



Asian Turtle Program Indo - Myanmar Conservation

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Indo-Myanmar
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IN SEARCH OF THE LEGEND

The Story of the World's Rarest Turtle

In Search of the Legend is the story of the world's rarest turtle a short, informal review of the Swinhoe's Softshell Turtle (*Rafetus swinhoei*), a species on the brink of extinction for which only three living animals are currently known.

The story was written shortly after Dr Peter Pritchard and Sibille Pritchard visited Vietnam in 2015. Peter had long been interested in the species and had been involved in a number of surveys with us in the early 2000s. It was a fantastic opportunity and privilege for us to spend time with such an amazing man and turtle expert who sadly passed away on the 25th of February 2020.

The review covers some of the background on the species and work spanning over a decade by the Asian Turtle Program (ATP) of Indo Myanmar Conservation (IMC). During this period, we have worked to better understand the species, identifying the only two known wild individuals, along with over a dozen possible sites in which the species might survive and have worked with the our partners and authorities in Vietnam to develop a plan to protect the species.

The story was written for a magazine that chose not to publish it, but we prepared it for release nonetheless and have now decided to share it here. It only covers our activity up until 2016 when this was written and we have so many new updated and development to add. We hope to share more updates on progress in the conservation of the species soon.

We hope you enjoy the story '[In Search of The Legend](#)'.

From Tim McCormack and the whole ATP/IMC team.

[Link to view the book online](#)

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Dr Peter Pritchard with skull of *Rafetus swinhoei* during interviews in Thanh Hoa province in 2004.
Photo by: Timothy McCormack – IMC/ATP

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By Timothy McCormack, Pham Van Thong, Dr Peter Pritchard, Sibille Pritchard,
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In Search of the Legend - The Story of the
World's Rarest Turtle (book cover)