

Collaborative Research with QSBG Entomology



Are these notes for you?

Queen Sirikit Botanic Gardens (QSBG) has a small Entomological group who are keen to collaborate with and help facilitate Entomologists conducting research in Thailand. These notes provide advice for Entomologists considering collaborating with the QSBG Entomology group. As well as providing some specific advice in relation to QSBG the notes also briefly cover some more general aspects of conducting Entomological research in Thailand that may be useful. The general principles described here, of course, often apply equally well to other types of biological research.

QSBG specific advice

QSBG Entomology's goals include:

1. establishing a representative collection of arthropods, especially for northern Thailand
2. the identification and description of the northern Thai arthropod fauna
3. the ongoing growth of a library covering the arthropod fauna of northern Thailand
4. the development of increased arthropod taxonomic capacity within QSBG and other Thai institutions
5. providing education and extension to visiting locals and international tourists

QSBG welcomes collaboration generally but looks very favourably on any collaboration which supports these goals. In particular QSBG encourages collaborators to consider four specific things they can leave QSBG as a legacy of any collaboration, *viz.*

1. lodged duplicate specimens, particularly voucher specimens and holotypes, so helping build and improve the QSBG collection
2. copies of any useful literature, or literature resulting from the collaboration, so helping build and improve the QSBG library
3. a commitment from any specialist to examine any relevant material already held at QSBG. Ideally this would be done while "mentoring" someone from QSBG or perhaps a visiting Thai Entomologist interested in the same taxa thus adding value to the QSBG collection and helping with capacity building in Thailand
4. a display item, perhaps as simple as a poster, suitable for display to the public (ideally in English and Thai) so adding to the Entomological extension materials of QSBG

General advice

While these notes are primarily to provide advice on research collaboration with QSBG there are some general aspects of research in Thailand that people should be aware of, *viz.*

1. The National Research Council of Thailand requires all foreign researchers to seek approval for any research conducted in Thailand.
2. Many collaborators and/or approving government departments require research proposals and documentation to be submitted in Thai for review.
3. In some cases researchers working in Thailand may require a work permit (in addition to usual travel documents such as a passport and visa).
4. There are a number of protected arthropods in Thailand, either protected by Thai wildlife laws or under CITES.
5. There are protected conservation areas in Thailand in which collecting is not permitted without special permission from the Department of National Parks, Wildlife and Plant Conservation (DNP) in the case of National Parks, Marine Parks, and Wildlife Sanctuaries. Additionally there are Forest Conservation Areas in which permission is required from the Royal Forest Department. Obtaining these permissions is often a very difficult and time consuming process.
6. Beside normal cautions it is worth considering that in *some* areas of Thailand there may be special need for caution from factors such as:
 - (a) wildlife: tigers, snakes, crocodiles, etc
 - (b) tropical diseases: malaria, dengue, leishmaniasis, etc
 - (c) unexploded ordinance: landmines, hunter's booby traps, etc
 - (d) armed poachers/smugglers
 - (e) armed insurgents

7. While there are no specific regulations relating to insect specimen export from Thailand, aside from CITES listed species, some *importing* countries do require export documentation issued by Thai authorities (managed by the DNP) and the DNP itself often requires export certification for specimens collected from protected areas.
8. Establishing a collaborative research relationship with a Thai researcher, perhaps formalised in an MOU, is often the best way to be aware of, minimise, and deal with any problems. Local collaborators are usually keen to collaborate and are often able to provide good advice and smooth over issues

Useful contacts and links

Contacts

Entomology Section
Queen Sirikit Botanic Garden
P.O. Box 7 Mae Rim,
Chiang Mai 50180,
THAILAND
Ph: +66-53-841243
Fx: +66-53-841242
entomology@qsbg.org

see <http://www.qsbginsects.org/contact.php> for a location map

Links

1. A translated version of the "Act for the Conservation and Protection of Wildlife B.E. 2535, 1992" can be found at:
http://www.fao.org/fishery/shared/faolextrans.jsp?xp_FAOLEX=LEX-FA0C004724&xp_faoLexLang=E&xp_lang=en
2. NRCT Guidelines for Foreign Researchers can be found at
http://www.nrct-foreignresearcher.org/index.php?lang=en&mod=forms&op=guidances_en
3. DNP Research Permit Application Forms can be found at:
http://www.dnp.go.th/Dnp_form/DnpFormen.htm