



Asian Turtle Program Indo - Myanmar Conservation



Indo-Myanmar
Conservation

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This Big-headed Turtle made its way to its new home with a transmitter and data logger on its carapace. © Hoang Van Ha – ATP/IMC.

Post-release monitoring of rehabilitated Big-headed Turtles in Vietnam

On the 27th and 28th of November 2019, the Asian Turtle Program (ATP) of Indo-Myanmar Conservation (IMC) carried out the fourth, and likely last, release of 2019, before winter arrives. In this release, six Big-headed Turtles (*Platysternon megacephalum*) were returned home to a protected area in northern Vietnam. These turtles are important as they are the first sub-set of a large group of rehabilitated Big-headed Turtles at the Turtle Conservation Centre (TCC) of Cuc Phuong National Park who are part of a post-monitoring release project. ATP staff will use radio-tracking to monitor these turtles every week for two years to assess survival rates and learn more about the spatial ecology of this evolutionarily distinct and globally endangered turtle species.

Prior to this release, both thorough genetic analyses and pathogen health screenings had been completed for those turtles. Supportive care and

treatment for these turtles was provided by the ATP/IMC and the TCC in Cuc Phuong.



A Big-headed Turtle (*Platysternon megacephalum*) with a radio transmitter attached on the rear carapace at the Turtle Conservation Centre of Cuc Phuong National Park. © Hoang Van Ha – ATP/IMC.

We would like to thank Fondation Segré Conservation Fund and the EDGE of Existence programme and Cleveland Metroparks Zoo for their support to this project as well as our project partners, the Zoological Society of London (ZSL), Paignton Zoo, Nordens Ark, the Centre for Natural Resources and Environmental Studies (CRES), and all of our numerous partners who have contributed along the way. Particular thanks go to the hard-working staff who took part in the release and those who have spent months, taking great care of this especially difficult-to-keep turtle species at the TCC.



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Hoang Van Ha, ATP/IMC's Vietnam Turtle Program Coordinator, was awarded an EDGE fellowship to carry out this special radio-tracking project as part of ATP/IMC.
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This waterfall with relatively large pool was selected as a good location for one Big-headed Turtle during this release.
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