

Teachers' Guide on a Trip to Chek Jawa

About Chek Jawa

The Chek Jawa Wetlands is essentially a large expanse of sand flats masked by the sea during high tides. It is only completely revealed during the lowest of tides. Prior to becoming a popular nature site, it was a quiet kampong reputed to be one of the best *kelongs* and fishing spots in Singapore. Slated for reclamation in December 2001, the authorities reversed the decision after considering feedback from interest groups and the public.

Occupying the flats are physically and ecologically distinctive zones. These comprise the rocky shore and seagrass lagoon, which are both bound by sandbars. Landwards, mangroves fringe the softer section of the shoreline while coastal forests flank the rockier portions. The numerous habitats are the primary reason why the biodiversity here is so rich.

Planning a Visit to Chek Jawa

1. Before the visit

To make your time at Chek Jawa as fulfilling and enjoyable as possible, a small amount of preparatory work should be done in class. The worksheet *A Trip to Chek Jawa* will give students some background information of the wetlands.

The worksheet is intended to help students in their observations of and interactions with the array of life found in the mangroves and inter-tidal zone.

The worksheet guides students to consider the following questions:

- What animals live in the wetlands?
- What conditions are these animals subjected to?
- How do the animals survive under these conditions?
- What interactions take place among the animals?
- What are the threats to the wetland environment?

2. Getting to Pulau Ubin

You can take a bumboat to Pulau Ubin from Changi Point Ferry Terminal. Each bumboat takes a maximum of 12 passengers and the fare is \$2.50 per passenger each way. The fare is paid onboard to the operator, and the journey lasts about 10 minutes.

3. Getting to Chek Jawa

Upon arriving in Pulau Ubin, make arrangements with the local taxi services for your transportation to the Chek Jawa Wetlands. Alternatively, you can hire bicycles if you and the students are comfortable with the journey and distance. When you reach the Punai Hut Arrival Point, walk towards the Information Counter where you can obtain information about the walking routes and the interesting features in the area.

4. Getting started

From the Information Counter, commence your exploration at the mangrove boardwalk and loop back to the start point via the coastal boardwalk. If you have more than one group, the other group can start in the opposite direction. You should end your learning journey at the Chek Jawa Wetlands Visitor Centre where you can find more information about this unique nature area.

5. Duration

It will take up to 2 hours to complete the tour and fill in the worksheet. Please ensure your students have taken their breakfast or lunch before starting. There are drink-vending machines on-site, but no eateries or places for groups to eat packed meals comfortably.

6. Student numbers

Due to the width of the boardwalk, each group should have no more than 15 students and a teacher/guide.

7. Essential items

Please remember to bring/wear the following essential items with you on your visit:

- Covered footwear
- *A Trip to Chek Jawa* worksheet available on www.nparks.gov.sg.
- Sunblock/Hat/cap
- Poncho/umbrella
- Insect repellent
- Ample supply of water
- First-aid kit
- Enthusiasm!

After the visit

Thank you for visiting Chek Jawa, Singapore's very own seashore sensation! We hope your students have learnt not just about shore ecology, but also to appreciate and treasure our natural environment.

For more general information about Pulau Ubin and Chek Jawa, please visit www.nparks.gov.sg/pulauubin.