

## International Program Description

Biodiversity, Agriculture and Culture in Taiwan (BACT) was a summer program requiring daily blog entries about our personal experiences, and a final report on a research project conducted at the National Taiwan University Experimental Forest. The course entailed attending lectures at NTU, several field activities such as rice seeding and harvesting, and extensive travel to places like the Phoenix Tea farm throughout the country to examine biodiversity. Overall my personal experience with this program has offered me the opportunity to interact with and form lasting friendships with international students as well as provide a hands on experience to discover and understand a different culture, environment, and perspective.



Taipei 101, Taiwan's tallest building, is home to the fastest elevator in the world with a speed of 1010 meters per second



Ju Ming's Soldiers a famous Taiwanese artist

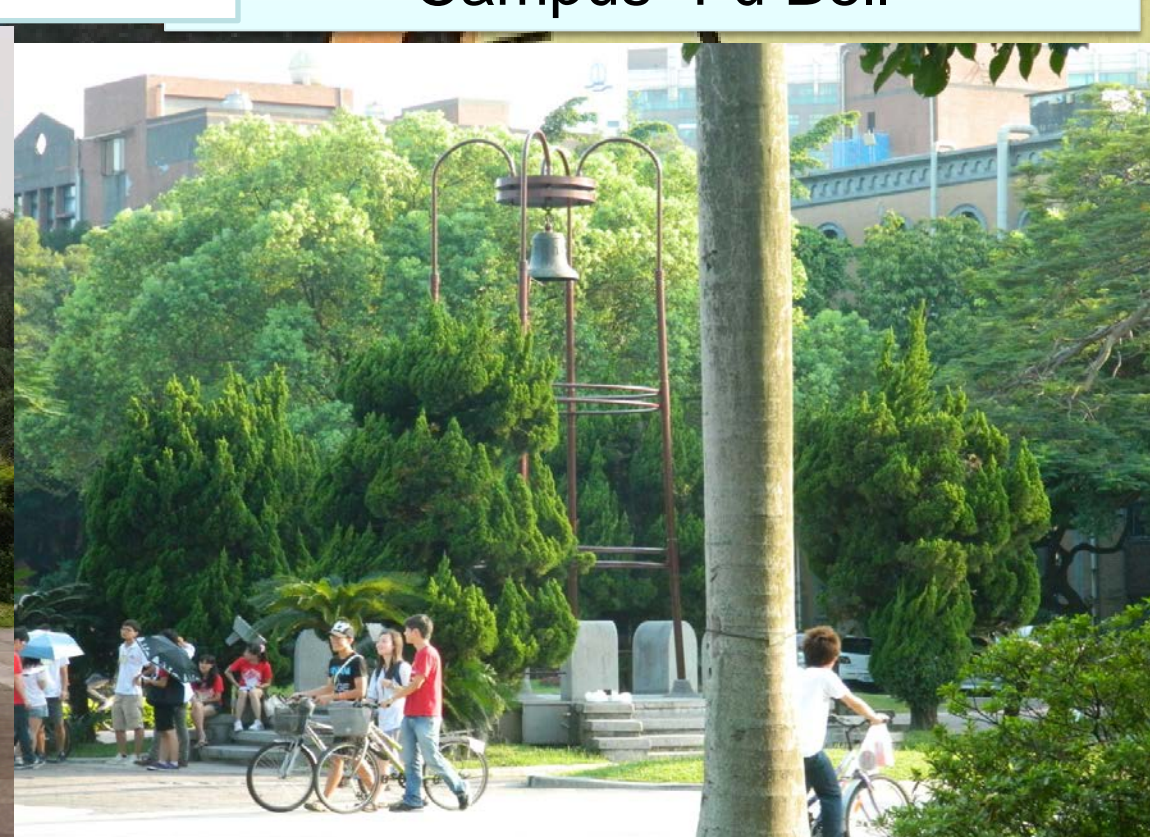
National Taiwan University Campus- Fu Bell



Mushroom Rock



Harvested my first sugar beet and rice bundle



Shiin Night Market



Corinne and I about to release our sky lanterns in Shifen

## Internship Objectives and Research

My personal goal of this trip was to interact with and explore Taiwan's native landscape while grasping the cultural, economic, social, and environmental differences that make up Taiwanese society. More specifically, in line with the research project, my aim was to conduct research on the biodiversity of Taiwan's animals and plants to learn about their unique differences, especially tree ferns.

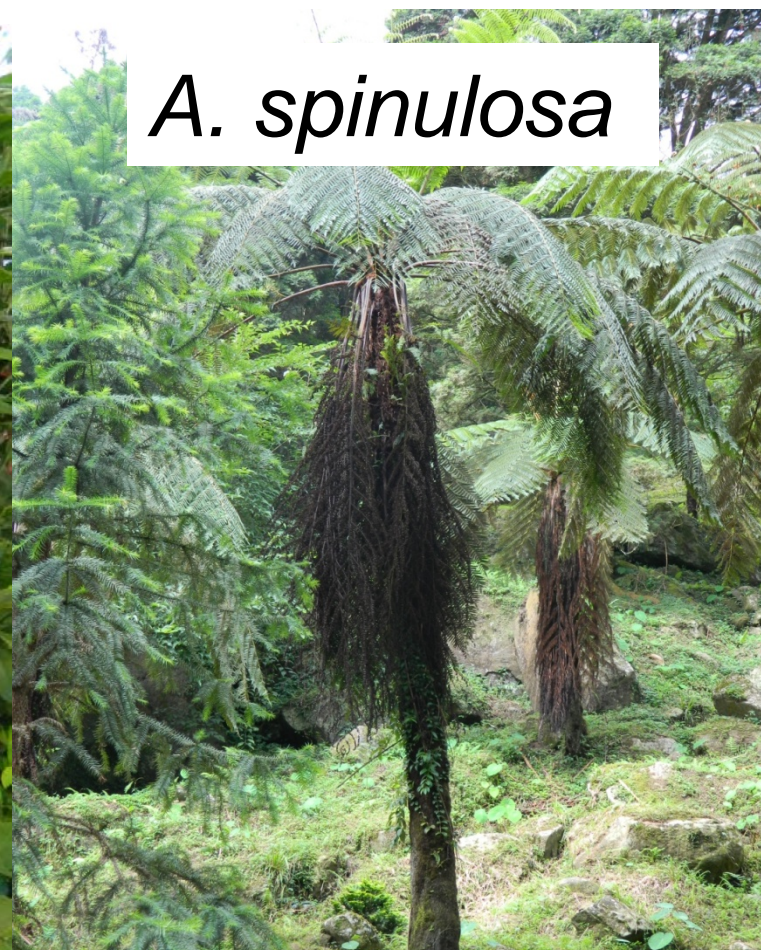
From the moment I landed in Taiwan, I fell in love. This small country had so much to offer from the night life to the amazing view. Whether it was visiting the Dharma Drum Mountain Buddhist Temple to taking Chinese class, every moment felt so surreal. I feel as if I only saw a quarter of the island with still so much more to see! I'm already anticipating my return and can't wait to go back!

## Perspective and Career Goals

The emphasis that the Taiwanese place on conservation and the environment made me realize that we could do much more to implement sustainable practices for future generations in the US. The Taiwanese society puts more effort into recycling, composting, and alternative energy, to minimize imports and waste. Fundamentally, I've become more aware that different approaches and tactics may be needed for dealing with environmental issues in different regions of the world. This experience inspires me to pursue research that may lead to new discoveries that will improve sustainable development in our country. As a BESC major, I think it is essential to gain a broader perspective of the world to help solve environmental problems we face now and as they arise in the future.



Local flower market selling orchids between \$2-\$3 USD



*A. spinulosa*



*S. lepifera*



The leaf stalks of *Sphaeropteris lepifera* (Common Tree Fern) appear green and have a golden base, whereas the leaf stalks of *Alsophila spinulosa* (Taiwan Tree Fern) have a brown and spiky base. The trunk of *S. lepifera* have snake like oval scars and *A. spinulosa* does not. Based on Figure 1, it was concluded that a trend of unhealthy tree ferns seemed to occur in clusters of two or three, with dead ferns nearby in both the Fern Park and Bird

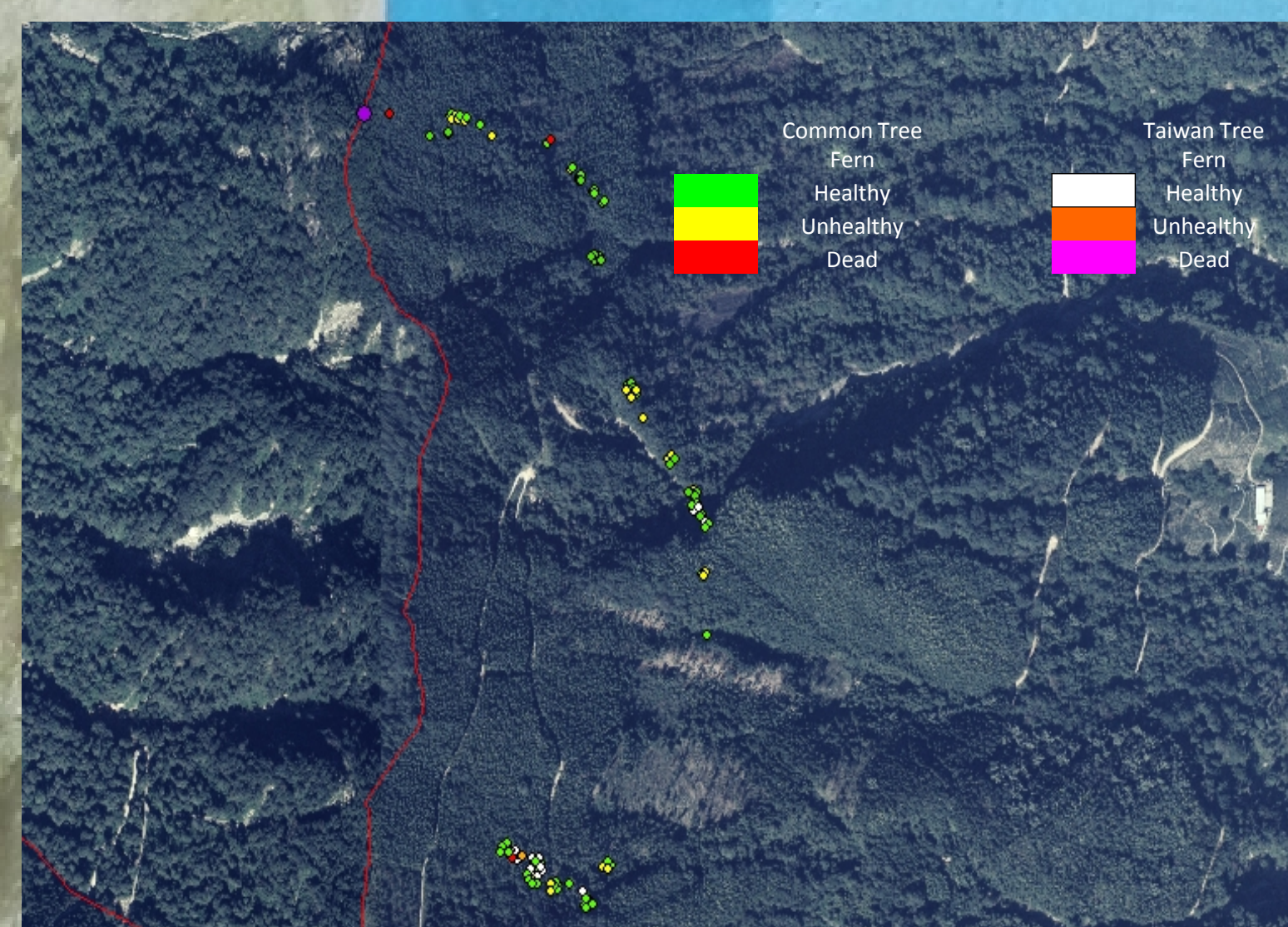
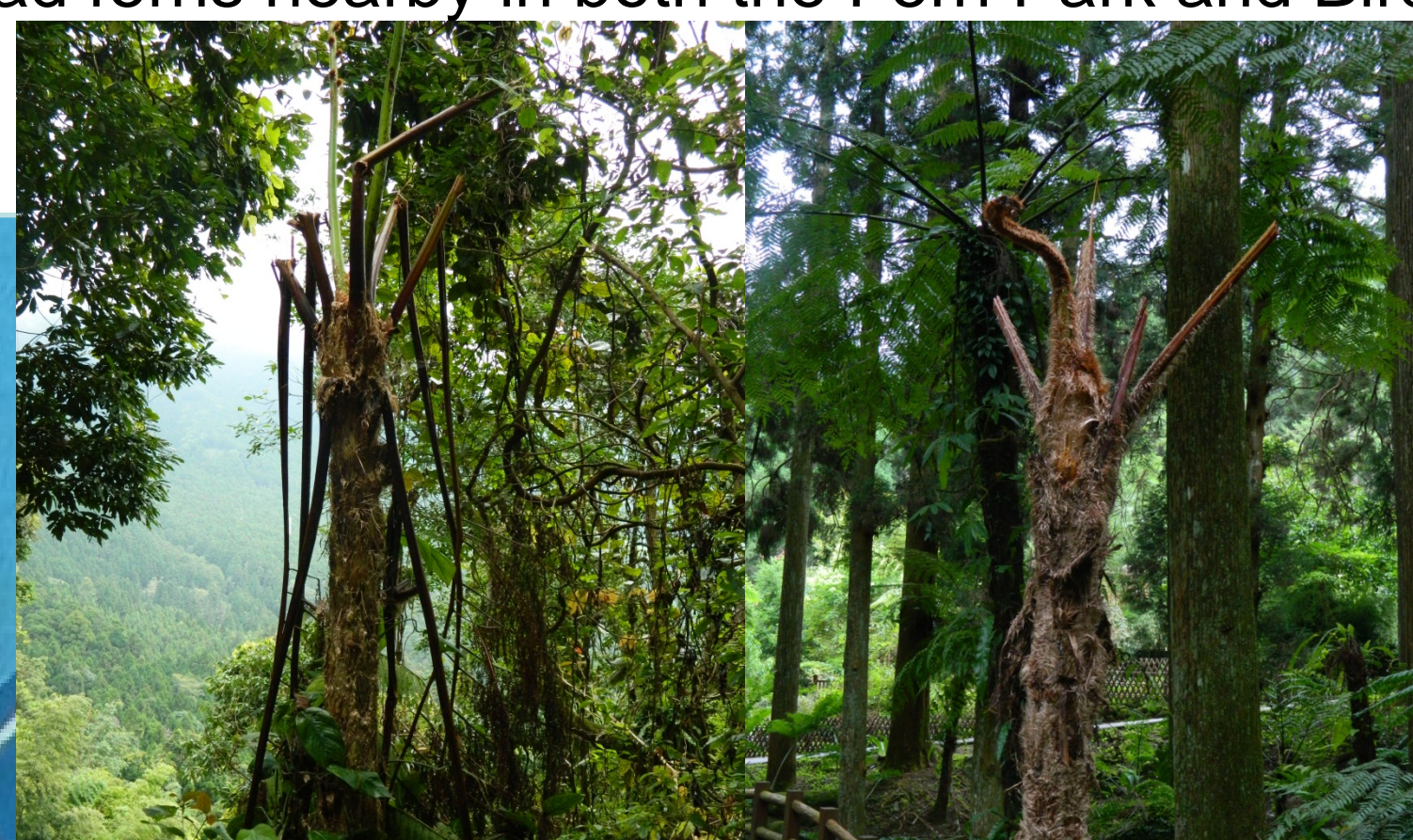
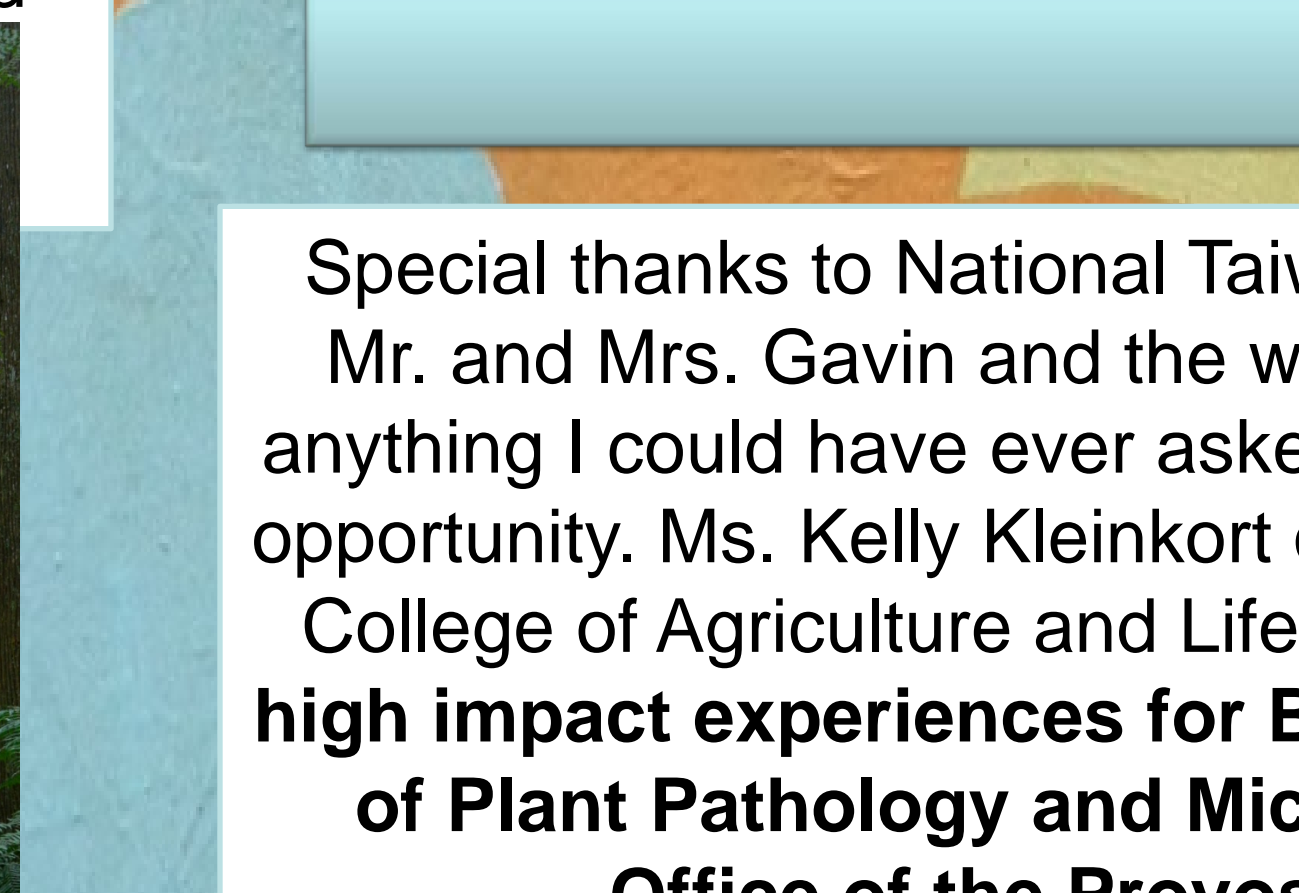


Figure 1. GPS location of both the Common tree fern and Taiwanese tree fern on the Bird Watching Trail at Sitou Experimental Forest



Unhealthy Tree



Dead Tree

## Acknowledgements

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