

Green Holiday in Taiwan

[13th to 16th Spt. 2014]

Guandu ● Keelung
● Taipei



International conservation volunteer tour for swallows and wetlands

Green Holiday is quite a new concept for tourism developed by Wild Bird Society of Japan, which entails practical conservation work, lectures set up with NGOs and the local people. The main focus was Barn swallows, a common bird in both Taiwan and Japan. There were 23 volunteers from Wild Bird Society of Japan, about 60 Taiwanese volunteers in total, 160 local school students and teachers joined the wetland conservation work for Barn swallows in a 4 days 3 nights programme. We also had active discussion among each NGO on how to promote conservation of nature, and visited local school which started swallow observation programme with children.

Guandu Nature Park, Taipei-city (working with the Wild Bird Society of Taipei)



Clean up the ponds
to protect foraging
site for swallows



Chu-hong lake, Keelung-city (working with the Wild Bird Society of Keelung)

There are many dragonflies and insects living around the Chu-hong lake, and provide swallows a buffet of food. The wetland habitat was slightly altered 2 years ago by eutrophication caused by nesting egrets. In the summer season, the water surface is covered with water lettuce and it decreases the habitat for dragonflies and other insects. We worked with local volunteers to remove water lettuce to protect the delicate wetland ecosystem for dragonflies and to enhance the foraging site for the swallows.

Barn Swallows
roost watch at
Wugu wetland



Local voice from the Chu-hong lake



Japanese volunteers came such a long way showing the importance of wetland conservation. Thanks to this conservation work on Chu-hong lake, we have been able to bring international attention and the Keelung City government should really consider how to make this habitat an National Important Wetland. (Mr.Chen , a local political leader of Xinyi District, Keelung)

Communication with local school

(working with Shen-Mei Elementary School)



The Shen-Mei Elementary School (Keelung City) has started a Barn swallow observation programme since Feb 2013 and the children who joined the surveys gave a presentation of the 1st survey results for us.

The children watched and counted the barn swallow nests and observed the environment in the neighbourhood of their school. They found the nests on the corridor of the buildings with eaves and walls made of concrete, rather than tile. There are very few nests at the new styled building without eaves which were recently constructed in a new town. Increasingly, the new construction styled buildings in the school's neighbourhood, are causing a loss of habitat for barn swallows.

Children have noticed those environmental changes through the swallow observation programme. The school teacher expressed

"Introducing the swallow observation as a school activity, and the children have responded

very sincerely, finding interest in not only swallows but any other creatures they came across in the neighbourhood, such as insects, plants, and raptors flying overhead. The effect is more than we could have expected."



Volunteers' Voice



Pum Soontornkit

(A volunteer from Japan)

International Green Holiday brought together people of different ages, sexes, occupations and nations. It gave all of us chances to get our hands dirty and sweat from hard work, and by feeling, and touching our mother natures. It made us feel and realize why we need to save and preserve our environment and ecology together. The trip also helped us to appreciate the importance of natures and our ecology system naturally.

With many activities from field works, exchanges ideas and knowledges with local participants, we got so many chances to see many wild birds, dragonflies, butterflies and most impressively barn swallow roost. By working and seeing, we knew our work to save our natures and ecology were in fact, not for anyone else, but for ourselves, our future generations and our future environments.

I have gained so much from this trip, not just realized the importance of natures, but gained the priceless experience and friendship among the participants both Japanese and Taiwanese.

Work to save our environment can't be done just by one country, one person, and one time.

And we don't need to be physically strong to get involved in such program. The love of nature is by heart and passion in each individual.



Local voice from NGO



Victor Yu

(Ecotourism Taiwan)

The first Green Holiday in Taiwan has worked at 2 wetland, Guandu Nature Park in Taipei City and Chu-hong lake in Keelung City. It has worked and had cross communication

more or less with volunteers from Wild Bird Society of Taipei, Wilderness Association, Wild Bird Society of Keelung, Xinyi District of Keelung City, and Shen Mei Elementary School. Volunteers from Japan worked very serious and hard under hot summer sun which has touched the heart of Taiwan people deeply. They shared common enthusiasm of nature conservation and for the love of Swallows. It also mutually enhanced the belief that it's our responsibility to work for nature conservation with more effort. The working spirit and the concept of nature conservation should be shared with more people. This is the first time Wild Bird Society of Japan and Ecotourism Taiwan worked together for GH-Taiwan. It has created a small ripple in the pond. We firmly believe the ripple will be and can be larger through our close cooperation.

