collect information and data about the Rhododendron indoors. They search the Internet for the appearance characteristics of Rhododendrons, biological evolutionary history, ecological conditions, and geographical distribution. They look for materials of the rare Rhododendron species.

Students collect information on Rhododendron cultivation at garden management institutions.

Students can complete study tourism teaching tasks independently. They can also be divided into groups according to interests. Each group contains 4-7 students. The group cooperates to review literature, formulate a study tour plan, and determine the study tour's theme, destination, and route. Group work can improve the student's ability to collect information, work in a team, and think comprehensively.

At the end of the Rhododendron Study Tour, each student or group submit a report of about 1,200 words.

4. SOME NOTES OF THE STUDY TOURISM

4.1 Note that the study tour task must keep students safe for a tour in mountain areas. Safety education and measures are required.

4.2 Study tours are fun.

4.3 Comprehensive evaluation. Teachers must give timely evaluations. The assessment should broadly consider the research theme, data, pictures, language, and logic.

5. CONCLUSION

The college tourism major's tourism environment course conducts a Rhododendron study tourism teaching. Rhododendrons are an indicator species in moist acidic soil. They are widely distributed in mountain areas in Sichuan, Yunnan, and Tibet. Rhododendrons in Mount Emei are concentrated in an area at an altitude of about 2,500 meters. There are more than thirty species, many of which are unique to Emei and China's particular types. From April to May, Rhododendrons in Mount Emei bloom brilliantly. From Chengdu, students can take the high-speed train to Mount Emei.

The contents and goals of the Rhododendron Study Tour include the ecology and geographical area of Rhododendrons. Rhododendrons prefer acidic soils and cool and ventilated semi-shaded environments. The optimal growth temperature is 12 °C to 25 °C.

Students must submit a 1,200-word report at the end of the Rhododendron Study Tour.

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