NUS National University of Singapore

Department of Biological Sciences
Faculty of Science

SEMINAR

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Hosted by A/P Edward Webb



The big role of Large Carnivores in the functioning of ecosystems

By

Robert Steinmetz

Large carnivores are being lost from ecosystems around the world. This has traditionally been viewed as an ethical problem. But research now reveals far-reaching cascading effects of their disappearance in marine, terrestrial, and freshwater ecosystems worldwide. It turns out that large carnivores have crucial stabilizing role in most ecosystems, affecting even the structure, composition, and dynamics of vegetation. I will discuss the roles that large carnivores play in ecosystems, with examples from terrestrial and marine ecosystems, then present a case study from research into carnivore interactions in Thailand. Finally I will present results from conservation efforts to recover large carnivores and their prey. During the talk there will be a few fun quizzes.

About the speaker

Rob Steinmetz is an ecologist working with WWF Thailand. He has worked in Southeast Asia for 23 years, conducting ecological research, training, and conservation projects in Thailand, Lao PDR, Cambodia, Bangladesh, and Bhutan. His research focuses on wildlife and vegetation ecology. Rob works closely with local farmers, indigenous people, and protected area officials to design, implement, and monitor interventions to recover wildlife populations from the crisis of overhunting that plagues Southeast Asia.

Artwork by Ann Nee, DBS, NUS