

UGM Student Research on Reptiles and Amphibian Animals and Melon Seeds

Friday, 17 June 2016 WIB, By: Marwati



Presently, reptiles and amphibian animals have increasingly become a favourite as pet. For Indonesians, some of these animals are believed to have medical benefit. As a matter of fact, reptiles and amphibian animals have the potential to contract pathogenic parasites to human.

This was explained by students of Universitas Gadjah Mada (UGM) that are doing inventory of parasites in reptiles and amphibian animals consumed by people, particularly around Yogyakarta. The UGM Student Creativity Programme group with members Elpri Eka Permadi, Rohmi Salamah, Arnita Prasintaningrum, and Aji Pamula Gunawan, are working on pathogenic parasites in King Cobra (*Naja sputatrix*), gecko (*Gekko gekko*), and Asian grass frog (*Fejervarya limnocharis*).

The parasites are taken from the intestines, hepar, and muscle tissues. They found parasitic worms, including order Distome, order Digenea, order Monogenea, larva Strongyloides, familia Ancylostomidae, order Strongylidea, Dibothriocephalus, Nematoda, and Ancylostomatidae. Some literature states that a number of members of order Digenea, familia Ancylostomidae, and genus Strongyloides are infectious to human.



“We can conclude from this research that reptile and amphibian animals have the potential as reservoir of disease in human. Hopefully, this research is useful to preventing parasitic contraction that is caused by reptiles and amphibian animals, as well as contributing to reptile and amphibian conservation in Indonesia,” said Elpri on Thursday (16/6).

Melon Seeds to Treat Osteoporosis and Hyperlipidemia

Another interesting medical finding is made by UGM Pharmaceutical students: Zahrotul Ulum, Else Ifana Widyaputri, Fitriana Hayyu Arifah, and Indra Lesmana, who researched into the potential of melon seeds.

“Melon seeds are available abundantly but mostly they are only thrown away as waste. Compounds in the melon seeds are alfa spinasterol and stigmasta 7,22,25, trien 3-ol that can prevent hyperlipidemia, so they are potential to minimise the risk for osteoporosis and hyperlipidemia among menopausal women,” said Zahrotul.

To test the benefits of melon seeds, these students made the extract of the seeds using ethanol 96% which is tested to Sprague Dawley mice that have undergone ovariectomy. The treatment is done for 30 days and on the last day, blood sample is taken to know the level of lipids as well as femurs to know the bone density.

“The result is expected to inform people that melon seeds have benefits for those two diseases. In the future the people can better make use of melon seeds waste,” Zahrotul concluded.

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