

Friday, 27 April 2018 | **10am** | DBS Conference Room 1

Hosted by A/P Peter Todd

Dead Men Tell No Tales But Dead Plants Do:

Herbarium Specimens
Provide Clues About Recent Environmental Changes

By Lawrence M. Liao

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Herbarium specimens deposited in museums around the world have traditionally been used to support taxonomic studies. Lately, new uses have been identified on top of their traditional roles. Some histological and chemical features therein have been used to describe and relate with changing environmental conditions, providing proxy data potentially useful for studies in climate and environmental change. In this presentation, examples from flowering plants and marine algae showing variability in phenology and morphological characteristics including their presence or absence have been used for mapping general community changes through time and space, biogeographical shifts, invasion history, urbanization and other anthropogenic impacts, affording a record of the recent past even if sketchy and perhaps, a peek into the future.

About the speaker

Associate Professor Lawrence Liao has worked with hundreds of herbarium specimens as part of his research on the taxonomy of marine algae in the USA and Southeast Asia. He took graduate courses at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and the University of the Philippines and was a recipient of a research fellowship in museums management at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C. Still very much active within the ASEAN network of seaweed taxonomists, he is completing a seaweed database of the South China Sea. He is the president of the Association of Systematic Biologists of the Philippines and currently holds a teaching appointment at the Graduate School of Biosphere Science of Hiroshima University.

