

Lantau Conservation Fund

Research Project

Project Number	RE-2022-13
Recipient Organisation	The Chinese University of Hong Kong
Project Title	Flora conservation and appreciation on Lantau Island: Hong Kong Azalea and Hong Kong Asarum
Project Description*	<p>The Lantau harbours a wealth of native flora with high conservation value, thanks to its diverse types of habitats ranging from mountainous terrains to indigenous forests. For instance, Hong Kong Azalea (<i>Rhododendron hongkongense</i> Hutch.) is the only vulnerable Azalea species found at high altitudes in Hong Kong including Lantau (Supplementary Figure S1). Besides, Hong Kong Asarum (<i>Asarum hongkongense</i> S. M. Hwang & T. P. Wong Siu) is endemic to Lantau with very narrow distribution and is recognised as critically endangered (Supplementary Figure S2). For this reason, this project aims to conserve and reveal the beauty of Lantau flora to the general public with the support of scientific research on these two representative floral species.</p> <p>In this 30-month project, the distribution range, habitat types and population size will be documented for the two flora species of conservation concern. Their genetic diversity and population uniqueness will also be assessed through population genomics with state-of-the-art sequencing technologies. More importantly, these scientific findings will be delivered to the general public via e-learning platforms as well as talks and workshops with a view to arouse their awareness in Lantau conservation.</p>

Project Period	1 January 2024 to 30 June 2026 (30 months)
Approved Grant	\$2,424,540

*The project description is provided by the project proponent