

Date: Weds, Oct 9th
Time: 14:00 (UTC+8)
Venue: 3N01 + Zoom



Virulence, host specialization, & trait-mediated indirect effects of a prevalent butterfly parasite



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Emily is a PhD student in the Global Change and Tropical Conservation Lab, where she studies butterfly-parasite interactions and butterfly migration. Formerly at HKU, she served as insect curator for HKBM's collaboration with K11 Musea. She has a master's in ecology and is broadly interested in how plants mediate trophic interactions.



ALL ARE WELCOME!



Abstract

Parasites rival predators in their ability to structure ecological communities, but as a group they have been vastly understudied. To investigate how microparasites mediate local trophic interactions, I sampled wild butterflies for the presence of spore-forming parasites. I identified prevalent infections of an unknown protozoa in *Danaus chrysippus chrysippus* (Nymphalidae: Danainae), a locally uncommon butterfly native to Hong Kong. For my dissertation, I will 1) assess parasite niche specialization and dose-dependent effects on host life history, and 2) examine the indirect trait-mediated effects of infection: that is, how infection status influences host plant preferences by female butterflies and how these preferences, in turn, affect offspring infection susceptibility and survival.

