



PAK NAI RESTORATION: RESTORING ABANDONED OYSTER FARMS INTO OYSTER REEFS

The Nature Conservancy Habitat Management Work

PROJECT OVERVIEW

Shellfish reefs are the most endangered marine habitat on the planet with an estimated 85 percent global loss. In nature, oysters naturally grow and accumulate on small reefs along intertidal mudflats, providing feeding grounds for unique species from shorebirds to tiny crabs. Deep Bay was once covered with these shellfish reefs, but centuries of human activities and development have greatly reduced this critical habitat.

If you have ever visited Pak Nai in Deep Bay, you may have noticed strange rows of oysters dotted along the shorelines of the mudflats. These vast rows of oyster clumps are actually abandoned oyster farms, and though the clumps are still alive, its unnatural configuration hinders the natural restoration of the environment. In addition, these man-made rows encroach on areas where the endangered horseshoe crab forage for food.

Recognizing this opportunity to restore natural habitats back to Pak Nai, **The Nature Conservancy (TNC) is organizing volunteer activities to restore these abandoned oyster farms into shellfish reefs.**

ACTIVITY

The now-abandoned oyster farms were built following a traditional method of planting concrete poles in concentrated rows where oysters can settle to and grow on. However, these farms have been abandoned for ten years and are no longer in use. **To restore Pak Nai's natural shorelines, we will remove these poles and reconfigure them into more natural reefs.** This will restore habitat for species to forage and increase biodiversity on the mudflats.

OUR RESTORATION WORK

Overharvesting and coastal development have destroyed much of Hong Kong's shellfish reefs, degrading local marine environments and jeopardizing livelihoods. Along with our partners, TNC has established two pilot reefs, in Lau Fau Shan and in Tolo Harbour, to monitor their impact on biodiversity, establish a baseline of local oyster habitats and biodiversity and study the feasibility for new growth to bring back Hong Kong's shellfish reefs at scale.



[WATCH | Three-minute video on Hong Kong's Oyster Reefs](#)

WHAT TO WEAR AND BRING

The field activity will conduct on mudflats with no shade. Areas are deep and muddy, thus

appropriate clothing must be worn:

- **Waterproof booties or sneakers (booties can be provided by TNC; please provide shoe size in advance)**
- **Sportswear or any suitable outdoor clothing such as leggings or long, athletic pants**

While gloves and necessary tools will be provided, we strongly suggest bringing the following items:

- **Plenty of water (please avoid single-use plastic bottles)**
- **Sun protection such as a hat and sunglasses**
- **Change of clothing**
- **Raincoat (if raining)**
- **Personal towel for wiping off mud**
- **Insect repellent**

ACTIVITY LOCATION

The field activity will take place on the mudflats of Pak Nai, Deep Bay. The meeting spot will be at TNC's Ap Tsai Hang site in Pak Nai. The site is directly accessible by private transport or taxi. We suggest that large volunteer groups hire a private coach for the duration of the activity.

Toilets and water hose are available for cleaning up; Snacks and chilled drinks available at App store.

Address: [App Store Cafe & Barbecue](#)
No. 283A, Nim Wan Road, Pak Nai (鴨仔坑士多)

IN-DEPTH

Activity Overview:

- Welcome and on-site briefing (15 mins)
- Eco-touring of biodiversity on Pak Nai mudflats (15 mins)
- Volunteer activity (2 hrs)
- Tidy up and wash off (30 mins)

Requirements:

- Participants should be physically able to do strenuous work such as lifting heavy materials under the sun.
- Participants should be minimum 12 years of age, participants aged 12 to 16 years old should be accompany by parents or adults.
- Minimum group size is 12 pax; maximum 50 pax.

CONTINGENCY PROCEDURE

The safety of our staff and volunteers are our main priority. We will take into consideration any disruptions that may occur and notify our volunteers accordingly. The activity would be canceled if any of the following warnings are hoisted 3 hours prior to the activity started :

- All rainstorm warnings: Amber, Red & Black
- Typhoon warning T3 & above

Activity will continue under "Very Hot Weather Warning" and "Thunderstorm Warning", however, duration of outdoor field work and eco-tour maybe shortened.

CONTACT US

Please contact Conservation Coordinator, Sheila Wong, at natureworkshk@tnc.org.

The Nature
Conservancy

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Covered venue for resting and briefing at App Store.

