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Organizer : Faculty of Science and Technology

Title : A brief review of the ecological studies on freshwater turtles in mainland China, Hong Kong, Macau and Taiwan--- an illustration of the significance of local post-secondary environmental sciences curriculum



Date : 21 October 2020 (Wednesday)

Time : 12:00 noon – 2:00 pm

Zoom Link : <https://uow-au.zoom.us/j/91262988556?pwd=Mkdpbnc5bnRTU0crTXpMckx1Wk5lZz09>

Facilitator : Ms. KIU Kin Yan, Lecturer, Faculty of Science & Technology

Language of Presentation : English

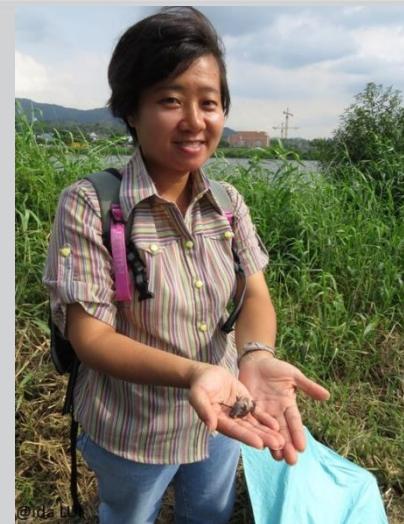
Of the more than 350 species of turtles in the world, many of the species make up a significant percentage of biomass in many ecosystems. Situated in one of the global chelonian biodiversity hotspots, the ecological information obtained from Hong Kong is scant. While certain species of turtles are top predators of some local food chains, they are also the major food sources of many other consumers. Herbivorous and omnivorous turtles and tortoises in the region may also contribute to the seed dispersal of different plant species. Due to the over-exploitation of many local turtle resources for the food and pet trade, some populations have been wiped out and some species became extinct as a result. Under the hot-topic of "Asian turtle crisis", there is an urgent need to collect the data of distribution and ecology of turtle populations in the region.

Locally trained researchers with basic ecological knowledge and professional surveying skills is a necessity to support this urgent conservation need. Post-secondary studies offered have been acting as a talent factory to supply the professional manpower. This talk will also cover some suggestions to the student audience about the possible application of ecological knowledge and skills learnt from lectures, field trips and even self-completed assignments to personal scientific career development.



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* No pre-registration is required for attending the talk.



Speaker: Dr. CHEUNG Sze Man

Dr. Cheung Sze Man has been working on the reptile and amphibian studies in Hong Kong and southern China. She has conducted herpetofaunal studies on a local restored landfill site to test the feasibility of wasteland restoration in the city landscape. She is also the first researcher in Hong Kong to conduct a territory-wide distribution survey and radio-tracking studies of the critically endangered Three-striped box turtle (*Cuora trifasciata*). Dr. Cheung has completed a pilot trial on the reintroduction of the endangered Reeve's turtle (*Chinemys reevesii*) at the Mai Po Nature Reserve to test the feasibility of this novel conservation technique. She has spent more than three years to study the wild animal trade in Hong Kong and southern China to determine the pattern of the trade and to provide policy suggestions to the Government. Apart from academic research, she has also been providing training for management officials of the wetland reserves in China. She received the international Outstanding Turtle Conservation Award in 2003. Dr. Cheung remains actively involved in the monitoring of local biodiversity in ecological hotspots and the wild animal trade.