The Management of the New Important Yearly Collection

The Museum started collecting fish specimens in 1991 when Mr. Tsan, Chien-ping donated a batch of fish specimens mainly gathered from the Dajia River.

During September and October of 2002, we had an opportunity to join a collection tour to Guanxi, China. During the visit, a batch of the freshwater fish specimens was obtained, including rarely seen cave fish, Oreonectes anophthalmus, and Sinocyclocheilus yishanensis. As a result, the Museum started to think about establishing a proper collection of fish specimens. This idea received the support from Chief Li, Academic Deputy Director Chou (who is also the chief of the Herpetology Division of the Zoology Department), and Dr. Chao, chair of the Zoology Department. Afterwards, with the mobilization of staff and resources at that time, the registry number was confirmed to follow the same collection rules in the Herpetology Division of the Zoology Department. Eventually, the official collection and management procedure of fish specimens were established.

At the beginning of 2004, after a year of trials and errors, the Museum only accumulated over 200 fish specimens for a total of 680 pieces. Most of the fish specimens were freshwater fish from creeks and rivers of Taiwan. By then the Museum started to sort out the harbor fish specimens preserved in the storeroom (which were mostly brought back by Mr. Lee, Kun-Hsuan and Mr. Hong, He-tian of the Invertebrate Division from the scrap fish piles at the harbor). In addition, the Museum conducted a collection investigation at Dapeng Bay in Pingtung (with the Research Center of Biodiversity, Academia Sinica) and another one in Chigu Lagoon in Tainan. After that, in response to the invitation of Dr. Shao, Kwang-Tsao from the Research Center of Biodiversity of Academia Sinica, we listed the collection information of our fish specimens on the website of the Fish Database of Taiwan (http://fishdb.sinica.edu.tw) and synchronize our collection information with the relevant ichthyology databases after obtaining approval from the appropriate authorities. The links available to six other advanced fish specimen databases: the Academia Sinica, National Museum of Marine Science and Technology, National Taiwan Museum, National Museum of Marine Biology and Aquarium, and Fisheries Research Institute, as well as to the international fish information database, FishBase (http://fishbase.org). The content is updated once in every quarter.

Due to the limited staff and resources, the Museum will mainly collect endemic freshwater fish with regional features in the initial stage of fish specimen collection. The acquisition of freshwater fish specimens was supported by many people who either provided relevant information or donations. Apart from scattered field collection, the Museum also works or exchanges specimens with other academic institutes to assist them in handling or examining the fish specimens they collected for research projects. For example, we worked with Guo, Jhong-siou from Feng Chia University, and Huang, Rong-fu from National Kaohsiung Marine University. These approaches significantly increased the number of our specimen collection. The scrap fish piles from Dasi fishing port and Donggang market were very important collecting sites for fish specimens.

Apart from increasing the species and quantities of our collection, we also hope to make good use of these species for academic research. The purpose of making the collection information public is to allow the general public to know the current status of the specimen collection in the Museum and encourage experts to use these specimens as much as possible.

Major Collection and Research Results

- Crossostoma lacustre
  - Collecting fish specimens with cast net.