



# SHARING GREEN



Beyond landscapes and greenery, NParks aims to cultivate relationships with all our stakeholders in all walks of life. The stewardship of our natural heritage is a responsibility that extends across groups, sectors and national boundaries. Working together with our friends and partners, we aim to foster a community spirit of Sharing Green, an appreciation and awareness for nature and for our greater environment that drives continuous action and builds long-term commitment.

(on left)

Students from Hougang Primary School enjoy an art lesson amid the greenery of their outdoor classroom in the school's garden. The school took the Platinum Award in the Schools category of NParks' Community In Bloom Awards 2010.

## A Birthday Celebration, with Friends Old and New

The Singapore Botanic Gardens turned 150 years old in 2009 – an occasion which was shared and enjoyed by Singapore’s residents and visitors. Minister Mah Bow Tan officially launched the year-long anniversary celebrations of the much-loved “People’s Garden” on 3 April 2009.

The festivities kicked off with *A Tale of Two Gardens*: the Singapore Botanic Gardens and her old friend, the Royal Botanic Gardens Kew in England, celebrated their 150th and 250th birthdays together. A symbolic tree planting ceremony was held simultaneously, via “live” video conference, in both the gardens. This event also paid tribute to the gift of 22 rubber seedlings from Kew Gardens in 1877, an act that catalysed the revolution of the rubber industry in Southeast Asia and the ensuing economic boom. Visitors learnt about the birth of the commercial rubber industry in the region from a supporting public exhibition called *The Seed that Changed the World*.

Minister Mentor Lee Kuan Yew, the visionary of Singapore as a Garden City and a regular visitor of the Gardens, also played a part in the celebrations. At the *Singapore Botanic Gardens’ 150th Anniversary Celebratory Dinner* on 6 May 2009, Minister Mentor Lee shared his valuable insights on the inspiration and challenges in the developmental process, and Singapore’s potential as a City in a Garden.

Adding yet more fanfare and joy to her birthday, the Botanic Gardens shared the happiness of 168 couples who took their marital vows in its premises on 20 September 2009, or 20-09-2009, earning herself a place in the Guinness World Records for “Most couples married in 24 hours (single location)”. Aptly named the *Garden Weddings 2009* ceremony, the blissful occasion was jointly organised by Lianhe Wanbao, People’s Association, and the Singapore Botanic Gardens.



The Singapore Botanic Gardens’ 150th anniversary celebrations wrapped up on a high note with *The Botanical Party*, a spectacular night-time birthday bash attended by over 5,000 members of the public.

The dialogue session with Minister Mentor Lee Kuan Yew, moderated by Professor Tommy Koh, Singapore’s Ambassador-at-Large, engaged guests at the *150th Anniversary Celebratory Dinner* in an open conversation on the past, present and future greening of Singapore.





Children from St Gabriel's Primary School planted three native trees of Singapore on their school grounds, as their contribution to the global Green Wave campaign.

## Reaching Out to the Classrooms

In our efforts to build the next generation of the green community, NParks has been collaborating with the Ministry of Education (MOE) on a number of initiatives.

Staff from NParks assisted in developing syllabus content to share knowledge about our Garden City in the classroom. The first such programme was developed in partnership with MOE's Co-Curricular Activities Branch (Outdoor Education), for their Programme for Active Learning (PAL).

Two NParks programmes – 'Kids for Nature' and 'Plants, Trees & Me' – were designed for PAL to aid children's understanding and knowledge of our natural heritage, flora and fauna. NParks also conducted teacher training for schools that took on these programmes.

Our staff have also been raising awareness of NParks' programmes and activities to educators through participation in MOE's roadshows. Separately, teachers can also make use of NParks' worksheets, e-guides and videos through Edumall, MOE's online platform for accessing and sharing teaching resources.

NParks and MOE also collaborated on the Teachers Work Attachment Programme. This programme gives teachers exposure to other areas of the public service and enables both agencies to leverage on each other's experiences and resources. This year, teachers were attached to various branches in NParks.



In 2009, more than 4,500 events were held in our parks and gardens. These include public events such as hands-on gardening workshops, conservation talks, and nature art sessions for adults and children.

In 2009, NParks supported the Green Wave for the first time. Green Wave is a global biodiversity campaign of the Convention on Biological Diversity, celebrated annually on 22 May as part of the worldwide celebrations of International Day for Biological Diversity.

Every year, students in participating schools all over the world plant or water a tree at 10 am local time, creating a 'green wave' that goes around the globe. This serves to raise awareness among children and youths about the importance of biodiversity and the need to conserve it. By supporting the Green Wave, NParks also provided a platform for many schools in Singapore to showcase and share their gardening efforts. This year, close to 1,000 students from 17 schools in Singapore planted 53 native trees.

**279 community gardens took part in the Community In Bloom Awards 2010, an increase from 193 entries in the 2008 awards.**

## Going Green, Starting Young

My First Skool, Singapore's biggest childcare operator, is partnering NParks to provide pre-school children with a range of nature appreciation learning experiences, which it will integrate into its curriculum. Under the Community In Bloom (CIB) programme, NParks has developed CIB Kidz, a set of teacher's resources designed for pre-school learning. This will enable teachers to incorporate environmental education into their daily activities. CIB Kidz will be rolled out to over 4,000 children in My First Skool's 43 centres.

My First Skool is also working closely with NParks in setting up sustainable community gardens at or near its existing and upcoming centres. These gardens will be jointly built and cared for by the teachers and children. NParks will provide advice on aspects such as design layout, plant selection and gardening skills suitable for children. These community gardens can also be enjoyed and supported by residents living near the My First Skool centres.

Cultivating a love of nature among the next generation is but one of many steps in our country's progress toward becoming a City in a Garden.





Professor Leo Tan, Chairman of the Garden City Fund (left), tours an exhibition of photos from the guidebook during the book's launch at Sungei Buloh Wetland Reserve, together with Joseph Tham, Chairman of the Green Committee at Grand Hyatt Singapore.

## A Hotelier Supports Our Feathered Guests

Singapore is a transit hub for travellers of all kinds – even avian ones. The migratory birds seen at the Sungei Buloh Wetland Reserve are now featured in a guidebook produced by the Grand Hyatt Singapore and the Garden City Fund (GCF), in partnership with NParks. This is the first comprehensive photographic guide on migratory birds to be published in Singapore.

This guidebook, titled **Migratory Birds of Sungei Buloh Wetland Reserve**, was launched by Professor Leo Tan, Chairman of the GCF, on 10 October 2009. It documents 108 species of migratory birds which have been sighted at Sungei Buloh Wetland Reserve over the past decade, with photos and descriptions of their behaviour. It is a useful resource to complement the tours, workshops and talks at Sungei Buloh Wetland Reserve, and will help visitors to learn about and appreciate these fascinating birds.

## Making Green Investments by Planting Trees

Established in 2007, the Plant-A-Tree programme gives the environmentally conscious a chance to donate the cost of a young tree and to plant it themselves. As of 31 March 2010, the programme has seen more than 8,000 trees pledged and planted by 140 organisations and 384 individuals.

The programme has received considerable support from corporations with their own green campaigns. One such organisation is Citibank. In partnership with the GCF, Citibank pledged to plant a tree for every 100 customers who opted for electronic statements instead of paper ones. Over 400 Citibank employees and their families planted 1,000 trees along the Changi Coastal Park Connector on 23 August 2009, as part of this campaign.



The act of tree planting has taken root among many environmentally conscious individuals and groups, such as the Amriteswari Society (pictured above).



At the second Curitiba Meeting on Cities and Biodiversity in Brazil, Minister Mah Bow Tan encouraged cities to participate in the testing and refinement of the City Biodiversity Index. Here, a guide at the Cultural Centre of the Amazonia explains the uses of local products derived from the Amazon forest.

## Global Teamwork in Nature Conservation

This year saw many achievements in the area of biodiversity conservation, made possible by the partnerships of NParks with various local and international stakeholders.

In collaboration with the Secretariat of the Convention of Biological Diversity and the Global Partnership on Cities and Biodiversity, NParks spearheaded the development of the **City Biodiversity Index (CBI)**. This self-assessment tool is designed to help cities evaluate and benchmark biodiversity conservation efforts.

Mr Mah Bow Tan, Minister for National Development, has been instrumental to the success of the CBI. Following his proposal for the development of this index in May

2008, at the Conference of Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), NParks organised workshops for international experts to develop the User's Manual for the CBI. NParks worked with cities worldwide to test this index, including Brussels, Curitiba, Edmonton, Frankfurt, Joondalup, London, Montpellier, Nagoya, Tallinn, and Waitakere City.

On 5 September 2009, Minister Mah launched Singapore's **National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP)**. Titled 'Conserving Our Biodiversity', this master plan charts a comprehensive and holistic approach towards developing unique solutions to our conservation challenges. It also ensures co-ordinated planning in the sustainable use, management and

## About 5% of land in land-scarce Singapore is set aside and protected as Nature Reserves.

conservation of our biodiversity. Developed with inputs from various public sector agencies and nature groups, it calls for the enhancement of awareness in conservation efforts, and strengthened partnerships with local and international stakeholders. The NBSAP fulfills our regional and international commitments, primarily the CBD.

The inaugural ASEAN Conference on Biodiversity 2009 (ACB2009) took place at Republic Polytechnic in Singapore from 21 – 23 October 2009. Jointly organised by NParks and the ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity, ACB2009 assessed how ASEAN countries fared against the 2010 Biodiversity Target of significantly reducing biodiversity loss. The conference also discussed the next steps to be taken for biodiversity beyond 2010. At the opening ceremony, Guest of Honour Ms Grace Fu, Senior Minister of State for National Development and Education, encouraged the 300 attendees to strengthen partnerships to address biodiversity challenges in this region.



Dr Aaron Bernstein, renowned Harvard physician and co-author of the acclaimed book *Sustaining Life: How Human Health Depends on Biodiversity*, was the keynote speaker at the inaugural ASEAN Conference on Biodiversity.



Partnerships were forged and strengthened to meet the region's biodiversity challenges at the ASEAN Conference on Biodiversity 2009. From left: Senior Minister of State Ms Grace Fu, Deputy Director of NParks' National Biodiversity Centre Dr Lena Chan, NParks' Deputy Chief Executive Officer Dr Leong Chee Chiew, Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity Dr Ahmed Djoghlaif.

Over 1.3 million trees in Singapore are cared for by NParks' 120 certified arborists, who conduct 15,000 scheduled tree inspections every month.

## Getting to Know Our Woody Guardians

In Singapore's densely populated urban environs, there are over one million trees of many species planted along roads, in parks and protected nature reserves. This year, ten of the most common tree species became familiar 'faces' to many Singapore residents.

In conjunction with Clean and Green Singapore (CGS) 2010, NParks launched a public engagement campaign to nurture tree appreciation in Singapore. The 'Know 10 Trees' campaign encouraged members of the public to recognise ten of Singapore's towering, silent green guardians: the Rain Tree, Angsana, Yellow Flame, Senegal Mahogany, Broad-Leafed Mahogany, Tembusu, Sea Apple, Saga, Trumpet Tree and Sea Almond.

At the CGS 2010 carnival at HortPark, visitors voted for their favourite tree out of the ten, through an interactive voting contest which was also held online.

More than 2,000 children and adults voted for their favourite tree out of the ten featured in the 'Know 10 Trees' campaign, during the CGS 2010 carnival as well as online.



They received Know 10 Trees calendars and brochures to bring home with them. Through this campaign, which was supported by Frasers Centrepoint, many learnt to appreciate these trees, and to identify them. The same ten trees were featured in a commemorative stamp series which was produced by SingPost in collaboration with NParks, and launched on 24 May 2010.

Also launched at CGS 2010 was the second edition of *Trees of Our Garden City*, which covers a wide range of the urban trees commonly encountered in Singapore. Besides 150 trees and palms in full colour, this book also features three new chapters – ‘Our Garden City Story’, ‘Tree Biology’, and ‘Trees and the Environment’ – which provide readers with a broader perspective of the functions of trees in Singapore.



At the launch of CGS 2010 on 30 October 2009, Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong planted a Bayur Bukit (*Schoutenia accrescens*) tree in HortPark.



**THE RED HANGING HELICONIA**  
**Ranzel Baking**

*First Toa Payoh Primary School*

This painting depicts a close-up of the heliconia plant, which can be found in the gardens of Singapore. The painting's main colours represent Singapore's everlasting youthfulness.



**PEACE**

**Muhammad Nur Randy Bin Kamsani**

*Admiralty Secondary School*

This batik artwork symbolises the bright sunshine. The yellow chrysanthemum's petals unfold in an orderly manner which gives an exuberant feeling.



**CANNONBALL**

**Seri Izyanti Bte Hussin**

*Naval Base Secondary School*

The artist chose to paint the perfumed flowers of the Cannonball Tree, as an expression of her enhanced awareness of the wildlife in her surroundings.



Our newsletters keep park users informed of upcoming events and activities for all ages. These provide a myriad of ideas for members of our green community - adults, children and families - to enjoy themselves in our parks and gardens.

**NParks stays in touch with over 60,000 online community members, through monthly and quarterly online newsletters.**

## Engaging Our Green Community

NParks reaches out to the wired community through a variety of e-engagement tools. Two e-newsletters, NParks Buzz and My Green Space, are emailed to more than 60,000 online community members every month and every quarter respectively. NParks Buzz updates our community members on upcoming events such as talks, workshops and guided walks, and also provides e-coupons for products and services from our lifestyle partners. My Green Space is a magazine-like newsletter with feature articles on activities and happenings related to our parks and gardens, as well as contests for readers to win 'green' prizes such as books on flora and fauna.

We are continually developing ways of engaging with the technologically savvy. Besides online presences on Facebook and Twitter, NParks is also developing a mobile phone map application called Parks "Live". This application will enable park users to navigate the attractions of each park, using location-based technology and augmented reality on their own smartphones. Currently, this application can be used at Pasir Ris Park, and will be developed for more parks in the months ahead.



An avid artist and passionate volunteer at Sungei Buloh Wetland Reserve, Tham Pui San holds monthly painting sessions that share his love of Sungei Buloh through the medium of art.

## Green Volunteers

Volunteers have always been integral to the work of NParks, since as early as 1993. Today, there is a strong group of regular volunteers assisting in various activities and projects across our parks, gardens and nature reserves, with many more signing up every year.

Our volunteers contribute to the Garden City in many different ways. They enable neighbourhoods to set up and maintain community gardens, lead visitors on guided walks and tours of our green spaces, and even personally help our forests to grow by removing aggressive weeds and planting native trees. Those with creative talents also lend a hand by writing for our publications, and taking photographs of flora and fauna for documentation and educational purposes.



### LESSONS BY THE PARK

**Arisha Piriya D/O Kaliannas, Pang Zhi Jian, Siti Rahayu Bte Uzman, Muhammad Nur Raihan B Azharie**  
*Hong Kah Secondary School*

This artwork is a representation of the artists' classroom in a park. It reflects how pupils learn with nature and about nature, moving away from cement walls of the classroom to enjoy the greenery.



### DANCE OF THE FERNS

**Naomi Chan**  
*Raffles Girls' Primary School*

The sculpture is inspired by the artist's love of ferns and their uniqueness. Movement is created in the sculpture by curling up the ends of coiled clay to suggest new ferns unfolding with each passing day.



### PLANTING MAY LEAD TO NEW DISCOVERY

**Ang Zhan Yao and Bryan Lee**  
*Tampines Secondary School*

Planting requires patience and time. The sculpture was constructed using shells, wire and a plastic cup to represent the excitement of two people who discover an unlikely object that will grow out of their plant-shells.