



香港教育大學

The Education University
of Hong Kong

REFLECTION OF AN ECOLOGICAL STUDY TOUR IN JILIN, CHINA (2016)

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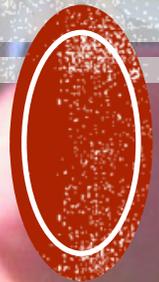
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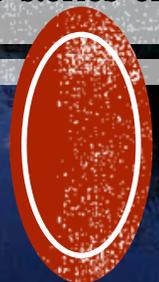
Momoge

Located in northwestern of Jilin Province, Momoge National Nature Reserve is a wetland that area size larger than that of Hong Kong. Momoge means “mum” in Mongolian and connects the Inner Mongolia. The wetland nourishes various water birds, including the endangered and precious red-crowned crane.

The Momoge Reserve is an important habitat for a variety of migratory birds and the breeding site of endangered bird species, such as cranes, storks and swans. In the path of migration, waterfowls stop for food and rest at the reserve. More than 10 species of First-class National Protected Birds survive here. There are six kinds of cranes live in Momoge, as there are 15 species totally over the world. The region consists of low plain wetlands, meadow, rivers, lakes and swamps. It is a typical wetland biological system.

Momoge National Nature Reserve is opened to public for tourism, aims to balance the environmental conservation and financial support. However, the wetland encounters the degradation problem, attributing to climate change and human activities such as overgrazing.

In the daytime, we investigated the animal population and observed the behaviours of water birds. At night, we could see clearly the starry sky with minimum light pollution. The twinkle stars seemed like telling the stories of cosmos from afar.



The Songnen Grassland

Being located in the eastern of China but the western area of Jilin, the climate of Songnen Grassland belongs to warm temperate continental monsoon. The four seasons are clearly cut in that arena. With abundant forage grass, the Songnen Grassland is also an outstanding field for grazing and mowing. On an experimental day, a crowd of sheep were seen.

In the trip, the Songnen grassland is visited for the survey of insects and plants. In the survey of flora, two different kinds of grassland were involved. Data including the biomass, species, coverage and the location is recorded. By comparing the two grasslands, it can be shown that the composition of flora would be changed if there was overgrazing. Also, some of the characteristics of desertification were studied.

The trip there was composed of fascination. It was the first time for most of us to catch insects and view them in a really intimate distance; the first time to chase after the natural friends and the first time to lay on a ground with such an enormous blue sky in a blockage-free horizon. The gains were priceless and awesome.

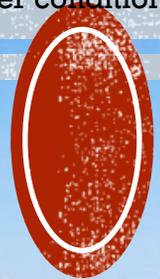


The Haven Lake

Heaven Lake is highly recommended in our promotion poster and some of us joined this trip because it is a unique opportunity to see the largest Crater Lake at China. It is also the deepest lake which is located at the boundary between China and North Korea so it is interesting to see the broader line divided the surrounding peak and the lake into two parts.

The high precipitation is related to the interception of the vertical vegetation zone at Changbai Mountain as well as the convergence of maritime airstream and continental airstream. Rainwater gathered and formed the lake which is also the source of Songhua River, Tumen River and Yalu River. It also formed other natural landscapes such as Changbai Waterfall and hot springs. Whereas the adequate moisture and the temperature at different levels of Changbai Mountain, five types of vegetation girdle from Temperate Zone to Frigid Zone survived simultaneously. On the way of going downhill, the driver introduced us the plant from Frigid Zone for example Changbai Sedge (*Carex peiktusanii* Kom.).

It is obvious that there is precious geographic and ecological value at Changbai Mountain but we need to consider that how can we maintain the sustainable development since the number of tourists may exceed the carrying capacity of the habitat. Too many tourists would lead to more construction related to transportation and housing that destruct the habitats. Therefore, we should set up a longer period for an injunction of entrance which is not just for consideration of weather condition.

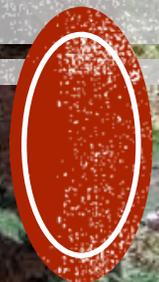


Eastern Jilin forests

The two forests we visited are located in the Eastern part of Jilin. With the name meaning “forest of fortune”, Jilin covers a wide diversity of the forest. Different types of forests located making Jilin an excellent field for forest investigation

Numerous of forests are visited throughout the trip. Two of them were selected for the survey. They were Korean pine (*Pinus koraiensis*) mixed broadleaf-conifer forest and White Birch (*Betula platyphylla*) secondary forest. Different sizes of quadrats are used in forests for the herbaceous plant, woody trees and branches. In each quadrat, the sample of mug and mulch are collected apart from the general data of plants.

The process was filled with fun and joy. It was wonderful to take part in the survey. Having lunch by the roadside and sharing the lunch together are great for us to build friendship between each other. Observing strange berries in the forest; laughing at each other; taking amusing photos of each other being the memorable parts for us to enjoy and cherish.



Longwan National Nature Reserve

It is worthwhile to visit a site with great ecological significance. Longwan is the largest distribution of maar lakes which are ancient volcanic landscapes in China. Maar lakes are formed due to the volcanic eruption in ancient times. Thus, the scenery has remained just like the past. It is a site with high biodiversity since a great number of vertebrates and invertebrates could be observed, for example the wetlands are formed by swampiness like Han Longwan. It was open eyes for us to see the transformation of the landscape in the nearby area. Also, it is an ideal habitat for endangered species since sufficient conservation is provided within this conservation zone. For instance, little Brown Bears are being taken care of at Longwan.

The most memorable thing is that we could enjoy the natural scenery by taking a boat. Although it was rainy on that day, we could still have a look at the view, with the clear distribution of lake and forest. It is though a pity to go sightseeing while raining since the color of the sky, which was grey then, would mirror on the lake surface. However, it was amusing to go viewing with many “wizards” since all of us were wearing cloaks.

