

OBITUARY: TONY WHITTEN (1953–2017)

Tony Whitten, who died in a cycling accident on 29 November 2017, was a passionate advocate for conservation, in particular the fauna and flora of SE Asia, and provided an important link between the taxonomic and conservation communities. For the last five years he was the Asia-Pacific Regional Director at Fauna & Flora International, and more recently a Senior Advisor.

His PhD was on the interactions between gibbons and forest plants on Siberut Island, west of Sumatra. While working at the University of North Sumatra he initiated the highly acclaimed *Ecology of Indonesia Series*, writing three volumes himself. He had a particular interest in the cement industry and its impacts on limestone-restricted habitats and the biodiversity it supported. During his 20 years with the World Bank he initiated projects on the forgotten biodiversity of caves and karst, in addition to providing

advice on habitat and species protection, and running programmes to produce local language field guides to plants and animals.

He gave an inspiring keynote speech at the 10th Flora Malesiana Symposium, entitled *The Trees I Have Loved and Lost*. Here, he reflected on the changes in forest cover that he had witnessed over the past 40-plus years in the Malesian region, and the ever-increasing number of species that had become highly threatened. With typical optimism, however, he also encouraged us to focus on the positive impacts the *Flora Malesiana* project can have on species conservation in Malesia.

Peter Wilkie, Edinburgh



Photo: Sarah Rakowski.