

9TH ASIAN CONFERENCE OF ARACHNOLOGY

VANG VIENG, LAOS

10-14 November 2025

2nd Circular

Dear fellow arachnologists, sabai dee!

The ACA 2025 starts in 105 days and the deadline for registration and sending abstracts is in 77 days. So far, more than 40 participants from over 20 countries have registered, and we are expecting an interesting event where the latest arachno-science results will be shared!

As you may have noticed, we are trying to organise a low-priced conference to make it as inclusive as possible. Thanks to the generous grants and donations from BIOPAT e.V., the PAUL UNGERER FOUNDATION, INTHIRA, FENIX and so many donors to the fund raiser (GoFundMe:

<https://www.asianarachnology.com/fundraiser-for-the-9th-asian-conference-of-arachnology-in-laos/>), we can offer a conference that includes the following: conference fee, shuttle service from and to Wattay International Airport in Vientiane, use of the venue including the lecture hall and coffee breaks, local transport including an excursion day, a conference dinner, six awards for the best student poster/talk competition, and banner printing. We particularly encourage students and young researchers to register and experience the atmosphere of an international conference in the memorable setting of limestone mountains, rivers and rice fields.

As our costs depend on the number of participants, we kindly ask to register as soon as possible. As there is no reduced conference fee to encourage early registration, which would enable the organising committee to plan well ahead, we trust that you will not leave it until the last minute to register and submit your contribution to the conference. However, you can upload your ticket to verify your attendance later, namely until the deadline on 13 October. Please note that you must be logged into the ASA website first to register for ACA 2025. If you are presenting a talk or a poster, please indicate this when you register. This will help us to plan sessions and poster display more effectively.

Scientific committee

To ensure a smooth conference, the following scientific committee has been established: Natapot Warrit (Thailand; managing speaker: natapot.w@chula.ac.th), Wimolwan Chotwong (Thailand), Xin Xu (China), Suresh Benjamin (Sri Lanka), Mathew Joseph (India), Majid Moradmamand (Iran), Yuri Marusik (Russia), Daiqin Li (China) and Pedro Castanheira (Australia).

Symposia

If you are interested in organising a symposium, please send your proposals to Natapot Warrit as soon as possible (see above for email address).

Travel grants

Unfortunately, we are unable to offer any travel grants at present. However, the organising committee and other ASA members are trying to raise additional money in order to enable students to attend the ACA 2025.

In the meantime, we will provide links to grant opportunities in Asia on the ASA website. If you are aware of any foundation or institution that grant financial support for fellowships, travel grants or conference hosting, please send the relevant links to contact@asianarachnology.com. This steadily updated list will be useful for future generations of arachnologists working on their projects. Sharing is caring!

<https://www.asianarachnology.com/category/news/research-grants-funding/>

Travel to Vientiane

As mentioned in the first circular, for those who don't have a lot of money, an alternative way to attend the conference is to fly to Bangkok and then take the train or bus to Vientiane. This option may take a little longer, but it is certainly a low-budget way to reach the conference venue.

<https://www.thailandtrains.com/trains-from-bangkok-to-vientiane/> [train]

<https://12go.asia/de/bus/bangkok/vientiane> [train, bus, etc.]

<https://www.busonlineticket.co.th/booking/bangkok-to-vientiane-bus-tickets> [bus]

No matter, how you proceed to get to Vientiane, the shuttle service operates between Wattay International Airport and Vang Vieng. If you would like to use the shuttle service to and from Vang Vieng, please note your arrival time at Wattay in the registration form. This can be added or updated later. As we have to plan the number of minivans and their departure time, only participants who have registered for the shuttle service can be considered! Same applies for the way back with time of your departure.



Visa

ASEAN members do not require a visa. All other participants can easily obtain a visa on arrival: you will need to present 40 US dollars in cash (no worn notes will be accepted), two passport photographs, and completed visa application and arrival and departure cards (the latter two are usually provided in the plane landing in Vientiane; the visa application form is available in the immigration hall on the right side). The entire process takes around 30 minutes. Check whether your country is eligible for an e-visa. This may be slightly more expensive, but you can proceed to the normal immigration channel (straight in the immigration hall).

Accommodation

Participants must book their own accommodation. To receive the conference discount at Thavisouk Island, add 'ACA 2025' to your reservation (email: thavisoukisland@hotmail.com). You can choose between a double room for \$35 or a triple room for \$45. Both options include a breakfast buffet on the 7th floor with amazing views of the limestone hills, as well as free use of the pool area.



Breakfast view



Pool Area

Although the conference hotel is recommended, you can also book a hotel or guesthouse anywhere in Vang Vieng offering beds in dorms from 2 USD per night and double rooms for two people from 7 USD per night. Please use the usual booking platforms. We cannot guarantee that the shuttle service from and to the airport will stop at all hotels, but we will try our best to cover the entire range in Vang Vieng. Please note that there will be no shuttle service from hotels to the venue during the conference!

Excursion

On the excursion day, we will visit the Inter Park, which is 10 kilometres by air and 13 kilometres by road from the conference venue. This recreational area is located close to a limestone cliff and features a local restaurant, an air-conditioned café, a natural swimming pool, a park and a garden with dinosaur models, two caves (one with a 2.4 km accessible route) and a viewpoint overlooking forest-covered limestone formations. Traditional songthaews (pickups with two rows of seats) will

take all registered participants to the spot after breakfast. Everyone is free to create their own programme. Two guides will accompany those who wish to explore the long cave (Tham Nang Oua Khiam; headlamps and water/snacks required). We plan to spend the whole day there, exchanging experiences about collecting methods and photographing spiders, or simply talking about our eight-legged friends. However, two Songthaews will be ready to take groups back to the hotel earlier if requested.



Vang Vieng with excursion area



Lagoon in front of limestone cliff in Inter Park



Tham Nang Oua Khiam in Inter Park

Russian Party

There will be a Russian party at the pool, a long-standing tradition of arachnological conferences. Please bring something special and local from your country to contribute to the buffet (check with Lao immigration laws, what is legal to import!).

To understand the history of this party, it is worth noting that in 1993, Yuri Marusik from Magadan, Russia, brought some special beers to the European Conference of Arachnology (ECA) in Catania, Sicily. The following year, in 1994, Yuri brought fish for the first time to the conference in Ceske Budejovice. He added caviar to the menu when he attended a conference in Florida, USA, in the same year. Since then, it has been a regular, albeit unofficial, event until the Russian Party was officially listed in the ECA programme in 2008 in Bern. From then on, every attendee contributed their own specialities from their respective countries, making the party even more international. Many colleagues attended these legendary parties and agreed that it was a superb idea, including the late Norman Platnick.

We will continue this long-standing tradition. Many conferences have an ice-breaker at the beginning. So why not break the ice again halfway through the conference?



Pool Area

Call for early registration

As mentioned above, you can support the organising committee by registering as soon as possible when you plan on attending the ACA 2025.

If you have not already registered as an ASA member, please do so here:

<https://www.asianarachnology.com/membership/>

After logging in, register for the ACA 2025 here:

<https://www.asianarachnology.com/9th-asian-conference-of-arachnology-registration/>

You should then receive an acknowledging email immediately after successful registration.

If you encounter any problems with registration, send a mail to contact@asianarachnology.com.

If you have any other questions or suggestions, please contact Peter Jaeger (peter.jaeger@senckenberg.de).

Thanks a lot for your cooperation and see you soon (phopkan mai) in Vang Vieng!

Peter Jäger and Nicky Bay on behalf of the organising team



View Point with airplane