

OVERVIEW OF SWIFTLET FARMING INDUSTRY IN SARAWAK

Dr. Lim Chan Koon

Kuching, Sarawak
limchankoon@yahoo.com

Edible-nest swiftlets belong to a group of small-sized swift from the Family Apodidae, where two species, namely the White-nest Swiftlet (*Aerodramus fuciphagus*) and the Black-nest Swiftlet (*A. maximus*), produce nests of commercial values. In the past, edible bird's nests were collected from natural caves, but human innovation has taken this traditional industry further by building specially designed buildings to lure these swiftlets to roost and nest, and hence the birth of swiftlet farming industry. This session gives a brief introduction on how this industry started in Sarawak and outlines important districts or regions where most swiftlet farms are located. In addition, legislation regulating this industry in Sarawak is also briefly mentioned. The second part of the presentation highlights the challenges faced and the sustainability of this industry. Issues such as where is the limit of growth are elaborated with examples and more than 10 years' of collective experience from swiftlet farmers. Why are we seeing population decline in the farmed colonies now? This is deliberated by looking at the fundamental correlation between food source and reproduction energetic of swiftlets. Finally, despite current setback arising from import ban by the Chinese government, the future prospect of this industry, according to the author's opinion, is still good because the overall nest production is declining and will drop even further in future.