

Getting To Know Our Students

Charlene Goh, Master of Science (Research) student



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previously worked as a teacher at St Joseph's Institution and is a Master of Science (Research) student of Natural Sciences & Science Education (NSSE) Academic Group.

What inspired you to do a higher degree programme?

Being a full-time teacher at a local secondary school has provided me with a great sense of fulfilment, as I can ignite the passion for Biology in my students, as well as mentor their development as student leaders. Their eagerness to learn and grow is an inspiration to me and it spurs me to want to expand my horizons. Furthermore, I have always believed in modelling the way for the students under my care. By enrolling in the Master of Science (Research) programme at NIE, and pursuing my interest in marine and intertidal ecology, I hope to challenge myself by following my passion so as to seek a deeper meaning in learning and understanding science.

What attracted you to a higher degree programme at NIE?

As a graduate of NIE's Bachelor's degree programme, I have received an all-round education and benefitted especially from the skills and knowledge gained while completing my final year project under the supervision of Associate Professor Shirley Lim of the Natural Sciences and Science Education (NSSE) Academic Group. The project has provided me with an unprecedented opportunity to engage in rigorous scientific research and share the findings with fellow workers in related fields. I believe the Master of Science by research programme will enable me to actively contribute to the scientific community and that there will be ample room for my development as a practising scientist and a science educator.

What is your research on?

My research focuses on detailing water uptake and feeding processes in local species of fiddler crabs. Fiddler crabs are unique in that they can stay active on the surface of sediment for prolonged durations, engaging in activities like feeding, combat and mating. It is of interest to uncover the morphological and behavioural adaptations these fiddler crabs possess, which enable them to break away from an aquatic environment and establish themselves along the intertidal shore.

What impact do you wish to make with your research?

Fiddler crabs are abundant in some mangroves and beaches in Singapore. The excavation of burrows and feeding activities of fiddler crabs help to aerate the sediment and provides some form of bioturbation. This, in turn, maintains the integrity of the sediment and enables other organisms to thrive within the same intertidal zone. My research aims to gather deeper insights on how fiddler crabs maintain their terrestriality and ascertain the role played by these crustaceans in the local intertidal ecosystem.

How would you describe your interactions with NIE faculty members?

The NIE faculty members I have interacted with are professional and effective in providing quality student-centred learning opportunities. They never hesitated to share their knowledge and often posed intriguing questions that made lessons engaging. Their readiness to discuss topics in the various courses beyond the boundaries of the classroom and curriculum time is also a testament to their commitment towards the development of their students.

What is the best part of being a student at NIE?

Being an institute for teacher education, the faculty members at NIE emulate effective teaching through the delivery of well thought-out lessons, which are highly interactive and learner-centred. As a student in the field of Biology, I find that the laboratory sessions and field trips are particularly impactful, as they best complement the content taught in class and make learning more meaningful. The quality education and constant guidance from the faculty members set NIE apart as an institute of choice for a higher degree programme.

How will the programme prepare you for your career progression?

The knowledge gained from each course has enabled me to develop my students into critical thinkers and enrich their learning beyond the stipulated curriculum. The programme also provided opportunities to expand my scope of work in the field of intertidal ecology, and I am excited to discover more as I continue my research in this area. The programme has definitely refined my teaching approaches and strengthened my scientific research disposition, allowing me to seek new ways to improve myself as a teacher and learner of Science.