NUS National University of Singapore | Department of Biological Sciences, Faculty of Science

SEMINAR

Wed 11 Oct 2017 | 3pm | S1A 02-17

Hosted by Dr. Chong Kwek Yan (DBS) & Dr. Benjamin Lee (NParks)

Conserving Schrodinger's Cat:
how do we know if a species is extinct?



By **David Roberts**

Reader in Biodiversity Conservation at the Durrell Institute of Conservation and Ecology at the University of Kent, UK.

We are entering a time of great environmental uncertainty, however understanding the impact of such changes relies on the correct classification of species and population in terms of threat of extinction. One of the most difficult classifications is whether a species is or is not extinct. Knowing if a species persists or not has important implications not only to understanding extinction rates but the effective utilisation of resources. In this talk we will look at the use of sighting data for estimating extinction dates, the issues that arise with using such data, for example sighting uncertainty, and the future direction of research in this area.

Bio: *Dr David Roberts is a Reader in Biodiversity Conservation at the Durrell Institute of Conservation and Ecology at the University of Kent. Prior to arriving at DICE in 2010, he worked in the orchid herbarium at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, for over 8 years specialising in orchids of Africa and the Western Indian Ocean Islands, as well as research on the role of museum specimen data in conservation assessments. Currently, David's research forms two strands: the first on modelling extinction dates using sighting data and the second, aspects of the wildlife trade from livelihoods to the trade over the Darkweb.*

Artwork by Ann Nee, DBS, NUS