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Tajuk : Five Scholars To Speak At Wallace Conference.

Five scholars to speak at Wallace conference

KOTA SAMARAHAN: Universiti Malaysia Sarawak (Unimas) will be holding the 2nd International Conference on 'Alfred Russel Wallace (Wallace 2013) - His Predecessor and Successors Naturalists, Explores and Field Scientist in South-East Asia and Australasia' - on Nov 7 and 8 at the Riverside Majestic Hotel here.

The Wallace 2013 will be held to honour the remarkable contribution of Alfred Russel Wallace in science, biodiversity conservation and humanity.

It is jointly organised by Unimas' Institute of Biodiversity and Environmental Conservation (IBEC), Department of Sarawak Museum and Sarawak Forestry Corporation (SFC), and supported by Sarawak Convention Bureau (SCB).

A publicity release issued yesterday pointed out that the first event was held in 2005 in celebration of 150 years of his explorations in Sarawak.

It aims to bring together historians, natural scientists, ecologists, zoologists, botanists, paleontologists, anthropologists,

geologists, park managers, and other scholars of the natural sciences to share their experience on ecology, evolution and resource management of the region, as A R Wallace did in his lifetime before his death on Nov 7, 1913.

At the conference, five international scholars will present their talks.

Earl of Cranbrook from the United Kingdom will talk about 'Alfred Russel Wallace and his Southeast Asian Heritage' and Prof Emeritus Yong Hoi Sen from Academy Science of Malaysia will present a talk on 'Phylogenetics and Systematics of Animal Life'.

Prof Charles H Smith from Western Kentucky University, USA, will give a video presentation on 'Wallace and Incipient Structures: A World of 'More Recondite Influences' and Paul Spencer Sochaczewski from Switzerland will talk on 'An Inordinate Fondness for Beetles. The Hero's Journey of Alfred Russel Wallace in South-east Asia'.

Darren J Mann from Oxford University Museum of Natural History will present a talk on

'Wallace Insects in Oxford - Their History and Value'.

In addition to this, an expert on Hornbills of Southeast Asia, Associate Prof Dr Vijak Chimchome from the Kasetsart University of Bangkok, will give a keynote lecture at a special session dedicated to hornbills at the conference.

Presently, 53 delegates have registered their attendance, representing Australia, Brunei, Germany, USA, the United Kingdom, Switzerland, Singapore, Japan, the Philippines, Indonesia, Thailand and Pakistan.

In conjunction with the conference, an official tour to Gunung Serambu, a Wallace collection locality, will be held on Nov 9.

An expedition relevant to the conference theme will be organised between Nov 1 and 18 at Gunung Santubong, where Wallace collected and wrote his monumental paper, now referred to as 'The Sarawak Law'.

The organiser will also be holding an Essay Writing Competition aimed at enhancing awareness among school students

on the contributions of Alfred Russel Wallace, with the hope that students will acquire new knowledge and information through their research for their essay.

The competition is open to all secondary school students (Forms 1-6) in Sarawak.

The competition offers first prize of RM1,000, second prize of RM750 and third prize of RM500 while 10 shortlisted candidates will receive RM50 for best essays as well as certificates.

The winners will be required to read their essays at the conference. Return airfare and accommodation will be provided for the winners and one accompanying parent or guardian.

Details of the above events and entry form can be found at the Conference Website <<http://www.unimas.my/Wallace2013/>>, or contact the organisers Prof Dr Andrew Alek Tuen (082-582997/019-8125960) Associate Prof Dr Alexander K. Sayok (082-582994/019-8280614), Jongkar Grinang (082-582993/013-5788110), Cindy Peter (016-8926027) or email to wallace2013@unimas.my.