

# wetlands

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sungei buloh wetland reserve



NParks' Publication

I wonder how many of us know the number of insects we co-exist and shared space with, in their own miniture world how they survive. I am always intrigue by their stunning beauty too! Enjoy reading Mr Abdul Khalid's artcile on the "Jewels of the dark".

Text by Halilah Ahmad, Editor eWetlands,  
Sungei Buloh Wetland Reserve



#### COVER PICTURE

Tiger Beetle

by Mohamad Azlin Sani, Manager/Outreach,  
Sungei Buloh Wetland Reserve

## CONTENTS

03-04

Jewels in the dark

Mr Abdul Khalid shares his experiences and findings during the stick insect surveys.

05

World Migratory Bird Day (WMBD)

Mr Mohamad Azlin shares the activities at Sungei Buloh during the World Migratory Bird Day

06

Return of an old friend - the Whimbrel

Mr David Li shares the story of a recaptured Whimbrel 19.5 years after it was ringed.

Celebrating Earth Day with Timberland Singapore

Mr Ivan Kwan shares the activities during the Earth Day celebration.

07-08

Sungei Buloh Fish Survey

Mr Mohamad Azlin shares the findings of the fish survey conducted over various ponds in Sungei Buloh.

Design and layout by

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## Upcoming Events

1. Free Guided Tour (in English)  
Date: Every Saturday  
(except public holiday and eve of public holiday)  
Time: 9.30am to 11.00am  
Meeting point: Visitor Centre  
Limited to a maximum of 20 pax
2. Free Guided Tour (in Mandarin)  
Date: Once a month on a Sunday  
Time: 9.30am to 11.15am  
Meeting point: Visitor Centre  
Limited to a maximum of 20 pax
3. Origami - The Art of Paper Folding  
Date: Once a month on a Sunday  
Time: 10.15am to 11.15am  
Meeting point: Visitor Centre
4. Paint Along Session  
Date: 24 Aug & 28 Sep 14 (Sunday)  
Time: 8.30am to 11.30am
5. Young Naturalist Passport (YNP)  
Age group: 6 to 11 years old  
Date: 13 Sep 14 (Saturday)  
Time: 8.30am to 3.30pm  
Registration fee: \$5.00  
Limited to 40 children

For all events, please call 67941401 for more details



# Jewels in the dark

By Abdul Khalid, Assistant Officer, Sungei Buloh Wetland Reserve  
Photos by: Mohamad Azlin Sani, Manager/Outreach, Sungei Buloh Wetland Reserve,  
Mishak Sunari, Assistant Officer, Sungei Buloh Wetland Reserve & Abdul Khalid Bin Hamid, Assistant Officer, Sungei Buloh Wetland Reserve

I have to admit. The only interest I have of insect is when they start to fly and crawl near me. It will just make me squirm and even jump in fear! I was shock when I was assigned to do stick insect survey! I started to feel the cold fear running down my spine! In spite of the initial shock that took over me, I'm up for the challenge.

That was last year in July 2013. With torch lights in hand, we conducted the 1st night survey under this project. Insects are more visible at night. I guess we are more focus in what we are looking for in the dark. At 7.30pm without knowing what's ahead, we headed towards prawn pond at Route 2 on foot.

The first creature I spotted was a Huntsman Spider. Ever wondered why the name "huntsman"? This spider does not make webs. Instead, they forage and hunt for food, mainly insects. They are also called giant crab spiders because of its size and appearance.



Photograph by Mohamad Azlin. We were surprised to see the photo showing the Huntsman Spider having its supper in the dark. That really amazed me, thinking of this night creature's ability to hunt in the dark!



Next Mishak spotted a Praying Mantis. It was well camouflaged and it took me a while to see it amongst the leaves!



I spotted a Plant Hopper next. As the name given, this insect remarkably looks like a leaf or part of a plant of their habitat. They often "hop" for quick transportation in a similar way to that of a grasshopper. Generally, Plant Hoppers walk very slowly so as not to attract attention.



After a long and exciting walk, we headed back to the office. Not satisfied with our findings, I decided to venture around the nursery next to the office. Who knows what treasure we could find!



There it was, a Tiger Beetle! This beauty baffles me till now! This insect is known for their aggressiveness and their speed. They could run about 9km/h!

Ironically, the primary objective of the night survey is to find stick insect. We did not manage to spot any. Surprisingly, a leaf insect appeared instead clinging on the tyre of the buggy I rode and park in the reserve in a bright day light!



Initially it looks like an odd leaf. Upon looking closely was I surprised! YES!!! It is a leaf insect, one of many insects I hope to find here in the reserve. With tremendous effort not to agitate the insect, I coaxed it out of the tyre and transferred it to a bunch of leaves, hoping that it will feel more comfort. Look how well camouflaged it is! My after though is how strange it is to spot it in the day than the darkness of the night as I would expect.

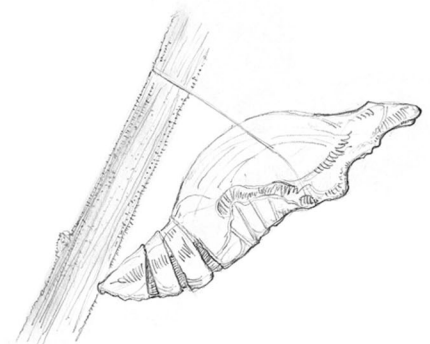


I would like to thank Mr How Choon Beng, Assistant Director, Sungei Buloh Wetland Reserve, for giving me this opportunity and trust to lead the insect survey. In return, I overcome my fear for these creepy crawlies and found myself respecting them more.

My perspectives towards insects change as I get to know them more and more. I'm amazed by their sheer beauty and their behaviour. Nowadays, I remind myself not to ignore insects or take them for granted.

This project is a success with the support and guidance from my fellow colleagues, mainly Azlin, Mishak, Desmond, Fadhli, Adnan and Sungei Buloh's staff.

This is an on-going project. Looking ahead to discover amazing insects I called "Jewels in the dark".



# World Migratory Bird Day (WMBD)

By Mohamad Azlin Sani, Manager/Outreach, Sungei Buloh Wetland Reserve  
Photos by Mohamad Azlin Sani

World Migratory Bird Day (WMBD) is a global initiative devoted to celebrating migratory birds and for promoting their conservation worldwide.

On the 10th and 11th May 2014, Sungei Buloh Wetland Reserve together with the Canadian High Commission launched a poster exhibition highlighting the various migration flyways namely the Northern America flyway and the East Asia-Australasian Flyway and the birds.

The poster exhibition also showcased the importance and of migratory birds and their conservation efforts such as the color flagging programme in Sungei Buloh Wetland Reserve.

In addition to the launch, a talk titled "Migratroy Birds: a Sungei Buloh Experience", was conducted by David Li, staff of SBWR. This was followed by a guided walk to try and spot the different species of birds. Also SBWR volunteers and staff carried out children hands-on activities to promote these special visitors to Singapore every migratory season. The poster exhibition was up until 29th June 2014, to coincide with the June school holidays.



Sungei Buloh's newest multi-purpose hall, converted into an exhibition gallery



David Li, finishing his talk on SBWR's story on migratory birds and preparing to take guests on their guided walk



Out on a trail of SBWR mangrove boardwalk



Fun activities for the young and young at heart and getting to know the migratory birds



# Return of an old friend - the Whimbrel!

By David Li, Senior Officer/Conservation, Sungei Buloh Wetland Reserve  
Photos by David Li

On 29 January 2014, a Whimbrel (*Numenius phaeopus*) was recaptured 19.5 years after it was ringed here. Repeat capture of the same individual bird is rare, but when it does happen, it allows researchers to study the migration patterns and the longevity of different species.

For this particular Whimbrel, after its measurements were taken, a brand new ring and colour flag were attached to its leg. It was released thereafter.



## Celebrating Earth Day with Timberland Singapore

By Ivan Kwan, Manager (Projects/Conservation), Sungei Buloh Wetland Reserve  
Photos by Timberland

On 22nd April, 53 Timberland Singapore employees and community members celebrated Earth Day at Sungei Buloh Wetland Reserve. The day began with a guided walk through the mangroves, where NParks staff pointed out wildlife that the group encountered, shared about the importance of wetland habitats, and how trash can have a serious impact on marine ecosystems.

The group then participated in a clean-up of the mangroves along the coast in the north-western edge of the reserve. All sorts of items, from cigarette butts and plastic straws, to plastic barrels and Styrofoam boxes, were collected. Despite the challenging terrain work, and the hot weather, everyone's spirits were high. Their combined efforts resulted in the removal of approximately 200 kilograms of trash from a 200-metre stretch of coastline.



As part of the brand's longstanding commitment to environmental stewardship and community building, Timberland has celebrated Earth Day for the past 16 years with community service events around the globe. This year, the brand hosted events in more than 100 locations worldwide, with some 30,000 hours of service performed by more than 5,000 volunteers in April and May.

Thank you Timberland Singapore!



# Sungei Buloh Fish Survey

By Mohamad Azlin Sani, Manager/Outreach, Sungei Buloh Wetland Reserve  
Photos by: Mohamad Azlin Sani, Manager/Outreach, Sungei Buloh Wetland Reserve,

Field surveys are an important tool to find out what exists in a particular habitat. Results from such surveys are then used gauge the health of the ecosystem or to monitor and evaluate the population of animals of interest.

The Sungei Buloh Fish Survey is one of the many surveys that SBWR carry out periodically. Sungei Buloh have various water habitats ranging from freshwater, to marine, to brackish waters and by conducting periodic field surveys, we will have a better understanding of the biodiversity and population of the habitat and in turn know more about the health of the habitat in general.



Cast netting is one of the sampling methods and it can be done from the water's edge or boat

Depending on the area of study, methods used include drift nets, cast nets, fish traps and even pond flushing. Most of the animals caught are released after basic data are recorded usually species, weight and length. Some are photographed and kept as sample for future reference.

Through regular surveys we will learn of the species diversity and inhabitants of the water bodies in the reserve. These results can then be used to determine the overall health of the habitat and ecosystem.



A box net over the opening of one of the ponds in SBWR and fishes will get trapped when the pond is flushed



Climbing Perch (*Anabas testudineus*)

A common native freshwater fish in Sungei Buloh Wetland Reserve that is capable of migrating from one water body to another by crawling on its spiky gill covers and support from its pectoral fins.



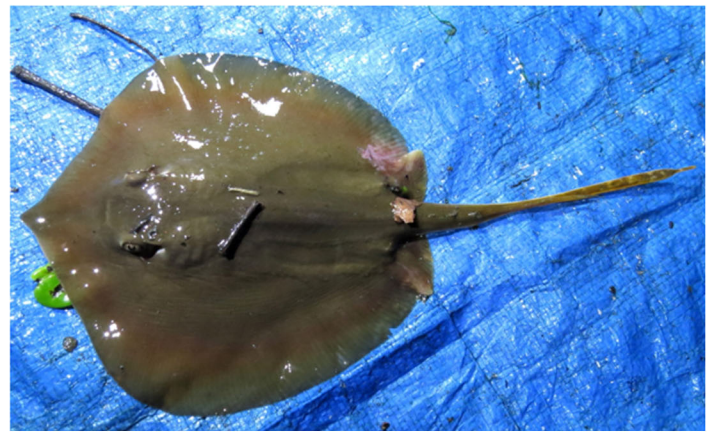
Mangrove Red Snapper,  
(*Lutjanus argentimaculatus*)

A predatory species which consumes other fish, the Mangrove Red Snapper is a much sought after fish food. They typically occur in coastal habitats such as coral reefs, river estuaries and mangroves.



Bumblebee goby (*Brachygobius kabillensis*)

Usually found in the mangroves pools at low tide, these tiny fishes grow at most to 1.5cm. They have black and yellowish bands along its body which gives rise to their name and feeds mainly on zooplankton.



Mangrove Whipray (*Himantura granulate*)

One of the many species of stingray, the Mangrove Whipray inhabits shallow inshore waters and preys on small bottom-dwelling invertebrates such as crabs and shrimps.

