

A  publication

WETlands

Sungei Buloh Nature Park, Vol. 6 No. 2, August 1999. MITA(P) No. 142/01/99



C O N T E N T S

"If we love our children, we must love the earth with tender care and pass it on, diverse and beautiful, so that on a warm spring 10,000 years hence they can feel peace in a sea of grass, can watch a bee visit a flower, can hear a sandpiper call in the sky, and find joy in being alive."

Hugh H. Itlis

3 Did You Know?
Profile of our Frog Prince.

4 Park Programmes
Involving the people.

6 Feature Article
*Intriguing Dusk:
The transition period where you find the beginnings of nocturnal life and diminishing of day activities.*

8 Centre Spread
Picture Perfect of Life at a Prawn Pond.



10 Other Nature Areas
Find out the myths and truths about the bats of Pulau Ubin.

12 What Happened
Happy Additions to Sungei Buloh Nature Park.

14 What's Coming Up
Calendar of events.

15 Sightings
Journal of a Nature Warden gives you an insight into the life of a Large-tailed Nightjar.



EDITORIAL

To me, the last ray of light is as magical a moment as the first break of dawn that beckons to be relished. It is a moment to be welcomed as the afternoon heat diffuses to a cool evening with the sun dismounting itself slowly from the skyline. The hurried movements of the day creatures to close the day and the slow awakening of the night creatures to start a brand new one heralded the diminishing presence of the light. The chapter on animal life does not end here with its absence as we indicate in the various articles presented to you.

This display of the changing of guards is a moment which all of us can experience. Especially so for the ones who have problems waking up to the call of daybreak!

Take notice of the varied wildlife at dusk as you walk home from work, while taking a stroll in a park or while visiting us at Sungei Buloh Nature Park. The experience awaits the patient and observant one.

linda goh



Editorial Committee

Advisor
Ms Ong Chui Leng

Editors
Ms Linda Goh
Ms Adeline Chia

Contributors
Mr Robert Teo
Ms Evelyn Kuah
Mr James Gan
Ms Adeline Chia
Ms Deborah Tay
Mr Tay Soon Lian
Ms Linda Goh
Ms Chan Su Hooi
Ms Halilah Ahmad
Mr Ramakrishnan RK

Design Studio
Yan Design Consultants

Printer
Octogram Press Pte Ltd

Publisher
Sungei Buloh Nature Park

Cover photo by Mr Robert Teo
Picture of Common Tree Frog
(*Polypedates leucomystax*)

Photos Credits
Mr Wong Tuan Wah
Ms Halilah Ahmad
Mr Micheal Aw
Ms Adeline Chia
Ms Chan Su Hooi

Green for life? **ROBERT TEO**, has the story of the Common Tree Frog for you.

Common Tree Frog

Common Tree Frog

For the average person, it is hard to believe that there are 25 different species of frogs and toads in Singapore. This does not include the large American Bullfrog commonly sold at restaurants! The only species commonly encountered are most likely the familiar Asian Toad (*Bufo melanostictus*) and the Banded Bullfrog (*Kaloula pulchra*), which can be heard bellowing like cattle after a downpour.

Do you know that we have four species of tree frogs? In fact, one species is found all over Singapore! If you were to listen and look carefully in gardens and parks, the Common Tree Frog (*Polypedates leucomystax*) can be easily found. It occurs near freshwater - pond edges, drains, small puddles, where it hides in low vegetation nearby. Sometimes, it can even be found clinging onto the walls of houses, especially near toilets and bathrooms.

It is also found here in Sungei Buloh Nature Park.

The Common Tree Frog is light yellowish-brown, with four rows of dark brown lines or markings along its back. Hence, it is also known as the Four-lined Tree Frog. The underside is either white or light grey. Amazingly, both its colouration and markings can change to blend in with its surroundings. The same frog can appear pale beige without any markings in the daytime and turn a dark brown with blackish stripes at night.

This frog is nocturnal, becoming active only at night when it hunts for small insects and other invertebrates. It is also at night when courtship occurs. Male frogs are smaller (37-50 mm) than the females (57-75 mm), and will gather around any standing water to "woo" the opposite sex. The call has been described as a "low-

pitched nasal quack". Using its sticky, expanded toe pads, a male will climb up the vegetation and call from one spot until a female locates it. The pair then searches for a spot near water and as they mate, a whitish foam nest is formed and attached to twigs, leaves or walls overhanging the water. The eggs and sperm are released into this foam nest, where the tadpoles will form. When the sun rises, the foam nest hardens but within a day or two, or when rain falls, it disintegrates, dispersing the tadpoles into the water below.

The tadpole grows to 50 mm and is light brown in colour with irregular darker markings. It has a distinguishing white spot on the head. The voracious tadpoles have mouths armed with strong, black beaks for feeding and are known to be cannibalistic, not hesitating to eat up other tadpoles. In a small puddle, only a single tadpole might be left to develop into a frog - "survival of the fittest" in action. Care to kiss this Frog Prince? 🐸

School by evelyn kuab Activities

Hard at work.

Community service took on a different meaning as groups of students from 2 secondary schools came to Sungei Buloh Nature Park each week to help maintain different areas of the Park and enjoyed themselves at the same time.

Plants are important and keeping them healthy and free from weeds is as meaningful as the planting itself. The girls from Raffles Girls Secondary School learnt about the different kinds of weeds, the before and after effects of clearing the weeds and also about the other plants commonly found infested with weeds,



Keeping a close watch on nature.

like the Long Grass and the Singapore Rhododendron. Walks to the Main hide and into the Reserve also make their trip to the Park more worthwhile as they see for themselves the birds in flight and the insects and animals they learned in textbooks come alive.

Coastal cleanup and mangrove saplings removal, which are 2 routine tasks undertaken by Sungei Buloh staff, are new experiences for the upper secondary students of Woodlands Secondary School. They waded in the mangrove mudflats clearing coastal rubbish and pulling out unwanted saplings, and of course, getting a "mud bath" in the process.

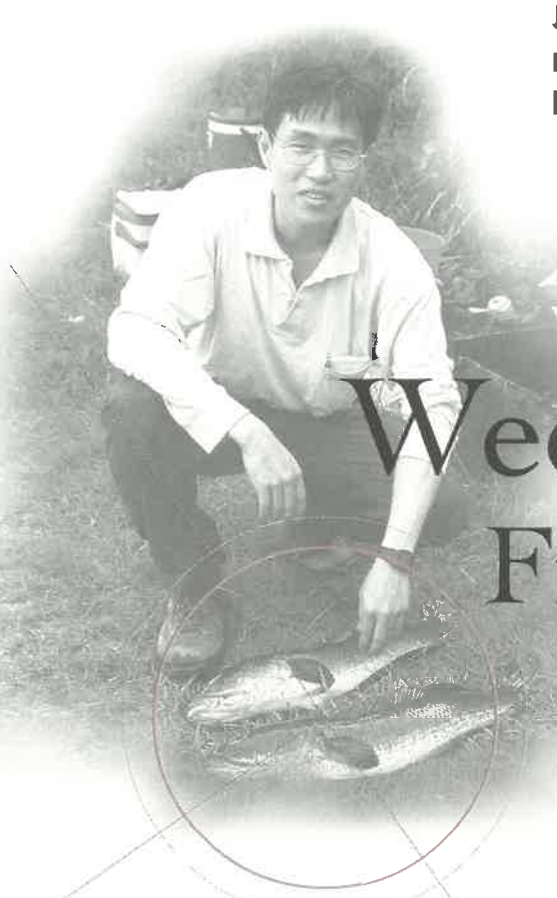
There was, however, not a single dull moment each time they came for their 3-hour long attachment service. All the girls and boys were briefed on their purpose at the Park and the details of their responsibility for the day. Arming

themselves with gloves and insect repellent, they switched into their working mode almost immediately, and soon after, their natural state of enthusiasm overtook the heat, and laughter was all around. The community involvement projects aim to bring Nature closer to the urban kids.

The whole process was a learning experience packaged with fun. With the continued support from the schools and the active participation of the students, this collaboration has turned out to be the beginning of a stronger relationship in future.

At the point in writing, an agreement has been reached with Woodlands Secondary School for the adoption of the Butterfly Trail Project at the Park. This is a first step in our effort to have more schools 'own' the Park and through the activities inculcate a sense of graciousness while caring for public property. 🦋

JAMES GAN gives you an account of our recent fish survey that documents the fish life found at our freshwater pond.



Weekend Fishing Survey

The catch of the day.

Date:
13 May 1999

Time:
1pm to 7pm

Weather :
Cool

Location:
Route 3 Freshwater Pond

At a nearby pond, the squawking of herons could be heard. A small group of Lesser Tree Ducks glided lazily across a freshwater pond. Baya weavers were busy weaving their unique pendulum nests on a *Macaranga heynei* tree. Over at two other adjacent ponds, a group of 10 were busy casting lines using rods and hand reels into the tranquil waters... Rods and hand reels?

What were they doing?

They were participating in a fish survey during the weekend that included staff of Sungei Buloh, volunteers and staff family members. Unlike usual fishing practices where the fish end up on the dinner plates, the

fish that were caught were carefully measured, weighed and released back into the ponds.

Artificial bait was used and the majority of the fish were caught in this way. A 0.64m *Channa striata* aka the Common Snakehead weighing 2.5kg was caught after putting up a fierce fight. The rod and line were strained with the weight of the fish but in the end the skillful angler won. Many "oohs" and "ahs" were heard. Cameras flashed to record the achievement. Not that the other fish were small though - the majority were between 0.4m and 0.5m long.

Park Ranger Charles Lim, hand reeled in a Climbing Perch excitedly while Park Ranger Patricia hooked one

on a rod. Other fish caught were Two Spot Gourmies. That session saw a total of 24 fish caught on handreels and rods. Another 30 gouramis were caught with a cast net as were a few unidentified freshwater shrimps.

Through this fishing session, the types and relative numbers of fish that could be caught with various baits and fishing methods in the freshwater ponds of the Park were established.

The survey brought together staff, volunteers and staff family members. Fishing skills were learned or honed. Everyone got to learn another aspect of the Park and the many surprises that it has in store.

Lesser Tree duck

Black-crowned Night-heron

Behold the magnificent display of the changing of guards as **ADELINE CHIA** guides you along the road of ...

Dusky Encounters

The daily rush to and fro in the course of work has left many of us with little time to stop and appreciate the beauty of nature. Hence when faced with an assignment to find out the life that could be seen before the last rays of sunlight fade away, I was eager enough to finish my work early in the late afternoon for a walk in the park. Armed with my binoculars and drinking water, I set off.

It did not take long before I had my first encounter: a Common Sun Skink (*Mabuya multifasciata*) basking near the main bridge, motionless. Most skinks are terrestrial, making their homes in leaf litter and loose soil. With over a thousand species in the world, it is no wonder that they are the most diverse of the lizard family. I admired its rich orange-brown shiny body for a while until it decided that I was getting too close for comfort and went into the bushes, making rustling sounds as it went.

Common Sun Skink

A stream of activities greeted me as I ventured into Route 1. Most species of birds are diurnal and are unable to feed at night. Once night falls they have to endure a full 12 hours (in the tropics) of non-feeding through the night until the next dawn when they would be ravenous. With the last opportunity to feed their young and themselves before the sun sets, you would notice birds engaged in various activities. A Pied Fantail (*Rhipidura javanica*) darted among the lower branches of the mangrove trees, deftly picking up insects disturbed by its movements. Its eccentric behaviour has earned itself a nickname called the 'gila bird' by the Malays. It feeds in a rather haphazard manner, dashing through the vegetation in a madcap chase with its long tail fanned open and closed, never staying at a spot long enough for the untrained eye to observe it.

As I walked along the trail, Tailorbirds called out to each other, their synchronized

calls floating like melodies through the ears. Yellow-vented Bulbuls (*Pycnonotus jocosus*) cautiously approach their nests with food for their young, ever on the lookout for predators. Always a joy to see, newly-fledged nestlings followed their parents around, ducking into cover at the first call of danger. Monitor lizards lazed on the trails, enjoying the sun-warmed ground. A family of White-breasted Waterhens (*Amaurornis phoenicurus*) cautiously crossed the trail into safer territory, the parents ever watchful. A common resident, it is a comical looking bird that usually dives into the undergrowth when it senses danger. Its gait is accompanied with an occasional flick of the tail. When alarmed it will run away clumsily, sometimes with its wings half open into the nearest cover. If you stay motionless, you will find that after a short while a white and black head will emerge from its cover cautiously before taking the first step, then the next and resuming its perky strut.



The flowers of the Sea Hibiscus (*Hibiscus tiliaceus*) were turning brown, swaying gently with the evening breeze. They have served their function: ensuring the survival of their species. Soon they will fall and in place the seeds of the tree's future generations will be produced.

Reaching the heronry I was treated to an aerial display of the Grey and Purple Heron (*Ardea cinerea*, and *Ardea purpurea*) returning to their roosts. Beautiful birds they certainly are. Beautiful voices they have not, for their call is a harsh 'Kra-ak'. Some were greeted by their young, hungry for a meal and rewarded with one. Others opted to land on the mudflats to grab a quick meal before returning to their nests which are massive platforms of twigs that sit in the canopy of the mangrove trees.

A Black-crowned Night Heron (*Nycticorax nycticorax*) stood motionless below the canopy with its blood red eyes; its most arresting feature. It is an attractive bird with black, grey and white plumage. One of the few nocturnal birds which is also active at dawn and dusk. Look out for one or groups of them flying over you in the evenings. Can't see them? Listen then to their call in flight which is a monotonous 'kwok'.

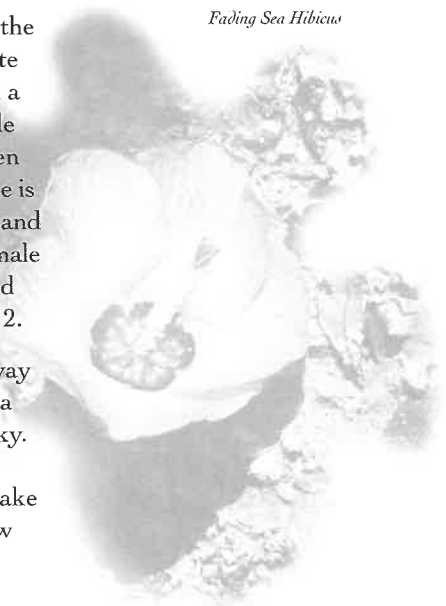
Last stop: The freshwater ponds at Route 3. These ponds provide the habitat for freshwater dwelling animals. Peering at the surface of the k*nd would reward one with the sight of pond skaters and the Two Spot Gouramy (*Trichogaster trichopterus*), a native species of freshwater fish in Singapore, lingering at the surface. You might hear the occasional splash caused by the Common Snakehead (*Channa striata*) or Aruan as it is commonly called. Oh, what a big mouth it has, for it is a carnivorous species of fish which can grow up to a length of 90 cm. Valued for its healing properties, it is the fish of choice for post-operation patients who believe that it can speed up recovery of wounds.

The grasses in the vicinity provide food and shelter for many species of birds such as the Yellow-bellied Prinia (*Prinia flaviventris*), warblers and munias, which were unfortunately not seen this evening. However a male Baya Weaver (*Ploceus*

philippinus) was busy building its nest by weaving strands of long grasses. Masters of nest-building they certainly are, for a Baya Weaver's nest is an ingenious piece of craft, easily surpassing other species of birds in their construction. The male first builds a "helmet" stage nest and displays on it, trying to attract a potential mate. Once a female has inspected the nest and stamps her approval, they mate and the male proceeds to complete the nest which ends with a long tube leading to a side entrance. His partner then lays her eggs and while she is busy with the incubation and caring of the young, the male builds another helmet and tries to attract Mate No. 2.

By the time I made my way back the sun was all but a dark orange ball in the sky. From the limited light available I was able to make out the silhouette of a few Large-tailed Nightjars (*Caprimulgus macrurus*) gliding around hunting for insects. Ah yes, it's another

Fading Sea Hibiscus



continued on pg 10

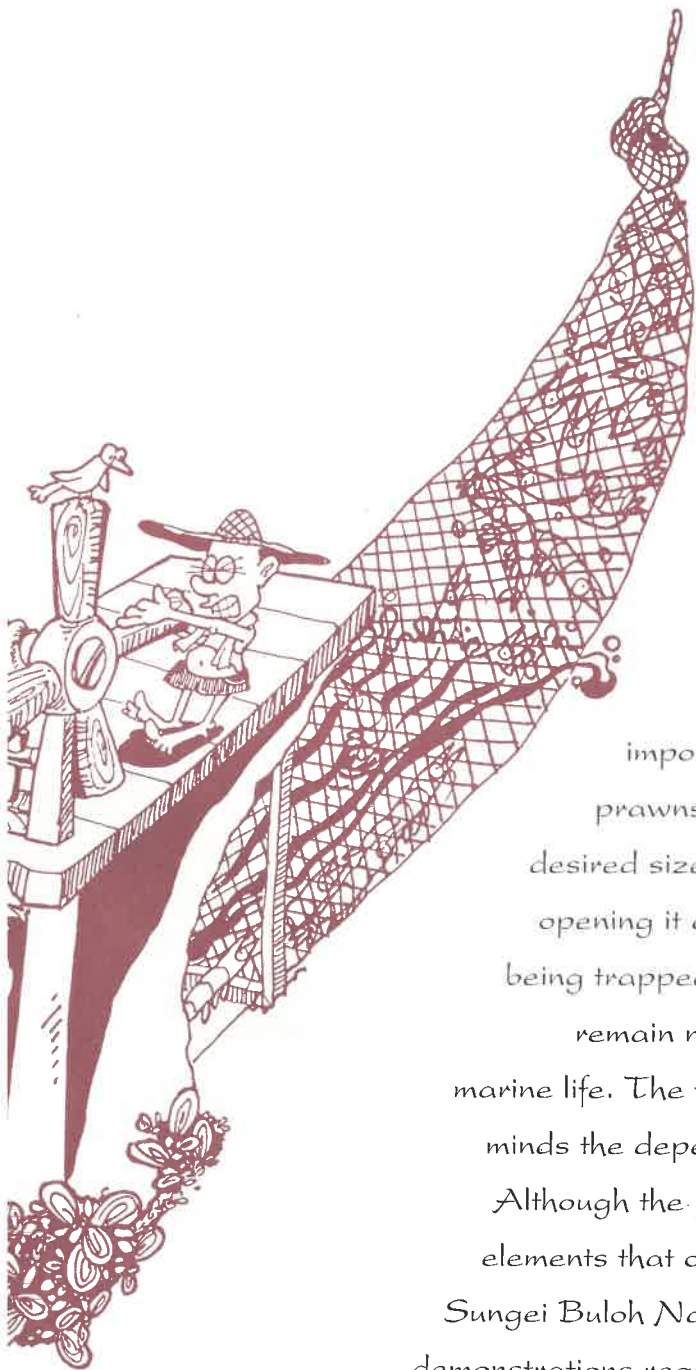
Picture Perfect:

Life at the



Rekindle the traditional prawn farming spirit with **DEBORAH TAY** as she fittingly depicts **Life at the Prawn Pond**.

e Prawn Pond



Rich in organic nutrients, the waterlogged mud itself acts as a natural feeding and spawning ground for any marine larvae or adult. Wild prawn larvae are introduced into the pond through a filter mesh. The mesh is installed at the sluice gate which is opened at high tide.

This will exclude large predators from entering. Flushing via the sluice gate is done regularly to remove the excrement-filled, deoxygenated water, in replacement with water, rich in oxygen, minerals and food.

Try analysing how the tidal influences play this important role of water exchange! Harvesting of the prawns are carried out when the stock has reached a desired size. The farmer will place a net at the gate whilst opening it at low tide. As the water flows out, prawns are being trapped in the net. Birds, like the Egrets and Herons,

remain near the farming site in wait for an easy meal of marine life. The traditional prawn farming method carves in our minds the dependency of human activity with Mother Nature. Although the prawn ponds are no longer farmed, the natural elements that once benefited the farmers still exist till this day.

Sungei Buloh Nature Park has been conducting prawn farming demonstrations regularly for the public. Come enjoy and relive this tradition with us! For more information, do call us at 7941401. 🦋

Common Pulmonate



nocturnal bird which sits quietly during the day, their greyish brown plumage providing excellent camouflage against the background.

It was time for animals on the night shift to take over. The world does not rest when the sun sets. Instead a whole new exciting episode begins. Sounds that filled the air during the day are now replaced by others, predominantly the shrilling calls of cicadas, the croaking of frogs and the songs of nocturnal birds. Hence an evening walk is definitely interesting for it is the transition period between day and night, light and dark where you can find the beginnings of nocturnal life and the diminishing of day activities.

Don't be surprised to find bats, the only true flying mammals flying around. When night falls they will be out in full force finding their favourite fruits or insects as they flit about. Slimy creatures such as slugs and snails crawl out in response to the falling temperature and increasing humidity. As soft bodied animals they risk the danger of losing body fluids through evaporation hence a dark, moist environment is perfect for them.

An evening walk is definitely interesting and the Park is opened until 7 pm daily, so come on down to experience what the evening has to offer you. As for me, it's time to go for a very important nocturnal activity: Dinner. 🦋

Baya Weaver building a nest



Besides Sungei Buloh, there are other areas with mangroves...

Across the Seas...

PULAU UBIN RECREATION AREA

Visitor Centre

Opening Hours:
7.00am to 6.00pm.
Mon - Sun, including
Public Holidays.

Bumboat Charges

\$1.50 per trip (per person).
\$1.00 extra per bicycle.

Getting There

To reach Changi Bus Terminal, take SBS No.2 from Bedok or Tanah Merah MRT Station; or SBS No. 29 from Tampines Bus Interchange. The Changi Point Jetty is

adjacent to the Bus Terminal. From then on, it is only a ten-minute bumboat ride to get to PULAU UBIN.

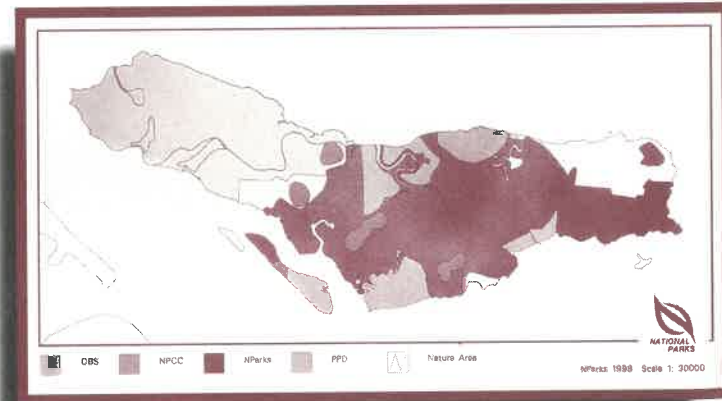
Further information may be obtained from:

Information Kiosk
Tel: 542-4108

NParks Office
Tel: 542-4842
Fax: 542-4843

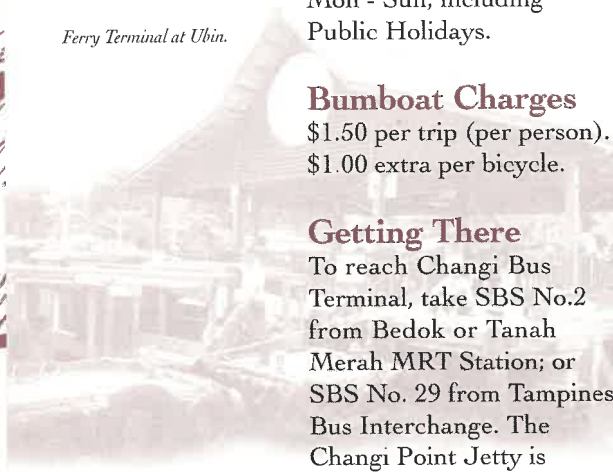
Pulau Ubin Police Post.
Tel: 542-8664

Website:
www.nparks.gov.sg/nature/pubin.html



Map of Ubin.

Ferry Terminal at Ubin.



Find out more about flying foxes and bats with 'Batman'
TAY SOON LIAN as he tells you the myths and truths about
these amazing creatures...in the night of course...

Flying Fox

Scientific Name
Pteropus scapulatus

Home
Tropical rainforests of
Northeastern Australia and
Southeast Asian islands.

Description
Small, dog like face and
eyes, reddish brown fur,
leathery black wings, black
nose, wing span of about 5ft,
and weighs up to 53oz.

Bat Facts
Unlike their smaller cousins,
the bats, flying foxes roost
outside in the sun rather than
in caves. High above the
forest floor, "camps" of
flying foxes hang upside
down together, sometimes as

many as a few thousand will
congregate at the same spot.
They hang from branches
by one or both feet, wrap
themselves in their wings
and sleep the day away. On
very hot days, these bats keep
cool by fanning themselves
with their wings. Flying foxes
use their excellent sense of
sight and smell (more than
echolocation) to locate their
food at night. These creatures
are frugivores i.e. fruit-eaters.
They also consume flowers
and pollen and assist in
pollination in the same way
bees do. They use their
sensitive sense of smell to
detect ripe fruits and places
where flowers are blooming.
Flying foxes can fly up to 80
km for food! They use their
long, bristly tongues (ideal

for lapping up juicy fruits)
for licking and grooming
themselves or their friends.
There are more than 160
species of fruit bats in the
world, but only about 60
species of the larger fruit
bats make up the family of
flying foxes. Male flying
foxes get the female's
attention by singing loudly
and flashing bunches of hair
on their backs! Obviously,
the female flying 'vixens'
think hairy backs are the
latest in flying fox fashion
apparel!

Now that you know several
truths about flying foxes,
have you heard these myths
about bats?

Close cousin of the Flying Fox.

All bats are blind?

*All bats can see, some see
better than us.*

*The larger bats have big eyes
that enable them to see flowers
and fruits in the night.*

*Smaller bats can still see, but
rely on their ability to echolocate
in order to capture insects
and to navigate in the night.*

***All bats are dirty and carry
rabies?***

*Bats are clean animals that
groom themselves daily.*

*Yes, they can contract rabies,
but less than 1/2 of 1% of
world's species of bats actually
have rabies.*

***You are more likely to
contract rabies from an
unvaccinated dog or cat.***

***Bats will try to fly into your
hair?***

*Bats do not want to be in your
hair!*

*Experiments have shown that
they could not get a bat to
stay on a person's head even
though they wrapped the hair
around the bat!*

***Bats are vampires that will
suck your blood?***

*There are only 3 species of
vampire bats that live in
Central and South America.
They do not suck blood.*

***Concentrating primarily on
mammals, they make a
small incision with their
razor sharp teeth and then
lap up the blood. Scientists
are currently looking into
using saliva from these bats
to develop new anticoagulant
drugs to prevent blood clots in
patients with heart-related
problems.***

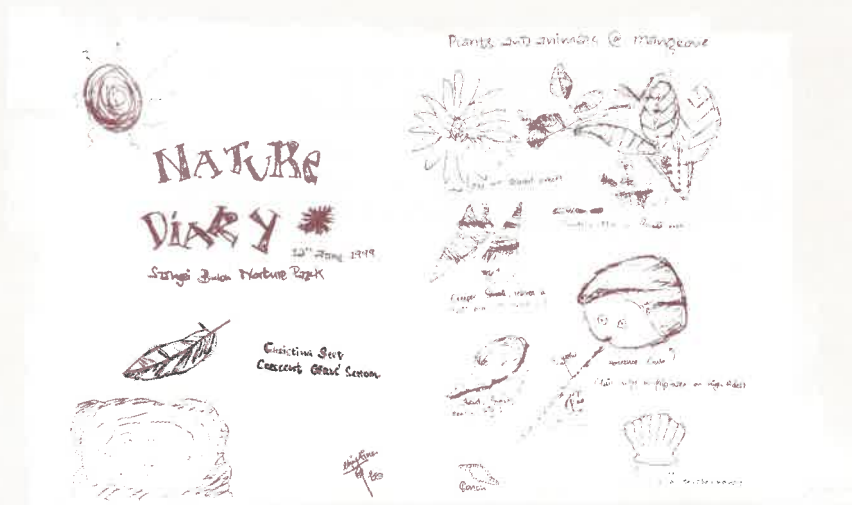
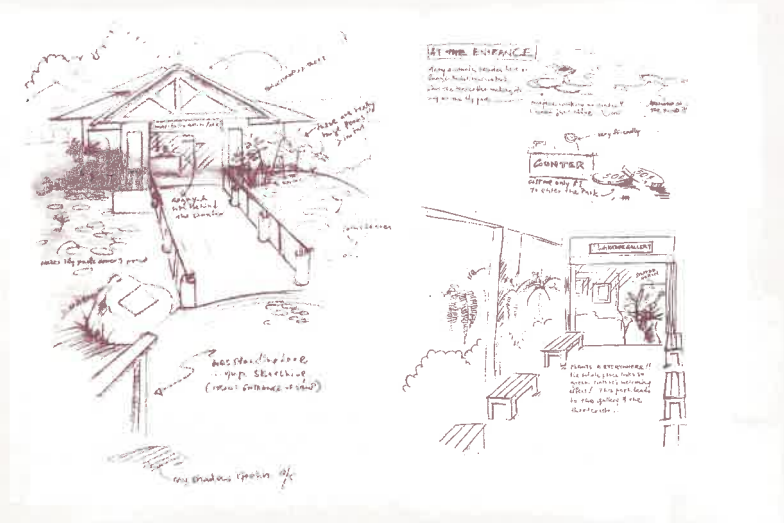
***However, the one REAL fact I
found out about writing
about bats is,***

You Have To Do It At Night.

*(Try looking out for the close cousins
of the Flying Fox at Sungei Buloh
Nature Park).*

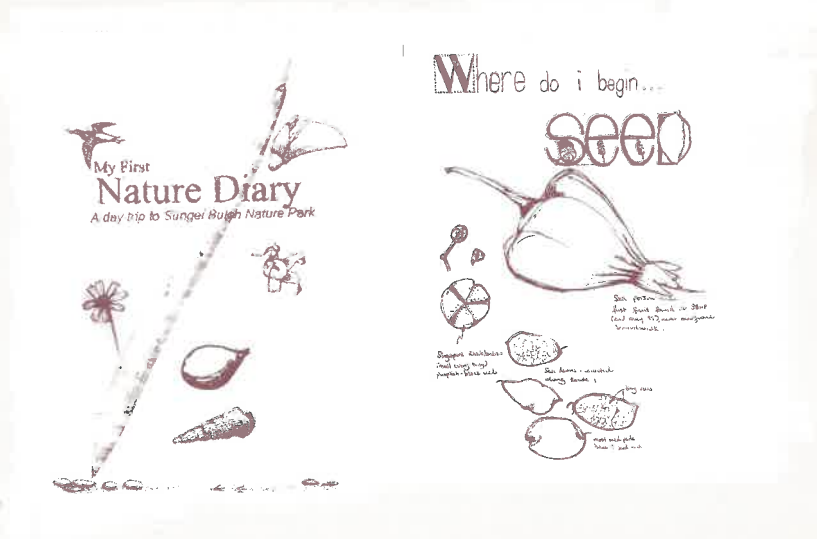
nature diary

..... a natural collection of memories



It was yet another inaugural activity conducted by Sungei Buloh Nature Park to bring you closer to Nature. Participants got to explore their world with us and capture it with sketches and words. At the end of the day, they not only created a nature diary that they could enjoy for years to come, they went home a little richer with the knowledge of the Park.

Their experience at the Park as depicted:



The No. 1 hit with kids,
Mr Monitor Lizard.

Spin Doctor

by Linda Goh

At Work



It was a wonderfully unique experience telling "tales" to young children, as I soon discovered when Sungei Buloh Nature Park was invited for a series of storytelling sessions at our local community libraries during the June vacation.

The natural curiosity of the young ones, spurred by the colourful presentations of the animal life at the Park, charged up the atmosphere.

Fuelled with the desire to share the wonders of nature, a "tale" on "Interesting inhabitants of Sungei Buloh" was told to whet their appetite for the real thing. Questions upon questions were exchanged luring us into a discovery channel of animal life. The wonders of nature mirrored evidently in each of the wide-eyed young ones as they eagerly awaited the introduction of each unique creature. Their vivacious

attention was soon treated with a dose of cartoon, "A Wetlands Adventure", where they journeyed through the perils in a mangrove swamp.

Judging from their warm response, we knew we had hit home the message of respecting animal life and caring for them. This outreach programme was indeed rewarding and one of many future collaboration with the National Library Board.

Amphibian or fish? The young soon found out about Mr Mudskipper.

OTTERS IN SIGHT

Happy Additions



Our wish has just been granted. The Smooth Otters (*Lutra perspicillata*) as reported in the previous issue of Wetlands are not only here but now with a pup too! They were sighted recently by our Senior Ranger and confirmed by our postgraduate researcher.

This is indeed good tidings as we were all hoping that they are a courting pair and would bring us more of their kind here in the Park.

In addition to the Smooth Otters, we have also released some Asian Small-clawed Otters (*Anonyx cinerea*).

Treasure the precious moments if you sight these adorable creatures. Take as many pictures as you want... but please do not feed them or touch them. Leave them in the wild as they should be.

Calendar of Events

compiled by chan su hooi and halilab ahmad

Ecology Trail On-going

Let "A Window to the Big Picture" lead you through some basic concepts of Ecology. Venture from station to station along Route One and discover fascinating facts of life.



Nature Talks

1st Saturday of the month

Want to spend an afternoon between 3-4 pm, learning and sharing knowledge? Come join us for the talk cum slide presentation by experts in different fields every 1st Sat of the month. Do look out for more details in the "What's On Column" in the Straits Times.

Free Guided Tours Every Saturday

Free guided tours every Saturday at 9am, 10am, 3pm & 4pm.

Come discover the Park's unique flora and fauna as the guide leads you

through the 'mystery walk'. See things that you might not have seen before!

Guiding service will be replaced with other interesting programs that coincide with allocated free guiding service slots.

Care for Nature' Family Nature Hunt

Jointly organised by SPH, HSBC and Sungei Buloh Nature Park.

17 & 18 July '99
24 & 25 July '99

• Prizes:

1st Prize : \$800 cash and \$700 worth of prizes

2nd Prize : \$500 cash and \$700 worth of prizes

3rd Prize : \$300 cash and \$700 worth of prizes

4th-10th Prize : \$200 cash and \$400 worth of prizes

25 Consolation Prizes: \$100 cash and \$150 worth of prizes

• Every family team is required to hunt for the answers to a set of questions relating to nature and to complete the game within 3 hours. Participants are required to complete some tasks or quizzes at various educational activity stations in order to score bonus points. The more bonus points accumulated the higher the chances of winning. A specially designed T-shirt will be given to all participants as well as a souvenir for each participating team.

International Coastal Cleanup

18 September '99.
International effort runs locally to clean shoreline of marine trash. Besides collection, the data is categorised and collated to develop a profile in trends of marine refuse locally, regionally and internationally. Volunteers are welcome. Call 794 1408.



Migratory season

September to March
The migratory birds will be making their way south to escape the northern winter. Watch them roost and feed at the Park.

Community Service Project

14 Aug '99

Woodlands Secondary School students are involved in various activities in the Park as part of their Community Involvement Programme.

Nature Diary '99

14 August '99 at 9.30am

Join us at Sungei Buloh Nature Park as we explore our living world and capture it with sketches and words. Learn how to create a nature diary that you can enjoy for years to come. Interested? Call 794 1401 to register in advance.

Teachers' Workshop

September '99
A half-day workshop is conducted for school teachers to familiarize them with the Park as well as to help them plan more meaningful field trips at Sungei Buloh.

School talks slide talks that bring the Park closer to schools.

5 Aug
Mountbaten Primary
School & Eunus Primary

Take a flight into the life of a night flier with Senior Ranger, **RAMAKRISHNAN RK.**

Journal of a Nature Warden: LARGE-TAILED NIGHTJAR *Caprimulgus macrurus*

Bird watching at Sungei Buloh Nature Park would be a more enriching experience if you come across this unique bird, the Large-tailed Nightjar (*Caprimulgus macrurus*). It is more often heard than seen, calling from dusk till dawn from its perch.

During the day, the Large-tailed Nightjar sits motionless among dead leaves along the sides of paths. The basic colour of its plumage is greyish-brown with buffy underparts lined with numerous black bars. Its plumage blend in with the habitat during the day, keeping it camouflaged from predators and humans.

The Nightjar starts to fly after sunset and is active throughout the night. Its "ghost-like" flight is almost similar to the moth's. The characteristic call of a Nightjar - a loud monotonous "Chonk" is most often heard when the sky is clear. Feeding takes place during flight when the Nightjar uses its jar-like mouth as a sweep net to catch insects such as moths, large beetles and mosquitoes. The bristles found near the base of the bill suggest that they act as an organ of touch for catching prey.

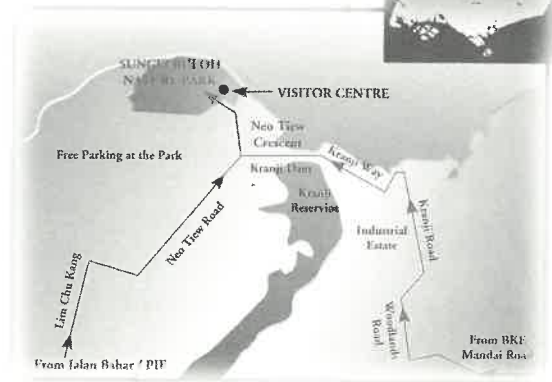
The Nightjar has been observed to breed from

March to June. Nest building is not required as the eggs are laid on the ground. The female lays between 1 to 2 elliptical-shaped eggs, which are creamy-white mottled with brown weighing 8-9gm. The first egg is usually heavier and larger. Both parents share incubation duties (16 to 18 days) with the female incubating during the day while the male takes over from dusk until dawn.

Nightjar nestlings have down feathers after hatching. Their eyes are fully opened by the second or third day. The nestlings are moved from one spot to another to avoid detection by predators. When disturbed during nesting, the Nightjar flies to a different location and performs a distraction display, flapping on the ground as if it has a broken wing. This art of display is to draw the intruder away from its nest. The nestlings on the other hand will display a flapping of wings with their mouths wide open and lunge forward when threatened.

Do try to spot this remarkable bird sitting by the side of the routes on your next visit to the Park. But remember not to pick up any eggs found along the routes as they may belong to this unique bird.

Map to the Park



Opening Hours
7.30am to 7.00pm
on weekdays
7.00am to 7.00pm
on weekends

Sungei Buloh Nature Park
301 Neo Tiew Crescent
Singapore 718925
Tel: 794 1401
Fax: 793 7271

Admission
\$1.00 per adult
\$0.50 per child/
student/senior citizen

E-mail:
sbnp@pacific.net.sg

Audio-visual Show
Mondays to Saturdays
9.00am, 11.00am,
1.00pm, 3.00pm,
5.00pm.

Website:
http://www.sbnp.org

**Sundays and
Public Holidays
Hourly from
9.00am to 5.00pm**

- Visitor Centre Facilities**
- Theatre
 - Cafeteria
 - Nature Gallery
 - Nature Cove
 - Toilet

Getting There
Mondays to Saturdays:
Board service
TIBS 925 from
Kranji MRT Station.

- Park Facilities**
- Boardwalk
 - Route 1
 - Route 2
 - Route 3
 - Bird Observation Hide
 - Tower Hide
 - Screen
 - Outdoor Classroom
 - Platform
 - Shelter
 - Binoculars
 - Emergency Walkie-talkie

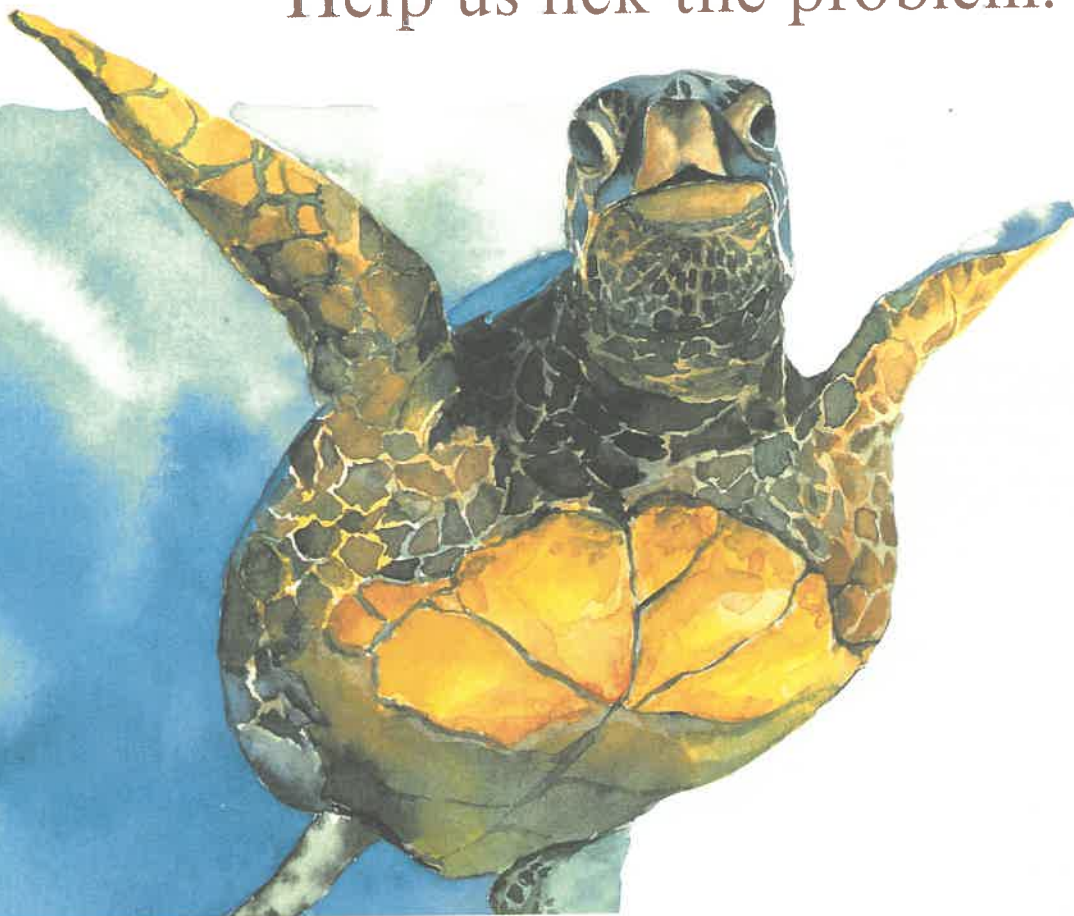
**Alight at Kranji
Reservoir carpark
for a 15 min walk
to the Park.**

**Sundays and
Public Holidays:
TIBS 925 will stop at
the Park entrance.**

Map of the Park



They're disappearing fast.
Help us lick the problem.



The Green Turtle is a magnificent creature. In the sea, it swims gracefully. And every once in a while, it will lumber up the beach to lay its precious eggs. It is a sight to behold.

Unfortunately the Green Turtle is being threatened, hunted towards extinction for its meat, its beautiful shell and its eggs. Many amphibian and reptile species are similarly endangered today because they are losing their natural habitats.

In an effort to help protect our environment and the many creatures that inhabit it, we launched the Care-for-Nature programme in 1989 to promote public awareness and action in caring for our living planet. Since then, we've helped save a beautiful coral reef from destruction – moving it piece by piece with the help of hundreds of volunteers – from the reef due for reclamation to a safe haven in Sentosa.

And to sow the seeds for a greener future, we've started a programme to involve our youths in re-introducing a variety of indigenous trees into our urban landscape. We're also continuing our efforts to help promote the Sungei Buloh Nature Park, Singapore's only wetland park as a living classroom to our school children; providing them with a learning experience and an appreciation of our environment far richer than what any text book can offer.

These are just a few of our more salient projects to help protect and preserve the environment, its wildlife and our natural heritage. You too can help

the environmental cause by supporting our latest endeavour – the sale of the 1999 Care-for-Nature Collectors' Stamp Series on amphibians and reptiles.

Every dollar and cent we receive from each Collector's Cover and Limited Edition Stamp Print Collection you buy will be donated to the Care-for-Nature Trust Fund; contributing to the financial resources needed to fund ongoing conservation projects as well as new ones in the pipeline.

With your support, our endangered wildlife may stand a better chance. Because if we can all just help to look after their habitat, nature's wildlife can look after themselves. So buy any one of the Care-for-Nature Collectors' Covers or Limited Edition Stamp Print Collection, and help lick the problem.

The Amphibian and Reptile Series

For as little as \$9.90, you can make a difference.

Care-for-Nature Collectors' Cover (\$9.90)

Special 4-in-1 print edition (\$68)

Set of 4 Limited Stamp Print Collection (\$338 with frames), (\$198 without frames)

From 13 October, the Care-for-Nature Collector's Covers are available at all HSBC branches and Post Offices. The Limited Edition Stamp Print Collection are also available at HSBC branches, Public Affairs and Advertising (HSBC Building #14-01, Tel: 530 5100) and Singapore Post (Killiney Road, Tel: 734 7899).

HSBC 

YOUR WORLD OF FINANCIAL SERVICES