



Asian Turtle Program Indo-Myanmar Conservation



Protecting Today So We Can See Tomorrow

Visit our websites

www.asianturtleprogram.org
www.indomyanmarconservations.org

Interview Survey to Investigate the Distribution of the Vietnamese Pond Turtle in Binh Dinh Province, Vietnam

08th November 2023

Tran Thi Tuyet Dung (ATP/IMC), Tran Ngoc Hang (ATP/IMC)

(Hanoi) - Binh Dinh is a coastal province of Central Vietnam. Currently, Binh Dinh province reportedly has 17 species of tortoises & freshwater turtles, including Vietnamese pond turtle (*Mauremys annamensis*)- an endemic species of Vietnam. A quick survey conducted by **Asian Turtle Program** (ATP) of **Indo-Myanmar Conservation** (IMC) in 2009 did record information and samples of the species in two districts of Binh Dinh province. In August 2022, IMC in cooperation with **International Centre for Interdisciplinary Science and Education** (ICISE) initiated the founding of a **Biodiversity Conservation Centre** focusing on conserving and breeding Vietnamese Pond Turtle within the ICISE compound.

In order to collect additional information for Vietnamese Pond Turtle conservation activities in Binh Dinh Province, as well as re-assessing the diversity of tortoise & freshwater turtle species in the area, from the 8th to 15th of June 2023, ATP/IMC research team conducted 63 interviews in 01 city, 02 towns and 08 districts of Binh Dinh province, namely Quy Nhon City, An Nhon, Hoai Nhon and the district of Phu Cat, Tuy Phuoc, Phu My, An Lao, Hoai An, Van Canh, Tay Son, Vinh Thanh.

As a result, the team recorded 11 species of tortoises and freshwater turtles in the province, seeing a number of species in the local trade, including the Eastern Black-bridged leaf turtle (*Cyclemys pulchristriata*), Bourret's box turtle (*Cuora bourreti*), Keeled box turtle (*Cuora mouhotii*), Vietnamese three striped box turtle (*Cuora cyclornata*), Giant Asian pond turtle (*Heosemys grandis*), Chinese striped neck turtle (*Mauremys sinensis*), four eyed turtle (*Sacalia quadriocellata*), spotted softshell turtle (*Pelodiscus variegatus*), Impressed tortoise (*Manouria impressa*), Elongated tortoise (*Indotestudo elongata*) and Vietnamese Pond Turtle (*Mauremys annamensis*). During the survey the team recorded 15 Vietnamese pond turtle specimens in a local household in Phu My District. According to the property owner, these specimens were purchased from wildlife breeding farms. Along with these findings, the team also collected 16 eDNA samples to confirm the distribution of the Vietnamese pond turtle at potential sites within Binh Dinh province. These results will help update the distribution area and current status of Vietnamese pond turtle and other threatened tortoise & freshwater turtle species in the province, so as to support future conservation and potential reintroduction programs in the area.



Suoi Tri Lake, Phu Cat commune, Binh Dinh Province, which was previously described as habitat for the Vietnamese pond turtles.

Photo: Tran Thi Tuyet Dung (ATP/IMC)



Some locations previously described as habitat for the species were visited during the survey. Photo: Hang Tran (ATP/IMC)

The Vietnamese pond turtle (*Mauremys annamensis*) is an endemic species distributed in the lowlands area of central Vietnam, from Da Nang in the north to Phu Yen Province and parts of Dak Lak province in the south. This turtle species is classified as **Critically Endangered (CR)** in the **Vietnam Red Data Book** and the **International Union for the Conservation of Nature Red List (IUCN Red List 2023)**. The species is also nationally protected in **group IB of Decree 06/2019/ND-CP**, amended and supplemented by **Decree 84/2021/ND-CP**, and listed in **Decree 160/2013/ND-CP**, amended and supplemented by **Decree 64/2019/ND-CP**. In addition, this endemic turtle species is also prioritized for conservation in **Vietnam's Endangered Turtle Species Conservation Program until 2025** (Decision 1176/QĐ-TTg dated September 12, 2019).

We would like to thank **Binh Dinh Provincial People's Committee**, **The Binh Dinh Provincial Forest Protection Department**, **Binh Dinh's Department of Foreign Affairs** for supporting our activities during the survey period. This survey is sponsored by **US Fish & Wildlife Services (USFWS)**, **Cleveland Metropark Zoo (CMZ)** and **Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF)** as part of **Vietnam's Endangered Turtle Species Conservation Program until 2025**.



An interview being conducted in Binh Dinh Province, central Vietnam. Photo: Hang Tran (ATP/IMC)



Turtles found in the local households were measured after identification by IMC staff. Photo: Hang Tran(ATP/IMC)



A basket of Vietnamese pond turtle (*Mauremys annamensis*) being kept in a local household. Photo: Tran Thi Tuyet Dung (ATP/IMC)



For further information please contact:
Asian Turtle Program, Indo-Myanmar Conservation

Room 1806, C14 Bac Ha Building, To Huu Road, Nam Tu Liem Dist., Hanoi, Vietnam

Tel: +84 (0) 24 7302 8389

Email: info@asianturtleprogram.org

Website: www.asianturtleprogram.org

