

17th World Congress of Malacology, Thailand 18-24 July 2010
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I was fortunate to be awarded the New Zealand Marine Sciences Society First Overseas Conference Travel Funding in 2010 which allowed me to attend and present an oral presentation on the “genetic investigation of an endemic complex: the *Cellana strigilis* subspecies in the New Zealand subantarctic islands”. Additionally I presented a poster on the link between phylogenetics and morphometric variation in the *Cellana strigilis* subspecies.

This conference brought together many internationally renowned scientists, professionals and students presenting on a wide range of topics, from systematics, phylogenetics, phylogeography and population genetics to palaeobiology, aquaculture and mating systems.

Out of the 13 symposia organized during this 5 day conference, three were directly relevant to my field of study: (1) the biology and evolution of limpets, (2) evolutionary ecology and genetics of molluscan populations and (3) speciation: insights from insular speciation to global patterns. My research integrated perfectly into the topic of these symposia as it is focused on a genetic study of a limpet complex from the NZ subantarctic islands. My results were well received, drawing praise from several world-leading researchers. I was also fortunate to meet another FOCTF receiver from New Zealand, Suzanne Adkins, who presented on cockle aquaculture.

The poster session went smoothly. Some of the researchers from my oral session also discussed the morphometric part of my PhD, although of the scientists present at the conference were not familiar with Fast Fourier Transform analysis of shape.

The conference was jointly organized by Uthairat Chulalongkorn University and the Biodiversity Research and Training Program of Thailand. It attracted more than 300 researchers and around a third of the attendees were students from many countries. Although large, the congress was well organized and I was able to attend all of the symposia relevant to my research.

The organizers also gave us the opportunity to visit the aquarium and the beautiful sea shell museum of Phuket and many of us enjoyed the outdoors at night after the talks, with elephant riding through the jungle or scuba diving and snorkeling around the different islands surrounding Phuket.

I would like to thank the New Zealand Marine Sciences Society for giving me the opportunity to attend and present at my first overseas conference. Without their generous support, this experience would not have been possible.