



Asian Turtle Program Indo - Myanmar Conservation



Indo-Myanmar
Conservation

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Trainees from the CRCO with trainers. Photo credit: ATP

Threatened reptiles and amphibians in Vietnam benefit from a conservation training program on field research and captive management

From the 07th to the 10th of September 2015, the Zoological Society of London (ZSL) the Centre for Rescue and Conservative Organism (CRCO) of Hoang Lien National Park (Lao Cai Province, Northern Vietnam) organised a Chelonian and Amphibian Field Skills and Husbandry Training Course for eight staffs of the CRCO.

Presentations made by the Asian Turtle Program (ATP) and Australian Museum focus on two main training components. Field surveys and captive management for reptiles (Turtles) and amphibians. During the training, through a combination of theoretical presentation and practical activities, participants had opportunities to understand and practise different methods, techniques. The participants were

shown how to find some of these cryptic species in the wild. Mount Fansipan, the highest peak in Vietnam at 3,143m is located in Hoang Lien National Park, it is also the only known locality for two frog species *Leptotalax botsfordi* and *Oreolalax sterlingae* which were only discovered in 2013, both of which are threatened by the recent development of a cable car to the top of the mountain. The protected areas is also developing a conservation program focused on the endangered Big-headed Turtle (*Platysternon megacephalum*) which is dependent on small mountain streams for its survival.

During a practical captive management sessions existing enclosures for some turtle species were improved to provide more suitable habitat with a

range of environmental variables. Keepers at the centre also learned how to prepare and keep a range of species at the centre, including Big-headed Turtle (*Platysternon megacephalum*) and the Impressed Tortoise (*Manouria impressa*).

We hope that through this training course and the collaboration with CRCO we can strengthen the conservation of these priority species in Vietnam.

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Press release: Hoang Van Ha &
Timothy McCormack – ATP

The CRCO centre could become the focal point for conservation of Impressed Tortoise (*Manouria impressa*) in Vietnam. The cool and damp conditions found around Sa Pa are idea for the high elevation species. Photo credit: ATP



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Before, a rather sad looking *Indotestudo* enclosure without much environmental gradient. Photo credit: ATP



After, the team discusses ongoing improvements that the facility plans to undertake. Photo credit: ATP

Photo left: Map reading, GPS and compass training is held annually by the ATP and was also presented at the training. Skills essential to field work in the mountainous forest area. Photo credit: ATP



Photo right: The teams competed in a GPS treasure hunt. Photo credit: ATP



Photo right: Chicken legs were used to show PIT tagging as a method for giving individual identification numbers to reptiles and amphibians. Photo credit: ATP



Photo left: Taking turtle measurements.
Photo credit: ATP



Photo left: Completion of individual animal records on standard form was part of the animal management section.
Photo credit: ATP



Photo right: Master Chefs, Tim McCormack (ATP) and Nguyen Manh Hung (CRCO) provide a quick lesson on preparation of healthy turtle diets specific to species maintained at the centre.
Photo credit: ATP

