

UNIVERSITI MALAYSIA SARAWAK

***Press Release
Kenyataan media***



10TH INTERNATIONAL BORNEAN FROG RACE 2023

EMBARGO: AFTER MIDNIGHT OF 18TH JUNE 2023

SAMA JAYA NATURE RESERVE, SARAWAK, 17th June 2023: The Tenth (10th) International Bornean Frog Race was held at the Sama Jaya Nature Reserve, Kuching, Sarawak. It was organised by Universiti Malaysia Sarawak, with support from the Sarawak Forestry Corporation.

17th June 2023

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This year's event welcoming address was given by YBrS. Tuan Haji Zolkipli Mohamad Aton, CEO of the Sarawak Forestry Corporation, who mentioned that the International Bornean Frog Race is a citizen's conservation movement that receives support from governmental agencies, drawing public attention to Sarawak and Malaysia's rich biological diversity. The Vice Chancellor of UNIMAS, YBhg Prof Datuk Dr Mohamad Kadim Suaidi, delivered the opening address.

Shell Chair, Business Events Sarawak, along with several private businesses and individuals, lent their support to this year's event. The chief components of the Race included talks, an exhibition, and the Race itself, which pits participants in a competition to find and photograph amphibian species, as well as nature by night, along the main trail in the Reserve.

With the exception of two years affected by the pandemic, the Race has been commemorated annually since 2012, and this was the tenth edition. In some years, the event coincides with the annual 'Save the Frogs Day', a global event celebrated through over 1,500 events in 58 countries, to highlight conservation issues facing the world's amphibians. The Race is organised by the students and staff of the Institute of Biodiversity and Environmental Conservation, the Faculty of Resource Science and Technology, and the Faculty of Creative and Applied Arts of Universiti Malaysia Sarawak, and the Sarawak Forestry Corporation.

The day started after lunch and continued close to midnight. Limited to 100 participants to reduce the impact on the vegetation and fauna, the event received an overwhelming response, with participants from all parts of Malaysia. Sama Jaya Nature Reserve is an appropriate venue for the event, the 'park within the city' being home to as many as 16 species of amphibians, and countless other life forms, from Colugo, Tarsier, and Pitta to Flying Lizard and Pitcher Plant.

All activities were held at the Activity Centre of the Nature Reserve and included talks, an exhibition of amphibian memorabilia and books, a sale of food and drinks, and near the end of the day, a photographic race along a pre-designated trail within the Centre, where participants competed against each other to obtain photographs of the most number of species (within a two-hour time period), as well as those that were to be judged for their aesthetics, in two different categories (DSLR, compact and mirrorless cameras on one hand, and mobile phones on the other). This year, a new category- night photography, was added to the event. Race participants received a generous goodie-bag, containing a T-shirt and other items specifically made for the event. The event was flagged off by the CEO of Sarawak Forestry Corporation, in the presence of Assoc Prof. Dr. Wong Sin Yeng, Deputy Director of the Institute of Biodiversity and Environmental Conservation, Universiti Malaysia Sarawak.

The International Speaker for the event was Emeritus Professor, Dr Richard Griffiths of the University of Canterbury, who spoke on conservation success stories from around the world, entitled "Around the World in 80 Frogs: Tales of Saving Endangered Amphibians".

Other talks included "Getting Creative with Your Photographic Compositions" by Ms Siti Shahida binti Kamel of the Faculty of Creative Arts, UNIMAS, "Land of the Rising Sun: In Search of Frogs and the Giant Salamander in Japan" by Dr Elvy Quatrin Deka of the Faculty of Resource Science and Technology, UNIMAS, and "10 Years of the Frog Race" by Prof Dr Indraneil Das of IBEC. Safety briefings before the Race were given by Awang Sjahrir, Park Warden of Sama Jaya Nature Reserve, and the rules of The 10th International Bornean Frog Race 2023 were described by Pui Yong Min. The generous prizes (cash as well as in-kind) were awarded close to midnight, based on the recommendations of the panel of judges for the event, each a distinguished photographer and/or naturalist.

The International Bornean Frog Race is a copyright protected by the Institute of Biodiversity and Environmental Conservation, Universiti Malaysia Sarawak, and held annually with a partnering organisation, initially, with the Camp Permai Resort, and in the next eight editions, with the Sarawak Forestry Corporation. It brings to the fore the great beauty and diversity of Borneo's amphibian fauna, and at the same time, highlights the importance of forests and wetlands for maintaining biodiversity.

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