

The Landscape Excellence Assessment Framework (LEAF) Awards

As an urbanised city where most, if not all, developments consist of some form of greenery, it is ever more important to recognise the many benefits brought about by good landscape design and management. Launched in 2013, the Landscape Excellence Assessment Framework (LEAF) is the first certification scheme in Singapore dedicated to celebrating good landscape design, construction, and management of landscape in development projects and parks. Organised by NParks, LEAF aims to cultivate ecologically, climatically, and socially resilient landscapes in Singapore's developments and parks in line with our nation's efforts to transform into a City in Nature.

LEAF is designed to assess a project in six aspects – design and landscape, accessibility, community wellbeing and engagement, environmental sustainability, biodiversity conservation and maintenance strategies. The certification also appreciates and recognises that concerted efforts from various parties, from contractors to architects, are required to achieve good landscapes. In 2020 and 2021, 37 developments were assessed and certified via LEAF. These projects exemplify how residential, commercial, and public developments in Singapore contribute to the nation's efforts to create a liveable, sustainable and climate resilient Singapore. Here, we showcase 4 exemplary projects.

Gold Award, certified in 2021

EDEN

Type
New Development

Developer
Celestial Fortune Pte Ltd

Contractor
Unison Construction Pte Ltd

Architect
RSP Architects Planners & Engineers (Pte) Ltd

Landscape Architect
COEN Design International Pte Ltd

Softscape Contractor
City Garden Pte Ltd

EDEN



Located in the historic Orchard Road neighbourhood of Singapore and commissioned by Swire Properties, the 104.5 metre building - the first residential project in Asia by the studio - offers a unique response to its location that entwines nature with city apartment living.

EDEN is designed to resemble a spine blade: simple vertical rectilinear plains with slim windows form the blade with generous garden balconies situated in between. This approach grants privacy for each of the twenty apartments and allows for a generous central living space that forms the heart of each residence. The unconventional concrete walls are moulded with a topographical map of Singapore's terrain which has been abstracted to create a unique three-dimensional texture.

The focus on creating a garden for each apartment is a response to the disconnection between high rise apartments and the lush greenery at street level in Singapore. Responding to Lee Kuan Yew's original vision of Singapore as a 'City in a Garden', the design extends the landscape of Singapore upwards through the building with a series of hanging gardens, connecting the interior living space with the outdoors, providing views of Singapore's green landscape.



Gold Award, certified in 2021

Yale-NUS College

Type Existing Development	Landscape Consultant Country Cousins
Developer & Landscape Manager Yale-NUS College	Landscape Term Contractor Swee Bee Contractor Pte Ltd

Yale-NUS campus, built over the old Warren Country Club, was completed in 2015. It conserved many of the large trees and undulating terrain, and further integrated lush greenery throughout the built space. It attained a LEAF Certificate of Recognition in 2017 and has since made improvements on multiple fronts over the past three years.

The central lung of the campus is flanked by three Residential College (RC) garden courtyards. It houses a diverse selection of plants — over 200 species— cultivated for their botanic and cultural significance. Its star is a majestic Heritage Tree, *Margaritaria indica* – Singapore’s one and only. A project has since been undertaken to propagate saplings.

The gardens of the RCs function as outdoor classrooms, where students learn experientially amidst nature. Terraces at corridors integrate the natural and built environment, providing spaces for outdoor teaching and social gathering. Species less suited for these semi-outdoor spaces

have been replaced with alternatives, significantly lowering maintenance needs. The central biofiltration pond filters runoff before it enters the PUB drainage network. Yale-NUS has collaborated with NParks to promote dragonfly habitats here. The engagement of students and faculty in creating experimental farms and deploying advanced farming methods such as aeroponics have amplified the richness of an educational experience.

The landscape is strategically managed by Yale-NUS Infrastructure, Safety and Security Office, an international FM award winner and the first office in SEA to be awarded the ISO 41001:2018 certification in Facilities Management System. It adopts a process-oriented approach to improving maintenance efficiency and adapts technology to empower our stakeholders to report anomalies real-time.

The Office is supported by a team of outsourced landscape technicians who thoroughly maintain the grounds. They are audited by a landscape consultant, who advises on systemic enhancements including the introduction of more resilient plant species.

Yale-NUS strives to be Singapore’s premier institution with the best-in-class maintenance management strategies to ensure that the landscape continues to protect NUS’ overall ecology.



Thomson Nature Park

Platinum Award, certified in 2022

Thomson Nature Park

Type

New Park

Developer

National Parks Board

Architect & Lead Consultant

**Ronny Chin Architects
Pte Ltd**

Landscape Consultant

**COEN Design International
Pte Ltd**

Main Contractor &

Landscape Contractor
**Landscape Engineering
Pte Ltd**

Located to the east of the Central Catchment Nature Reserve (CCNR), between Old Upper Thomson Road and Upper Thomson Road, Thomson Nature Park is one of the latest additions to the buffer parks around CCNR. This 50-hectare buffer park complements existing nature parks including Springleaf and Windsor Nature Parks, by providing alternative venues for the public to enjoy nature-related activities and enhancing the existing ecological network for biodiversity with its rich flora and fauna.

Being a former Hainan Village, Thomson Nature Park is unique for its rich cultural heritage, and is also home to many rare and locally endangered animals. In particular, the nature park serves as a

key conservation site for the critically endangered Raffles' Banded Langur (*Presbytis femoralis femoralis*). By preserving and further enhancing existing habitats for flora and fauna movements, the existing forest habitat has been newly planted with native wildlife-attracting tree species such as Tembusu (*Cyrtophyllum fragrans*) and Kelat Oil (*Syzygium myrtifolium*), and Raffles' Banded Langur food trees such as Rambutan (*Nephelium spp*) and (*Xanthophyllum eurhynchum*). All existing mature trees are conserved on site.

The five trails spanning 3.8 km around the former village's road within the site have been specially curated to provide visitors with deeper insight into the ways of life during the kampung days and discover the variety of flora and fauna within Thomson Nature Park.

The overall landscape strategy to reinforce Thomson Nature Park's strong ethnobotany theme further emphasize the site's rich natural and cultural heritage. This is interwoven into the integrative landscape design, creating a unique experience for the park visitors - a park where history meets nature.

Platinum Award, certified in 2021

River Safari

Type	Developer
Existing Park	Singapore Zoological Gardens

River Safari is Asia's first and only river-themed wildlife park. Occupying 12 hectares and developed at S\$160 million, the park is home to 400 plant species and over 7,500 aquatic and terrestrial animals representing close to 240 species, including one of the world's largest collections of freshwater animals.

River Safari aims to inspire visitors to appreciate and protect fragile freshwater ecosystems and is home to threatened species such as the giant panda, manatee, and Mekong giant catfish. These magnificent animals are housed in themed exhibits that mirror iconic rivers of the world, from the Mississippi to the Amazon.

River Safari was designed with the environment in mind and is the first attraction in Singapore to receive the Building and Construction Authority's (BCA) Green Mark Platinum Award in the Park category.

Most of the park can be explored on foot. Guests will meander through the park on an exploratory river adventure of the Mississippi, Congo, Nile, Ganges, Mekong, and Yangtze rivers, peering into our freshwater aquariums and luscious walk-through exhibits.

Through a diverse offering of interactive in park activities such as enrichment programmes, interdisciplinary trails and workshops, these immersive experiences are set to engage senses and provide a unique, hands-on experience for visitors.

WRS plays a role in global conservation efforts through the captive breeding programmes. The park is also planning research initiatives, such as a tagging and tracking projects for giant freshwater stingrays in Thailand that will contribute to the conservation of endangered animal species in their native habitat.

River Safari

