



Location: Punggol Park

Cultivating Natural Bonds

Bonding with people, in nature.
Life is never so good when emotions
and family ties bloom amidst nature's
abundant treasures.

NParks continues to be driven by our conviction to provide and manage inspiring and beautiful parks and gardens for Singapore's people to live life's essential moments. This we have tried to achieve through appropriate amenity, recreational and activity management for our hierarchy of more than 300 parks. In order to serve the public better, NParks is continually redeveloping older parks, while building new ones to cater to increasingly sophisticated public tastes. It is our hope that in doing so, NParks will continue to be true to Singaporeans' trust in us to provide them with a great variety of recreational opportunities; some vibrant and some tranquil; sanctuaries from the stresses of our urban landscape and working environment.

Providing New Recreational Facilities

Among the new parks completed last year were four nature-oriented parks. One of them was Coney Island, a large 50 ha park that has been developed as a wilderness park. This island park boasts a beachfront, and a 5.2km sandy footpath that runs through the park. In keeping with the natural environment of the island, picnic tables, dustbins and park signs are constructed in an unobtrusive and tasteful manner.

In addition, the year also saw the completion of Zhenghua Park, a linear park that provides access to the Bukit Timah Nature Reserve. New trails and boardwalks at the Central Catchment Nature Reserve, MacRitchie, were also completed. These boardwalks skirt the perimeter of MacRitchie Reservoir, allowing users to experience the flora and fauna of the area right up to the water's edge. It forms part of the Nature Reserves Recreational Masterplan aimed at providing more recreational opportunities while conserving the Reserves by directing visitor pressure away from the cores of highest biodiversity to designated

fringe areas. Other upcoming exciting features include a tree-top walk, and a seven-storey Jelutong observation tower. The last nature oriented project completed for the year was Kranji Nature Trail, which links up with Sungei Buloh Wetland Reserve and allows users to experience the area's mangroves and native fauna.

Apart from the wilderness-oriented parks, the 15 ha Marina South Promenade has been developed to enhance access between the promenade and Marina City Park, as well as the New Downtown Development.

To provide a sheltered oasis for office workers in the Central Area, the Ann Siang Hill pocket park is being developed. This park was planned to reflect the history and landscape of its densely built-up environs, with distinctive entrance gateways reminiscent of the adjacent shophouses. Finally, the 0.9 ha Kim Seng Park was completed in February 2003, providing a green leisure space at the bank of the upper reaches of the Singapore River.



1. Experience nature's mangroves on the Kranji Nature Trail which leads to Sungei Buloh Wetland Reserve.
2. Zhenghua Park is a linear park that is linked to the Nature Reserves and the Bukit Panjang Park Connector.
3. Built on existing trails, the new MacRitchie boardwalks bring users closer to nature.



Bringing More Value To Existing Parks



In what is arguably the centre of our Garden City, exciting new improvement works to the Singapore Botanic Gardens have been completed. Both the Ginger Garden and the Cool House drew on innovative new ideas, and the Symphony Lake was tastefully re-landscaped.

The 600 square metre Cool House is home to some mountain tropical vegetation, and includes orchids and other plants not possible to otherwise grow in Singapore's climate, thereby extending the range of orchid species that can be displayed at the National Orchid Garden.

The new 1 ha Ginger Garden surrounds the popular Halia alfresco restaurant and showcases more than 250 species of gingers and related plants in a setting that includes a waterfall, lily-filled ponds and ambient lighting.



4. The new Ginger Garden boasts over 250 species of gingers and related plants.
5. The Cool House allows visitors to view mountain tropical vegetation that is otherwise impossible to grow in the local climate.

Complementing the efforts was the extensive upgrading of the Symphony Lake. The lake, which is very popular for the many concerts that take place free of charge for the public, was desilted, deepened and its banks reconfigured to improve aesthetics and water quality. In addition, a marsh garden, a picturesque new bridge and lakeside pavilion commanding grand vistas were added for the enjoyment of users.

Meanwhile, the Tanglin Core Redevelopment Project is progressing. When completed in 2005, new public amenities include additional car parking facilities, a new entrance plaza, and food and beverages (F & B) outlets. The Singapore Botanic Gardens Extension redevelopment will include a new Herb & Spice Garden, Healing Garden, Children's Garden and resource centres for horticultural, botanical and related activities.

The next exciting and unique development project is the Evolution Garden, which will bring visitors through a journey of

discovery as they trace the emergence and growth of plants and vegetation as they evolved during the long years of Mother Earth's geologic history.

At Fort Canning Park, another major city park, the development of the southern gateway to the park was completed. An intricately carved stone mural now welcomes visitors with nostalgic scenes of old Singapore. Lushly landscaped steps lead up to the Raffles Terrace, where a fountain and replicas of historical structures such as the former lighthouse and flag-mast take pride of place. At the top of the hill, the new Raffles House, which boasts panoramic views of the cityscape and harbour, looks set to be a popular venue for garden parties and family outings.

Towards the east, in response to user feedback and to improve amenities for the most visited park in Singapore, Phase 1 of the East Coast Park upgrading works has resulted in 80 new barbecue pits and 55 new shelters being constructed. Cycling and roller-skating

6. The popular 186 ha East Coast Park continues to meet diverse recreational needs.



tracks in some areas have also been widened and park lighting improved to enhance park usage at night. To further improve visitor comfort, NParks has improved drainage systems in flood-prone areas, thereby preventing waterlogging and eradicating mosquito breeding.

As part of our efforts to enhance park users' experiences, NParks also introduced new F & B outlets to various parks, emulating past success stories like the Au Jardin and Halia restaurants in the Singapore Botanic Gardens. These new outlets include an outdoor Beach Cabana at East Coast Park, and the Balinese-styled Restaurant Acacia at Bishan Park. In addition, a new restaurant will open by end of year 2003 in the Raffles Place Park, bringing to the central business district a new meeting point for busy executives.

Labrador Park in the west has also seen its share of upgrades to conserve its heritage. Upon completion, the park will see new historical attractions such as

Singapore's only authentic six-inch cannon. The 110-year-old cannon, when refurbished, will be displayed in an original gun emplacement design. Interpretive elements for the park's historical relics will be enhanced, and a World War II tunnel, previously sealed, will be opened up for guided historical walks. In addition, look-out decks along the seawall will allow greater access to the waterfront. Visitors will also enjoy a new service kiosk and a new car park.

Tiong Bahru Park is also being upgraded, with new facilities such as an adventure playground, fitness corners for adults and senior citizens, and a pavilion. Finally, also in the west, Kent Ridge Park will be enhanced with new amenities. An elevated walkway is being built to traverse the sloped terrain and allow the park's visitors to stroll through the tree canopy when redevelopment is completed in November 2003. This will also provide barrier-free access for the physically challenged and the elderly.



7. Take the lushly landscaped steps that lead up to the Raffles Terrace, and retrace the steps of Sir Stamford Raffles.

Bringing Our Parks Closer To The Community

Park connectors are a key step in NPark's efforts to give Singaporeans easy access and linkage to our major parks and nature areas. In recent years, Singaporeans of all ages have expressed great interest in using the connectors for recreational pursuits such as jogging and cycling, as well as useful short cuts to facilities within and beyond their own neighbourhoods.

NParks has committed to deliver a further 120km of park connectors by 2015. The completed network will link parks coast to coast (e.g. Pasir Ris Park to East Coast Park) and link towns and regions to the Central Catchment Nature Reserve. They will provide valuable service to park users and residents, who can enjoy the growing linkages between our parks and use the park connectors as shortcuts to amenities.

As of November 2002, 17 stretches of park connectors, totalling 54km have been developed. Park connectors completed in FY 2002 include those in Siglap, Simpang Kiri, Ang Mo Kio and Bukit Panjang.

In addition, the Whampoa Park Connector extension is currently under construction and seven other stretches are at the design stage, including the park connectors in Bedok, Punggol and Kallang. When these are completed, an approximate 12km will be added to the green network allowing better accessibility and an increase in recreational spaces for Singaporeans.

"I take the park connector to reach the bus station on most mornings. Despite the early hours, I enjoyed these walks as it felt as though I was taking a stroll through a mini-park. My sons also cycle down this stretch on the weekends to reach the parks."

Mdm Tan Siok Eng,
45-year-old Bishan Town resident.

8. The Siglap Park Connector is part of NParks' network of park connectors aimed at linking major parks and nature areas.



Enhancing Quality Of Life

Beyond providing green infrastructure, NParks' thrust is to create opportunities for recreational experiences and lifestyles to enhance our quality of life. For the year in review, more than 2,500 performances and events enthralled park visitors in many of our parks. NParks continued to draw upon local and overseas talent to use our parks as performance spaces, thereby adding to park users' quality of life and expanding their choice of high-quality entertainment options.

Fort Canning Park continued to play a lead role in this regard, hosting popular British rock bands such as Deep Purple, Suede, and Uriah Heep. Movie fans were thrilled by the 10-day Starlight Cinema Festival, while WOMAD made yet another well-received appearance.

A perennial favourite, the Singapore Botanic Gardens' concerts, continued to draw visitors with international performers and homegrown favourites such as the Singapore Symphony Orchestra and the Singapore Chinese Orchestra. The Gardens also organised a Christmas Fiesta for park users, with an exhibition on Christmas plants, workshops on Christmas dish gardening, carolling and stalls selling gifts and Christmas decorations.

Further afield, Hong Lim Park staged a four-day Chinese Opera Festival. Marina Promenade saw four major events, including the grand opening of the Esplanade Theatre, the River Hong Bao Event and the Singapore Marathon.



9. The Pasir Ris Park provides a breezy setting for picnics and BBQs.



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10. Hosting some 150 events in 2002, Fort Canning Park continues to enthrall its visitors with its historical and lush setting.

11. Melodious music at the Symphony Stage continues to draw crowds to the Singapore Botanic Gardens.



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12. Morning Taiji exercises at the SunPlaza Park bring people together.

NParks also continued to organise numerous activities at the neighbourhood parks such as the “Help Kids Day” event in December 2002, where thousands took part in raising funds for the School Pocket Money Fund. Many other events were also held in other locales like Raffles Place Park, Pasir Ris Park and SunPlaza Park. The Istana Park alone held 11 performances.

Park users will soon be able to get the latest updates on recreational activities in Singapore through the Recreation Town portal, a one-stop service managed by NParks. To provide greater convenience to users, we are also working towards online booking of services. One example would be the online BBQ Pits Booking and Payment service. When ready, users with internet access can book our BBQ pits from the comfort of their homes.

“I bring my family for camps at Sembawang Park and picnics at West Coast Park. The children really look forward to the camps and the breezy seaside atmosphere. The play areas provide fun and adventure. It’s a great way to spend time with the family.”

Ali Salleh,
43-year-old Woodlands resident.