

## Pesta Konvo 2018



His Royal Highness the Crown Prince planting a tree (*Dipterocarpus borneensis*) at UBD BRC. Photo: Hj Roslan Hj Mohd. Daud, Pelita Brunei



His Royal Highness the Crown Prince taking a tour at UBD BRC. Photo: UBD Website

On 16th August 2018, Pesta Konvo, an annual event in conjunction with the 30th Convocation Ceremony, was held at the newly opened Botanical Research Centre (BRC). The theme of the festival this year was “I.L.M” which stands for Innovation, Leadership & Mastery. It highlights the importance of innovation which has significant benefits to society and introduces some of the important innovation by UBD graduates such as the Coat Guard 003 and phytochemical and biological studies of Pawas (*Litsea elliptica*).

[More info here.](#)



## Thai Royalty Visits



Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn of Thailand visited UBD BRC on 31st October 2018 and was accompanied by military officers and 35 Year Four Cadets from the Chulachomklao Royal Military Academy. HRH consented to plant a tree (*Agathis borneensis*) in UBD BRC and was greeted by Thai students studying at UBD. HRH was also presented a showcase of UBD graduates latest innovative research such as the sensor technology known as 'Droplet 2.0'.

[More info here.](#)

Her Royal Highness interacting with student on her project at BRC. Photo: UBD Website

## Brunei Darussalam – Commonwealth Third Country Training Programme (BDTCTP)



Participants were given a briefing at the Earthwatch plot, KBFSC. Photo: IBER



One of the participant measuring diameter of a tree. Photo: IBER

The BDTCTP training was conducted from 6th to 11th August 2018 and attended by participants from Brunei and the South Pacific Islands: Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, Samoa, Tonga, and Vanuatu. The workshop was intended to stimulate interest and involvement, encouraging participants to share best practices and lessons learnt from their respective countries.

[More info here.](#)

Group photo with the participants and programme facilitators from IBER. Photo: IBER





## Research

## Seminar Series



## Seminar Series

### Sensor networks for environmental measurements in Brunei Darussalam

By:  
Dr Alex Cobb  
Singapore-MIT Alliance for Research and Technology (SMART)

TUESDAY | 18 SEPTEMBER 2018

2.30 pm

Training Room,  
Office of Assistant Vice Chancellor  
Research (OAVCR),  
1<sup>st</sup> floor, Block A,  
Integrated Science Building,  
Universiti Brunei Darussalam

#### Abstract

Advances in sensor, data transmission and data storage technology have made it possible to make sophisticated environmental measurements more efficiently and cheaply than ever before. The Peatflux project under the Heart of Borneo Centre Brunei Darussalam, involving the Singapore-MIT Alliance for Research and Technology and UBD, has been working to develop a sensor network for monitoring ecosystem processes in peat forest in the Belait District. In this talk, Dr Alex Cobb will describe the sensor technologies they have applied and their approach to modularization, communication and data management for environmental sensing.

#### Speaker:

Dr Alex Cobb is a Principal Research Scientist in the Singapore-MIT Alliance for Research and Technology's Center for Environmental Sensing and Modeling (CENSAM). His work at SMART focuses on forest carbon, water and energy cycles and the physiology and biomechanics of trees in Southeast Asian peat forests. Before commencing his work at SMART, Dr Cobb held a joint postdoctoral position studying the biomechanics of plant development at Harvard University and the University of Massachusetts. He received his Ph.D. in the physiology of plants from Harvard University in 2006 and first came to Southeast Asia as a Fulbright Fellow to Malaysia in 2000-2001.



## Seminar Series

### Ecology and evolution of visual signals

By:  
Dr Eunice Tan  
Yale-NUS College Singapore

Tuesday | 17 July 2018

10.00 am

Lecture Room 1,  
Level 2, Block D,  
Integrated Science Building,  
UBD

#### Abstract:

How have interactions between species and their environment shaped the species that we have today? My research examines the ecological interactions between the environment, animals and their predators, to improve our understanding of the ecological selection pressures on the colour patterns and behaviours of animals. In this seminar, I will discuss how I use phylogenetic comparative analyses and field and laboratory experiments to address fundamental questions about our environment in a range of arthropod systems.

#### Speaker:

Eunice Tan is an evolutionary ecologist whose research examines the interactions between species and their environment. Eunice obtained her BSc and MSc in Life Sciences from the National University of Singapore and earned her PhD from the University of Melbourne, Australia. Eunice's research involved field experiments in forests in Singapore, Malaysia, China and Australia. Eunice is currently an Assistant Professor at Yale-NUS College, Singapore.



## Seminar Series

### Raw results of the revisited Pinanga palms

By:  
Associate Professor Alison Shapcott  
University of the Sunshine Coast, Australia

Wednesday | 30 Jan 2019

2.30 pm

Lecture Room 2,  
Level 2, Block D,  
Integrated Science Building,  
UBD

#### Abstract

Tropical rainforests such as that found in Brunei at the Ulu Temburong National Park (UTNP) contain very high floral diversity. Borneo has a very rich palm flora and members of the genus *Pinanga* dominate the understorey. It is also the centre of diversity of this genus with 45 species endemic to the island, there are at least 13 species recorded in UTNP. Understorey species are true rainforest species dependent on the shaded conditions provided by the dense canopy thus their populations may be sensitive to changes over time in the canopy conditions and moisture levels and thus may be sensitive to climate change. In 1997/8, AP Dr Alison Shapcott documented the populations of five co-occurring species of *Pinanga* at seven locations along the Belalong and Temburong rivers close to the Kuala Belalong Field Studies Centre. This given that this represents relatively undisturbed rainforest the changes in populations of these *Pinanga* understorey palms may be indicative of more widespread changes to the rainforest under climate change. 20 years later, in 2018, one of these sites was revisited and a preliminary assessment of the populations was conducted to see how they had changed. Unfortunately the populations of all species appeared to have declined. This project aimed to undertake a comprehensive survey of the original five species of *Pinanga* palm species in order to assess if there is similar population declines across multiple sites. The preliminary results of these re-census field surveys will be presented. It appears that the different species may have differing population dynamics.

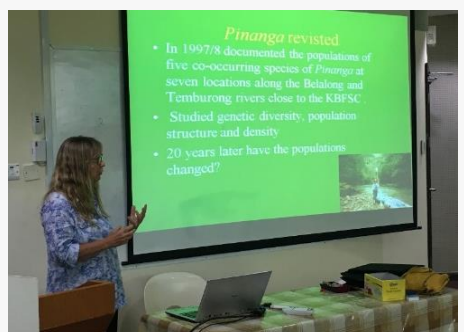
#### Speaker's profile:

Dr Alison Shapcott is an Associate Professor at the Geneecology Research Center and Faculty of Science, Health, Education Engineering, University of the Sunshine Coast. She has been researching the population genetics and ecology of rainforest plants and palms since 1985. Associate Professor Shapcott is particularly interested in the evolution and maintenance of biodiversity. She has worked with rainforest types across Australia from Tasmania to Cape Tribulation and the Northern Territory as well as in Madagascar, Papua New Guinea, Djibouti and Brunei.



Seminar series by Dr Alex Cobb during his presentation at UBD.  
Photo: IBER

### More about IBER seminar series



Seminar series by Associate Professor Dr Alison Shapcott during her presentation at UBD. Photo: IBER



A day-visit to KBFSC by La Trobe University, Australia in August 2018.

Photo: IBER

### Research trips at KBFSC



Field course ran by University of Sunshine Coast, Australia at KBFSC from 26 November to 3 December 2018.

Photo: IBER



## Education & Outreach

### Environmental Education Programme (EEP)

A total of 5 schools participated in the programme that was conducted at KBFSC from July-December 2018:

- Sekolah Menengah Rimba
- Sekolah Tinggi Perempuan Raja Isteri (STPRI)
- Sekolah Menengah Yayasan Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah
- Sekolah Menengah Sayyidina Ali (SMSA)
- IBTE Agro-Technology Campus (IBTE)



IBTE participants  
conducting stream  
ecology experiment at  
Sg. Belalong.  
*Photo: IBER*



Students from STPRI measuring  
environmental parameters at the  
Ashton trail.  
*Photo: IBER*



SMSA students  
during lecture in  
the laboratory.  
*Photo: IBER*

### FoB Teaching Assistantship Training



Three Friends of Belalong (FoB) volunteers  
underwent training to become teaching  
assistants for Environmental Education  
Programme. The training aims to equip them  
with relevant skills in conducting field course  
based activities. *Photo: IBER*



The volunteers worked in a group for a hands-on training activity  
at the KBFSC. *Photo: IBER*





*Bronchocela cristatella* (Green crested lizard) spotted on a fern.  
Photo: Mahdi Hussainmiya

## Contact

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### Kuala Belalong Field Studies Centre

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### UBD Botanical Research Centre

✉ [office.brc@ubd.edu.bn](mailto:office.brc@ubd.edu.bn)



## Upcoming event



(Click image for details)