

Tree inside Hong Kong Zoological and Botanical Gardens removed for public safety

The Architectural Services Department (ArchSD) today (March 2) removed an Old and Valuable Tree (OVT) infected with brown root rot (BRR) disease at the Hong Kong Zoological and Botanical Gardens to ensure public safety and prevent the potential spread of the fungus to nearby trees.

The removed tree was a *Ficus rumphii* with the registration number ARCHSD CW/27 on the Register of OVTs. ArchSD found in January 2019 that it was infected with BRR disease, and promptly carried out risk mitigation measures, including crown cleaning and application of fungicide. However, the health and structural conditions of the tree kept declining, as indicated by the continuous spreading of the disease at the tree base and roots, resulting in sparse crown density and dead branches.

ArchSD and the Greening, Landscape and Tree Management Section (GLTMS) of the Development Bureau jointly conducted an on-site tree inspection last December and confirmed that the health and structural conditions of the tree were irrecoverable with a potential risk of collapse. The GLTMS then consulted the Urban Forestry Advisory Panel on the proposal to fell the tree, and the panel members had no objection to the proposal. To protect the safety of members of the public, in particular park users and the drivers along the adjacent driveway, the tree was removed today.