

嶼海遺珠

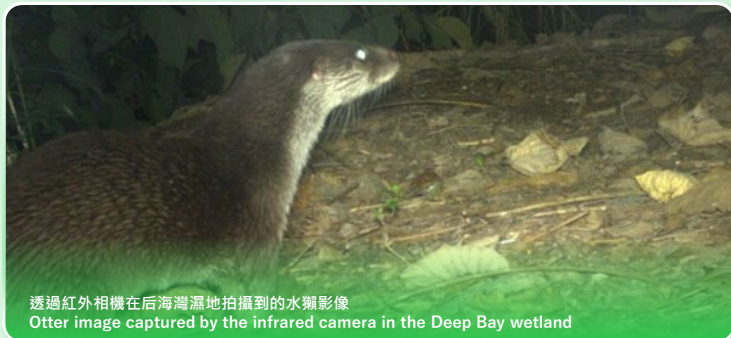
大嶼山考「獺」計劃

Forgotten but not Gone:
Lantau Otter Conservation Project

RE-2024-04

研究項目
Research Projects

嘉道理農場暨植物園
Kadoorie Farm and Botanic
Garden Corporation



嶼海遺珠 - 大嶼山考「獺」計劃

你知道香港還有水獺嗎？

曾幾何時，江河密布的珠三角地區是水獺的天堂。在香港，牠們的足跡曾遍布包括大嶼山在內的全港水域，如今卻主要局限於后海灣一帶，且面臨著極高的本地滅絕風險。作為濕地生態系中的頂級掠食者，水獺具有重要的保育價值，但相關研究卻仍十分不足。

相隔逾半世紀，嘉道理農場暨植物園水獺研究團隊於2024年意外地在大嶼山水域的大小磨刀海岸公園重新發現歐亞水獺蹤跡，為本港水獺保育帶來嶄新的希望。

大嶼山至今仍保留不少紅樹林、河口等濕地生境和天然海岸；十分適宜水獺生存。本計劃將啟動首個大嶼山水獺專項調查，範圍涵蓋整全島沿岸地區以及大小磨刀海岸公園。調查團隊將透過蹤跡樣線調查，並引入「保育犬」協助搜索，結合非入侵性基因檢測方法及紅外相機監測，以全面探查大嶼山內是否仍存在尚未被發現的水獺種群。此外，項目亦進行訪問調查和棲息地現狀評估，進一步釐清大嶼山水獺在過去與當前在大嶼山的分佈狀況及生存威脅，並據此提出相關保育建議。此外，項目亦將舉辦水獺主題的推廣活動，以提升公眾對水獺保育的意識。

Forgotten but not Gone: Lantau Otter Conservation Project

Do you know that otters still exist in Hong Kong?

Once upon a time, the Pearl River Delta, with its dense network of waterways and wetlands, was a paradise for otters. In Hong Kong, their footprints were once found across all waters, including Lantau Island; today, however, they are largely restricted to the Deep Bay area and face a high risk of local extinction. As a top predator in the wetland ecosystems, otters play a vital role in maintaining ecological balance and therefore hold significant conservation value in Hong Kong, yet they remain understudied locally.

In 2024, after more than half a century, the otter research team of Kadoorie Farm and Botanic Garden (KFBG) unexpectedly rediscovered a verified sign of Eurasian otter in the Brothers Marine Park in northern Lantau waters, bringing new hope for otter conservation in Hong Kong.

Lantau Island boasts many natural wetlands and coastal areas, such as mangroves and estuaries, that provide suitable habitats for otters. This project will launch the first comprehensive otter survey on Lantau, covering its entire coastal region and the Brothers Marine Park. Survey methods include otter sign transect surveys, the use of conservation detection dogs to assist in searches, non-invasive genetic analysis, and infrared camera trapping. These multiple research methods aim to determine whether there is still an undiscovered otter population exists on Lantau. Additionally, through interviews and habitat assessments, the project will also evaluate the past and present distribution and status of otters on Lantau, as well as the threats they face, to inform evidence-based conservation recommendations. A series of otter-themed outreach activities will also be organised to raise public awareness and engagement in otter conservation.

