

UMS' ITBC plays host to international conference

on ants

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KOTA KINABALU: The Institute of Tropical Biology and Conservation (ITBC) of Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS) played host to the ninth ANeT International Conference on Ants, here, Monday.

It has been almost 13 years since the last ANeT conference was held in UMS. The theme of the conference this year, scheduled for Oct 28-Nov 1, is 'Ant Ecology, Evolution and Taxonomy - Asian Myrmecology in 21st Century'.

This conference is specific to the study and research of ants and for those who study them to present their research papers to others in the ANeT community.

The members of this community have contributed to this field of study in the cataloguing of ant diversity in Borneo and the promoting of ant taxonomy in Asia.

The aim of this conference is to provide a forum for Asian ant researchers to update their research activities and findings while also being the venue for fostering potential research collaborations between institutions.

Participants of this conference will make an excursion to Crocker Range for further research and sample taking of the local ants.

Officiating the event was UMS Senior Officer cum UMS Head Librarian, Dayang Rukiah Awang Amit representing UMS Vice-Chancellor, Datuk Mohd. Harun Abdullah. Also present was ANeT President, Himender Bharti from the University of Patiala, India.

"It's about time that Asian myrmecologists explore other avenues like molecular biology, ecology and phylogenetics so as to generate a holistic view regarding Asian ants," said Himender

He added that the different disciplines will not only help to bridge the gap in the community's knowledge, but will also allow young researchers to explore different possibilities. - Aaron Totu