



# Asian Turtle Program & Turtle Conservation Centre

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One of four Keel box turtles (*Cuora mouhotii*) transferred to the TCC from SAM2 village in the buffer zone of Cuc Phuong National Park

## 4 endangered Keel box turtles (*Cuora mouhotii*) transferred to the TCC after student training

On the 27<sup>th</sup> March 2014 during the annual Tortoise and Freshwater Turtle Field Skill Training Course held in Cuc Phuong National Park, the students discovered a total of 8 Keel box turtles (*Cuora mouhotii*) while conducting an interview survey practical in SAM2 village in the buffer zone of Cuc Phuong National Park. In their interview they found out that the turtles were caught while the locals were collecting snails in the forest of Cuc Phuong National Park.

When TCC manager Do Thanh Hao learned of the student's discovery he decided to visit Dinh Van Lam, a local that the students reported was keeping five Keel box turtles at his house. However, when TCC staff arrived at Mr Lam's house to see if the local would transfer the turtles to the TCC, they found that only four turtles remained. Mr Lam said that the fifth had died and he only agreed to transfer one of the turtles, the smallest of four, to the TCC. The other three turtles he wanted to keep as pets. Mr Hao presented a TCC and Asian Turtle Program hat to Mr Lam as a small thank you and in the



Photo above: Dinh Van Lam handing over the *Cuora mouhotii* to Do Thanh Hao to be transferred to the TCC

hope of receiving the other turtles in the near future without having to report Mr Lam to the Forest Protection Department for keeping a protected species at his house.

Fortunately, Dinh Van Hau, an employee of Cuc Phuong National Park who has been working closely with the local people in the buffer zone, was able to convince Mr Lam to also hand over the three other Keeled box turtles. On the 11th of April the three remaining animals were transferred to the TCC. Since all the turtles were collected in Cuc Phuong National Park options for them are either to be released back to the forest or to establish a head-starting programme with these four Cuc Phuong natives as founders.

Press release written by Đỗ Thanh Hào and Sarah Wahl

Photo below: Dinh Van Lam getting out the three *Cuora mouhotii* that he wanted to keep as pets. These lucky turtles will trade a dark concrete tank for a semi-wild enclosure with lots of vegetation at the TCC



Photo by Sarah Wahl (TCC)

TCC staff found 4 juvenile Keeled box turtles (*Cuora mouhotii*) at Dinh Van Lam's house in SAM2 village in the buffer zone of Cuc Phuong National Park



Photo by Sarah Wahl (TCC)

We would like to thank all our partners for supporting our conservation efforts in 2014:

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