

Students from 6 Countries Learn Biodiversity through the Summer Course Bio-Geo of Belitong Geopark



Department of Biology in collaboration with MCSTO IPB, Belitong Geopark, Belitung Regency Government, and Nottingham University, has successfully held Summer Course on October 24-28, 2019. This activity is routinely held by the Department of Biology annually.

This activity was attended by undergraduate and graduate students from 6 countries, including Osaka University-Japan, Kasetsart University-Thailand, Nottingham University-UK, Putra Malaya University-Malaysia, Western Sydney University-Australia, and IPB University-Indonesia. This activity was also attended by 10 students of SMA Negeri 1 Tanjungpandan, Belitung.

In general, this activity aims to introduce the biodiversity of Belitung and its potential to be wisely developed and utilized as well as its potential as a tourist interest. Every day, students are invited to study in one Geosite. On the first day, participants explored the diversity of *Nepenthes* sp. in the Kerangas Cendil Forest area and the Kelapa Kampit open pit, which was guided by Dr. Triadiati from the Plant Physiology and Genetics Division, Dept. Biology and Dr. Yulian Fakhurrozi from Belitong Geopark.

Dr. Rika Raffiudin, who is a stingless bee expert, also explained the students to learn about stingless bee cultivation techniques, on Tanjung Kelayang Geosite, on the second day. Not only observing the behavior of this insect but also students can taste the honey, directly from the nest.

The activity continued on the third day, participants visited Bukit Peramun. Dr. Puji Rianti, a lecturer from the Division of Animal Biosystematics and Ecology, teaches about sustainable tourism and animal biodiversity. In this area, participants explore the terrestrial and aquatic animals along the journey to the hills. In the evening, participants have also observed the world's smallest primate, Tarsius, directly in their habitat.

Once satisfied exploring the hill, Dr. Laura Dean from the Department of Life Sciences, Nottingham University-UK, guided participants to sample aquatic organisms on the Batu Bedil beach. Organisms found include mollusks, insects, butterflies, birds, benthic invertebrates and spiders.

The enthusiasm of the participants seemed to never run out and even more enthusiastic when Bagus Putra Moeljadi, Ph.D, Assistant Professor of Chemical and Environmental Engineering-Nottingham University explained about the permeability of Mangrove roots to protect the land from waves.

This Summer Course activity was very memorable, both for the participants and speakers. "The Warm Welcome from the committee, citizen, the local government, especially the Regent of Belitung (H. Sahani Saleh S. Sos), was very unforgettable. The view at each Geosite made us want to visit Belitung again" Said Bagus at the Gala Dinner on the last day with the Regent Belitung.

Laura Dean also said that this activity was very important to educate students and citizens about Belitung's biodiversity, to be more concerned and in love with nature. This activity could also be an initiation of collaboration between Nottingham University and the Belitung Regency Government.

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