

Research History and Collections of Hong Kong Fishes – Status and Perspectives

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Ichthyological research in Oriental Region has begun almost up to 300 years ago since the westerns discovered the resources on lands and islands in the South China Sea and the Western Pacific beyond India and Indo-China Peninsula exploring via Malacca Strait. Thousands of new species of living creatures were discovered by the explorers of which included up to more than 2000 species of marine, brackish, and freshwater fishes.

The research works of ichthyology can be classified into several stages. In the earliest stage, on or before 17th to 18th Century, most of the research works on Ichthyology were concentrated on discovering species. While, in the second, from 19th to the beginning of 20th, as knowledge of nature accumulates, most of the major subjects of biological sciences had begun to form. During 20th Century, the sciences got distinct progressions, and the change lead biologists recognized the importance of specimen collections, not only to discover and naming species, but also the most fundamental keys to open the door of sophisticated relationships between creatures and environments in terms of Ecology. Nowadays, in the 21st, as most of the early specimen collections exceeding the years of hundreds, large amount of works including managing registration, re-examination, conservation of the specimens becomes necessary for the researchers in museums and institutes, etc. Hong Kong possesses a complicated historical background including both politics and wars disturbances prohibited the establishment of safe and stable place for storing specimens especially of those faunal species. The scattered specimens in present and damaged or lost collections during World Wars not only means the demands on re-collecting new specimens for identification and education, as the science technology progresses, it also implies the necessity for establishing a new better place (museum) and system (database) for managing the fish specimen collections for Hong Kong's future.

香港魚類之研究歷史與標本 — 現況與展望

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摘 要

東洋區的魚類學研究，早於三百多年前，西方人經過馬六甲海峽，發現印度及印支半島以東，南中國海及西太平洋域的陸地與島嶼開始。數千個物種，包括超過二千種海水、鹹淡水淡水魚類，被探險家們所發現。

魚類學的研究工作，可被分為數個階段。最早階段，十七至十八世紀或以前，研究工作大多集中於發現物種。第二階段，十九至二十世紀初，隨著自然有關知識的積累，許多生命科學的主要科目開始形成。在二十世紀，各類科學均得到了顯著進展，而這改變，使生物學家們認識到所藏標本之重要性，不僅於發現與命名物種，但也作為是能解明生態學上那些複雜的物種與環境間關係的關鍵。

在廿一世紀今日，隨著大多數早期標本時逾數百年，大量工作，包括眾標本的管理登記、再鑒定、保存等，需要待諸博物館與研究所的研究工作者去做。

香港有複雜的歷史背景，包括昔日政治與戰爭等的因素，阻礙了安全安定的地點去存放標本，尤其是動物物種。現存靈散的以及在世界大戰中損毀或失去的藏品，不僅意味在物種鑒定和教育有著再採集新標本的需要，隨著科技進步，這也同時啟示，為了香港的未來，極有需要設立一個新的地點（博物館）與系統（資料庫）來管理所藏存的魚類標本。