

Singaporean working to save corals featured in children's book series

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It was a Sunday morning filled with wonder as more than 150 young children learnt about marine biology and the life of Professor Chou Loke Ming, an adjunct research professor at the Tropical Marine Science Institute at the National University of Singapore.

Prof Chou, who has made saving corals his life's passion, is one of six scientists whose stories are told in the Asian Scientist Junior Book Series.

The series was launched at the Central Public Library yesterday. Mr Heng Swee Keat, Minister for Finance and chairman of the National Research Foundation Singapore, was the guest of honour.

Prof Chou, the only Singaporean scientist to be featured in the series, was also there.

Mr Heng, who read the book about Prof Chou to the group of children, stopped often to engage them in questions and later invited the man himself to join him for a short conversa-

tion about marine life and the importance of saving Singapore's coral reefs.

Prof Chou, who brought along skeletons of coral reefs, the shell of a giant clam and a tissue box cover in the shape of a sea slug, had the full attention of the kids, who peppered him with questions.

Mr Heng said: "Science, technology and innovation is where we have to invest to build Singapore's future. In this spirit, we must continue to inspire our children to be curious about science, understand its possibilities and make an impact using science."

The book series, which features the stories of other scientists such as Chinese paleontologist Chang Meemann and Indian space scientist Udupi Rao, was the result of a successful Kickstarter campaign.

Wildtype Books published the book series after the campaign received \$16,000 through 128 backers.

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