

NEWSLETTER

SABAH WETLANDS CONSERVATION SOCIETY



CONTENTS

- 01** *What's Happening*

- 02** *Wetland Corner*

- 03** EEP, EVW & Mangrove Tree Planting Activities

- 04** Guests' Comments & Upcoming Events

- 05** KK Wetland Ramsar Site's Membership, Volunteering & Monthly Activities



COURTESY CALL TO OCPD KOTA KINABALU

20th November 2019- A courtesy call to OCPD Kota Kinabalu Tuan Habibi Majinji to discuss on how to resolve the issues of illegal encroachment / trespasses, vandalism and burglary at Kota Kinabalu Wetland Ramsar Site.



OBJECTIVES

To promote the conservation of wetlands in Sabah and the variety of plants, birds and other kinds of organisms found in them.

To raise public awareness and appreciation of wetlands and public involvement in protecting wetlands.

To manage Kota Kinabalu Wetland (KKW) as a model wetlands centre for the purpose of conservation, education, recreation, tourism and research.



Sabah Wetlands Conservation Society

A Non-Governmental Organization working on Conservation of Wetlands in Sabah

Established on 22 August 2005



COURSE ON HONORARY WILDLIFE WARDEN

25th-27th November 2019- A total of four (4) staff have been attended the three-day course on the Honorary Wildlife Warden which organised by Sabah Wildlife Department at Taman Hidupan Liar Lok Kawi. This three-days course emphasised on the understanding of the Wildlife Conservation Enactment 1997, the importance of roles and responsibilities of the Honorary Wildlife Warden and at the end of the sessions, the participants were required to take and pass the written examination. Only candidates who passed the test will be offered as the Honorary Wildlife Warden.

WORKSHOP ON WETLANDS EDUCATION RESOLUTION DEVELOPMENT FOR RAMSAR COP 14

20th-22nd November 2019- Recheal Jane Ronnie, the Environmental Education Officer has attended the Workshop on Wetlands Education Resolution Development for Ramsar centre at Gyeongsamnan-do South Korea. In this workshop, Recheal presented and shared the efforts of SWCS towards wetlands conservation through the Environment Education Programme.



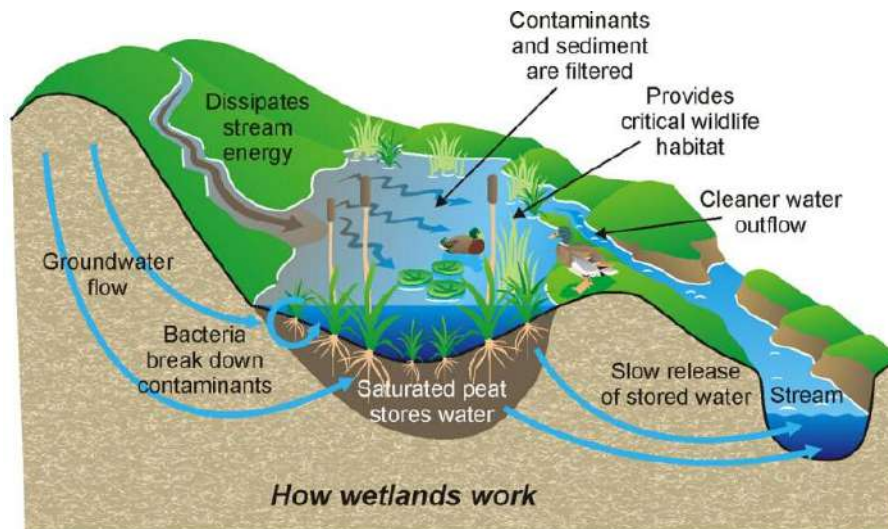
NSR ASIA PACIFIC FORUM FORUM 2019

22nd November 2019- Sabah Wetlands Conservation Society were invited to attend the New Silk Road Asia Pacific Forum 2019 at Promenade Hotel Kota Kinabalu. During this forum, the organiser also giving us a chance to open the booth to promote SWCS and KKWRS. In last October, KKWRS become one of the venue for NSR Asia Pacific "Art Connect" Week.



Wetlands and Water

How is wetland store water? Wetlands function like natural tubs or sponges, storing water and slowly releasing it. This process slows the water's momentum and erosive potential, reduces flood heights, and allows for groundwater recharge, which contributes to base flow to surface water systems during dry periods. Although a small wetland might not store much water, a network of many small wetlands can store an enormous amount of water.



Credit: <http://www.tworiverscoalition.org/>

The importance of Wetlands

Flood Control

Wetlands slow the flow of water, allowing it to replenish the groundwater - a supply that most plants and many people depend on. By slowing the water during floods, wetlands reduce flood damage in areas downstream and around them.

Water Purification

This function reflects the capacity of a wetland to collect and retain inflowing surface water, direct precipitation and discharging groundwater as standing water above the soil surface, pore water in the saturated zone or soil moisture in the unsaturated zone. Water that is delayed or stored in the wetland reduces the amount of runoff downslope, thereby ensuring a decrease in flood crests down gradient.

Water Storage

As sediment, excess nutrients and chemicals flow off of the land, wetlands filter the runoff before it reaches the open water. Nutrients are stored and absorbed by plants or microorganisms. Sediment settles at the bottom after reaching an area with slow water flow.

Habitat for Plant & Animal

Many animals and plants depending on wetlands especially aquatic plants and animals. The wetlands provided them food, shelter and spawning ground.

Article references:
<https://sciencing.com/>
<https://www.epa.gov/>

Compilation : What Are Environmental News Happened In November

Extinct giant ape directly linked to the living orangutan

By using ancient protein sequencing, researchers have retrieved genetic information from a 1.9 million-year-old extinct, giant primate that used to live in a subtropical area in southern China. The genetic information allows the researchers to uncover the evolutionary position of *Gigantopithecus blacki*, a three-meter tall and maybe up to 600 kg heavy primate, revealing the orangutan as its closest, living relative.

<https://www.sciencedaily.com/>

Clean air research converts toxic air pollutant into industrial chemical

A toxic pollutant produced by burning fossil fuels can be captured from the exhaust gas stream and converted into useful industrial chemicals using only water and air thanks to a new advanced material developed by an international team of scientists. New research led by The University of Manchester, has developed a metal-organic framework (MOF) material that provides a selective, fully reversible and repeatable capability to capture nitrogen dioxide (NO₂), a toxic air pollutant produced particularly by diesel and bio-fuel use.

<https://www.sciencedaily.com/>

Old newspapers can be used to grow carbon nanotubes

A research collaboration between Rice University and the Energy Safety Research Institute (ESRI) at Swansea University has found that old newspapers can be used as a low cost, eco-friendly material on which to grow single-walled carbon nanotubes on a large scale. Carbon nanotubes are tiny molecules with incredible physical properties that can be used in a huge range of things, such as conductive films for touchscreen displays, flexible electronics, fabrics that create energy and antennas for 5G networks.

<https://news.mongabay.com>

At least 50% of Sabah will remain under forest cover

In tackling deforestation in the state, the Sabah government ensures that about 50% of Sabah's land area is always under forest cover and sufficient to provide ecosystem services like watershed areas and habitats for flora and fauna. Sabah Chief Minister, Datuk Seri Mohd Shafie Apdal said the overall forest cover in Sabah at the end of the 1980s was estimated at 44,750 sq km, slightly over 60% of the Sabah's total land area of 73,631 sq km. In 2010, around 37,600 sq km or 51% of the Sabah's land area were covered with forest, he said.

<https://www.thesundaily.my/>

Animals could help humans monitor oceans

Sharks, penguins, turtles and other seagoing species could help humans to monitor the oceans by transmitting oceanographic information from electronic tags. Thousands of marine animals are tagged for a variety of research and conservation purposes, but at present, the information gathered isn't widely used to track climate change and other shifts in the oceans.

Researchers find climate change and turf seaweed causing 'patchy' seascape

The effects of climate change are becoming more apparent, from the rapidly warming Gulf of Maine to more frequent and severe storms and the increase of invasive turf seaweed. Researchers at the University of New Hampshire have found that these environmental developments are contributing to the transformation of the seafloor to a lower, more patchy seascape dominated by shrub-like seaweed which could impact species habitats and the structure of the food web.

<https://www.thesundaily.my/>



6th November 2019. Environmental Education Programme with Jesselton International School.



17th November 2019. Environmental Voluntary Work with Aeon Credit.



17th November 2019. Environmental Voluntary Work with Universiti Malaysia Sabah.



30th November 2019. Environmental Voluntary Work with Volley ball club Universiti Malaysia Sabah.

Guests' comments



Saw A lot of birds! Thank You - Nozumi Japan

Upcoming Events

Environmental Education Programme

- Young Explorer Academy
- Kinderkaizen Putatan
- MRS JSP Damai

Environmental Voluntary Work

- AEON Credit Kota Kinabalu
- Sabah International Convention centre

Newspaper Cutting

Kota Kinabalu Wetland: Safe haven for KK's flora and fauna



The wooden trail for visitors to see in.

By PAUL MU

THE KOTA KINABALU WETLAND RAMSAR SITE was first gazetted in Kota Kinabalu City Hall documents in 1976, after it was discovered that the site was a nesting, feeding and resting site for migratory and resident birds.

Later in 1996, the wetland - which is the last patch of surviving mangrove forest in Kota Kinabalu - obtained an island layer of protection when it was gazetted as the Cultural Heritage Site 'Conservation Area' before it was then gazetted as the Ramsar Site in 2014, making it a world heritage site.

The three layers of protection according to the developer to ensure that we are able to maintain this site for our future generations, despite there being a threat for a proposed condominium project next door.

"We told that the developer was asked by

relation authorities) to comply for the Environment Impact Assessment (EIA) Report again. They are required to do an impact study and must comply with the regulations if they were the intention to proceed with the proposed project," Sabah Wildlife Conservation Society (SWCS) Manager/Executive Secretary, Rita Ruzaini, stated.

The SWCS is a non-governmental organisation mandated by the Sabah Government to manage the Kota Kinabalu Wetland, one among the seven Ramsar Sites declared in Malaysia. It is the second in Sabah after the Lower Kinabatangan large wetlands.

The Ramsar Site is a Convention on Wetlands of International Importance, especially as Waterfowl Habitat. The name derived from a city in Iran, known as Ramsar, where the convention was signed back in 1971. It is an international treaty for the conservation and sustainable use of wetlands, which is also known as the Convention on Wetlands.

The mangrove in Kota Kinabalu is arguably one of the only urban wetlands to be found in the world and was gazetted by the Sabah Government to provide a place for conservation, education, research, recreation and other purposes.

Being strategically located, it takes about seven minutes' drive from the city centre and 17 minutes away from the Kota Kinabalu International Airport to the Kota Kinabalu Wetland.

The location of this wetland is also convenient for visitors to come, compared to other wetlands which are located about 30-40 minutes' drive away from the city centre.

The wetland also acts as the 'green lung' for the city and is the 'window' to other larger wetland areas.

During the plan, the coastal area of Kota Kinabalu was a swamp of mangrove lands before the town was further developed, only only 24 hectares (60 acres) of the wetland remain.

Looking back, it was a group of environmentalists from WWF, PETA and others who advocated for this wetland to be protected since the early 1980s, Rita revealed.

The Kota Kinabalu wetland is situated off Jalan Bukit Bendera Upper, Likiep and is open to tourists and visitors alike from Tuesday to Sunday, from 8am to 5pm. They are closed on Mondays.

There is a registration counter inside the wetland office, for tourists and visitors, to pay the contribution fee before they embark on a tour of the wetland. The charging fee for Malaysian are RM5 for adults and RM3 for school children, while for non-Malaysian it is RM15 for adults and RM10 for school children.

"We will do a short briefing about this place, so that our visitors know what to expect upon entering the wetland area. They can then spend whatever time inside the site, as we also have 10 units of wooden nests here for them to sit down and relax, while also observing the natural view," she explained.

Visitors will begin their walk on a 200 metres brick pathway, before they stroll on top of a 1.5-metre-high long bridge to cross the whole distance between 45 metres and one hour depending

on their speed and purpose.

Bird watchers usually take up a larger area in the wetland, sometimes up to four hours to be the late. During quiet moments, they can see the mangrove trees in bloom and listen to the sound of nature.

"We have a nursery area to take in approximately more than 18,000 mangrove seedlings and visitors can also carry out the planting on the wetland. We are a centre for providing the mangrove seedlings to replace the trees of around Sabah."

"Among the trees that people can see here are the mud mangrove, mangrove, little crab, mud crabs, clam and snail and many more," Rita said.

Along the boardwalk, there is an outdoor classroom for visitors to carry out environment-related activities and education awareness programmes.



A bird's eye view from the mangrove observation tower.

There are more than 10 species of migratory and resident birds that are found in the wetland. The migratory birds can be seen arriving to the wetland during the migratory season, from September to April.

"Normally, the migratory birds come from the northern hemisphere and fly to us through the cold winter season. This wetland here provides a place for them to feed, rest and nest. This is the reason this place is so important and has been gazetted as a bird sanctuary," she said.

Furthermore, Sabah is one of the few places that they migratory birds will pass by. Sabah's Kota Kinabalu wetland, the mangrove birds will make a stopover to place such as Kudat and Kota Belud, the Pacific Golden Plover, Common Sandpiper and Purple Heron are the regular migratory birds that can be spotted in the Kota Kinabalu wetland, besides resident birds such as the variety of kingfisher, egret, domestic pigeon, sea eagle and many others.

"During the bird migratory season, we are flexible to visitors, when a group migrates we would open the bird watching station for them. They would be there at 7pm, they stay as informants too. As the best time to see the birds is during the early morning and late afternoon," she advised.

She said experienced birders have also helped them in identifying both the migratory and resident birds, then they spotted and recorded at the wetland.

"We have bird watching activities for visitors on the 1st of every month, where visitors can also record birds for the birds." She said, adding that they also organise a bird programme for visitors to identify the birds and learn about the wetland.

The wetland also serves as a breeding ground for hornbills, which they often come from the sea and into the area to lay eggs. The housing area near the wetland is a nesting place between the sea and the mangrove area.

Besides, from the surrounding housing area would sometimes go for a few offences walk at the wetland, where they are able to enjoy fresh air and mangrove, where they also function as air purifier.

The SWCS would also organise school tours and field trips for students to learn more about the importance of wetland conservation, as well as planting mud mangrove in the planting ground.

The Kota Kinabalu wetland is also a favourite spot for tourists from United Kingdom, Canada, Japan, Singapore and many more, as they have witnessed 90 per cent for foreign tourists.

"We have received a lot of constructive comments and feedback from foreign tourists because they are excited to see and learn more about the mangrove forest and ecosystem," Rita shared.

According to her, a lot of the foreign tourists found the location of the wetland very convenient to visit, as they can get there by foot from their hotels in downtown Kota Kinabalu without having to travel for long hours.



The outdoor area for planting mangrove trees.

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The wooden boardwalk covered the mangrove trees canopy.

more seedlings from the island and try to propagate it here at the Kota Kinabalu Wetland. In fact, they have been planting mangrove seedlings for many years, and it is now a well-known site for bird watching.

"We did an experiment to grow the trees in different conditions in the wetland, such as on mud, sand and so forth," Rita explained.

For those who want to get a bird's eye view of the wetland, they can walk-up to the three-storey high observation tower to see the mangrove swamp and trees.

"We need to be able to see the shore areas from here, but not on the water, as the water would not let us see the shore areas," she said.

The public are also encouraged to spare their time to contribute back to nature by assisting or joining

the environmental volunteer programme, through which they would be engaged in mangrove work, mangrove cleanup, seedling planting and peeling mangrove seeds for planting.

Next to the interpretation office is the mangrove and fauna exhibiting and growing in the wetland, the riparian area of water. The Riparian Area in Malaysia, before nesting with a self-reflection session on how the environment impacts on other lives.

Rita also disclosed that they are planning to build a table in the near future, where they would sell light refreshments while also serving as a space for visitors to sit back and relax after the tour.

"This proposal has been sent to the relevant authority for approval," she said, adding that a bigger gateway will be put up soon to make sure the Kota Kinabalu Wetland is hard to miss.



The bird hide.



The wetland wooden walkway.

VOLUNTEER NEEDED!

01 Volunteering is good for your heart

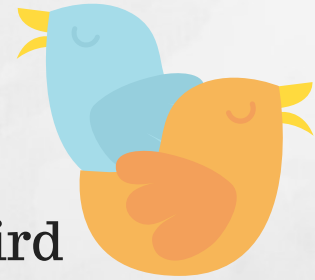
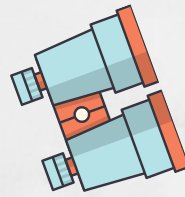
Volunteering for KK Wetland Ramsar Site can be a great fun! If you have passion for the environment or just want to gain more outdoor experiences, this is the appropriate channel. Do not miss the chance! Sign up to be a volunteer now or contact us for more information.

03 membership

Benefits of being our member

- As a member, you will be able to participate in members' events and enjoy free entry to Kota Kinabalu Wetlands Ramsar Site
- Eligible for 50% discount for binoculars rental*.
- Most importantly, you know you are helping this ecosystem to survive and provide essential services to it.

02



Monthly Bird Monitoring



Join our monthly birding activity on every 15th-17th day of the month

FOR
MORE
INFO

How to
REGISTER

Call us at
088-246955
or drop us an email at
swcs@sabahwetlands.org

04

DONATION



Join the forces with us and help save our Wetlands by giving donation to Sabah Wetlands Conservation Society.

Bank Transfer to;
SWCS Account No:392050779101
(HSBC)

support us by joining our programmes

1. Environmental Education Programme

- KK Wetlands Mangrove Experience Programme
- Mangrove Conservation Experience Programme
- Handcrafting from Mangrove

2 Environmental Voluntary Work

- Nursery Work
- Mangrove Clean-Up

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