



Asian Turtle Program & Turtle Conservation Centre

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Benjamin Tapley, Curator of Herpetology at ZSL making a presentation on effects of insufficient UV provision and MBD in turtle. Photo by Pham Van Thong – ATP

Ultra Violet light provision improved for hatching turtles at the Turtle Conservation Centre - Vietnam

Ultraviolet (UV) light (type A and B) have an important role in animal and turtle daily life, development and activities. While UV-A increases activity, social behaviour, feeding, basking and breeding, UV-B facilitates the biosynthesis of vitamin D3 in the skin. Insufficient UV-B provision may manifest as Metabolic Bone Disease (MBD) in skeletons of captive turtles. Affecting the turtles development and animal welfare.

To improve UV provisions for turtle in captivity in Vietnam, on the 15th of June 2016, the Turtle Conservation Centre (TCC) Of Cuc Phuong National Park in corporation with the Zoological Society of London (ZSL), a charity devoted to the worldwide conservation of animal and their habitats, held a one-day training course on UV provision for the Asian Turtle Program staffs and TCC keepers.

The course content was a combination between theoretical and practicum at the TCC. Keepers were introduced to different UV light types, its role in reptile and amphibian daily life and development through an informative presentation in the morning. Trainees were given instruction on how to record UV readings with UV metres. In the afternoon, four UV lamps were installed in the hatchling room of the TCC. At the centre adult and juvenile animals are kept in outdoor enclosures where natural UV is accessible for them but due to the predation risk for hatchlings these are currently kept inside. Prior to installing the UV lighting keepers were moving some container outside daily to get natural sunlight but with many animals to care for this was not ideal.

New temperature and humidity data logger was also presented and given to the TCC for use in incubation boxes for turtle eggs. The training course was given by Benjamin Tapley, Curator of Herpetology and ZSL.

We hope that with new UV provision system, health and well-being of hatching at the TCC will be improved. Thank you to the Zoological Society of London and Benjamin Tapley for providing support and equipment for this activity.



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A hatchling Vietnamese Pond Turtle (*Mauremys annamensis*) at the TCC. Photo by: Tim McCormack - IMC/ATP



An aquatic hatchling room at the TCC, where animals are held until 2-3 years old when they can go outside. The UV lighting will help with good growth in these important years. Photo by: Pham Van Thong - ATP



UV meter practicum at the TCC. Photo by Pham Van Thong - ATP