



wetlands

Sungei Buloh Wetland Reserve • Wetlands is sponsored by HSBC • April 2006 • Vol. 30 • 7



Nature will bear the closest inspection. She invites us to lay our eye level with her smallest leaf, and take an insect view of its plain.

- Henry David Thoreau, 1817-1862



New beginnings, new discoveries, new life...

Wetlands Vol 10:7

EDITORIAL

While looking at the salient traits and delectable expression of the otter on this issue's cover page, I remembered a quote by American author and naturalist, Henry David Thoreau (1817-1862). He wrote "the question is not what you look at, but what you see." People who visit Sungei Buloh Wetland Reserve, I believe, do so with many different reasons. Whether the visit is done individually as a meditative time out from the rest of the world, or as a purposed visit with some others, I am sure, they would have all been showered with lots of the exquisite elements of Nature encircling their senses! To come to this Reserve and simply "look" at nature would be, to say the least in literary terms, an anti-climax. At the beginning of the year, some of the staff and volunteers have been pleasantly surprised by encounters with some unique inhabitants, both visiting and resident. This year as we start from new beginnings for 2006... we continue to hope and look forward to more new discoveries and new life for this Reserve.

- Jeanne Tan

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HSBC's Care-for-Nature programme is dedicated to help conserve and protect our living resources in our natural environment and at the same time generate awareness among the public to do likewise.

The sponsorship of 'Wetlands' is one such effort to help promote a better understanding and appreciation of wetland ecology such as Sungei Buloh and its importance to our natural landscape.

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"Smooth otter (*Lutrogale perspicillata*)" by Jeremy Ang
Main hide, Nikon D70, Nikon 600mm F/4D, 1/160sec-F8



EDITOR : Jeanne Tan CONTRIBUTORS: James Gan, Jeanne Tan, Tay Soon Lian, Jeremy Ang, Jacqueline Lau.
DESIGN: Amphibios Creative PHOTOS CREDITS: Tay Soon Lian, Jeremy Ang, Jacqueline Lau

A Family Outing

Jeremy Ang, Conservation Officer



The various encounters we had as well as the fact that the otters are reproducing showed that Sungei Buloh Wetland Reserve is a natural habitat with abundant food for them. Let us continue to keep the reserve a safe and conducive habitat for them.

As my colleague Tay and I were heading back to our office, we saw ranger Bill who excitedly told us that a family of Smooth Otters were swimming in one of the ponds. Tay and I immediately set up our photography gear and headed to the "main hide".

It was the afternoon of 10 February 2006, the weather was fair and the tide was low.

From the "Main Hide" we saw the smooth otters happily playing on the bund that separated the ponds. It was spectacular as much as it was entertaining to see them running around each other, intermittently rubbing their bodies on the sand, marking out their territories with their scent and occasionally standing up on their hind legs to catch a glimpse of us.

The family consisted of six members - two adults (parent) and four pups. From our previous encounters with the family, we saw that the parents often taught the pups how to fish. They would also play with the pups, and in the process, strengthened the bond within the group. This time we saw them teaching the pups how to mark the territory with the scent that is produced from a pair of scent glands at the base of their tail. 🐾





Reflections

on Young Naturalist Passport (YNP) Camp
from student helpers

Jeanne Tan, Senior Outreach Officer



**YOUNG
NATURALISTS
PROGRAMME**

When asked if they could share their thoughts on what it meant to be a leader and helper at the YNP camp, the students were more than happy to do it. The following are reflections from students who have partnered with us in making nature awareness fun and a learning journey to groups of children during the December holidays last year.



YNP camp was an enriching experience. As student leaders, we were trained not only in our knowledge of the wildlife at the Reserve, but our threshold for patience was put to the test as well! Some of the children were rather mischievous and learning to work with them enabled us to think creatively. Mutual trust was developed, and not only were we their group leaders, but we became their friends! YNP camp was physically tiring as there was so much to do in one day, but at the end of it, I knew what contentment was. I have done my part in achieving something meaningful in making this an enjoyable learning experience for children...

Cheryl Lim, 16, Hillgrove Secondary School

YNP camp has taught me various aspects of leadership, especially patience and responsibility. I have learned to approach some new situations with confidence. It has increased my knowledge and appreciation of nature. I am further inspired to want to learn more about environmental issues and concerns... I hope to be able to help out in future YNP programmes...

Divya, 15, Hillgrove Secondary School

At the camp, I felt really happy when I saw little children asking questions about nature, the plants and animals. To them, this was all very new, and the children were very enthusiastic about learning and having fun at the camp. Towards the end of the day, the children were asked to write a postcard, relating their experience for the day's programme. This was most interesting and a highlight for me, as I saw that children as young as six years old already knew how to promote care for nature...

Wu Jiawen, 15, Hillgrove Secondary School

I was a camp helper at the Young Naturalist Passport Camp in Sungei Buloh Wetland Reserve. I knew about this through a school programme called Integrated Project Work. The camp was a very rewarding experience with much laughter and joy among fellow camp helpers and the children. Our roles were to look after the kids and make sure they enjoyed the programme. Overall, the whole experience was also a much needed lesson on responsibility...

Rachel, 14, Cedar Girls School

Through this camp, I have learned many new things about the mangroves and about the wildlife at the Reserve. I have also improved my leadership skills through this project as it involved interacting with young children. It was challenging in different ways, such as times when we had to make sure the children were safe. As the main leader for my group, there were so many things to account for. The memories of this camp are very close to my heart because through it I have met new people who have guided me throughout the camp. I will never forget the children and the staff at Sungei Buloh Wetland Reserve whom I met. I will surely volunteer again to be a camp helper if there was another opportunity...

Subashini, 14, Cedar Girls School





Freshwater Pond Life Programme

By: Jeanne Tan, Senior Outreach Officer




"Are we there yet? Are we there yet?" I smiled as I thought how much the little boy was likened to the character of "Donkey" in the Dreamworks animated production "Shrek". Children in the group, armed with their worksheets and "tools of discovery" in hand, were all eager to get to a freshwater pond in the Reserve. When we reached the "watery" destination, the children hastily scanned the surroundings for adventure and surprises. The water had a beckoning effect I thought, as the children raced to the side of the platform, and peered inquisitively into the water, looking for signs of life.



With the kind sponsorship from Toyota Motor Corporation, we were able to organise a Freshwater Pond Life activity for children at Sungei Buloh Wetland Reserve. We started a first session for children last year over Clean and Green Week in November 2005. This year, over World Wetlands Day, we successfully ran another. Specially for children between the ages of eight to twelve years old, this half day programme encompasses a series of fun-filled educational outdoor and indoor learning of the freshwater ecosystem and its inhabitants. The children, as always, in their own little adventurous ways, came to understand why freshwater ponds were important through worksheets, nature walks and games. There were also sessions of origami, where after learning about frogs, each made their own "jumping" frog with a colourful piece of paper. Within 20 minutes, we had colourful frogs jumping all over the room.



At the end of the programme when their parents came to pick them up, we could only hear the excited chattering of the children leaving the Visitor Centre. Some of them proudly showed their jumping paper frogs and certificate of participation, while some happily held on to their little chocolate bar which they had won in the games. The memory of this display of joy and excitement from the children was all I need... 



Bird Ringing in Sungei Buloh Wetland Reserve in 2005

James Gan,
Senior Conservation Officer

Bird ringing has been conducted at Sungei Buloh Wetland Reserve (SBWR) since 1990. This article gives an overview of some of the results of the bird ringing effort at Sungei Buloh over the past year. In 2005, a total of 479 birds from 59 species were ringed. The ringing field work was carried out on scheduled days and nights throughout the year. A summary of the number of birds ringed in 2005 (and the previous five years) is provided in Table 1.

The most commonly ringed bird species were (Numbers ringed in brackets) : Pacific Golden Plover (82), Scaly-breasted Munia (66), Yellow-vented Bulbul (48), Common Redshank (32) and Collared Kingfisher (23). Compared to the previous year (2004 ringing results), the number of birds ringed has increased from 373 to 479. The increase is attributed to additional hours of mist netting.

Regular bird counts in SBWR have revealed an increase in shorebird numbers. Curlew Sandpipers and Mongolian Plovers that were noted to have avoided the wetland in 2003 have returned. Peak counts of 206 Curlew Sandpipers in 2004 increased to 276 in 2005 while Mongolian Plovers increased from 175 birds in 2004 to 310 in 2005. Not surprisingly and unlike in 2003 and 2004, Curlew Sandpipers were once again mist netted and ringed while the number of Mongolian Plovers that were ringed in 2005 has remained stable. Several habitat management measures to increase the attractiveness of the wetland for shorebirds over the past two years have apparently been successful. These measures will continue. Ringing work and shorebird counts over the next few years will help to determine the effectiveness of the measures.

Three species of birds were ringed for the first time at SBWR in 2005. They are the Little Egret, Ruddy-breasted Crake and Streaked Weaver. Some other interesting species ringed include the Crow-billed Drongo, Japanese Sparrowhawk, Oriental Scops Owl and Yellow-rumped Flycatcher.

There were 62 recoveries from 19 species that had been ringed before 2005. The Pacific Golden Plover had the most recoveries with 10 birds while the Common Redshank saw eight recoveries. One use for the data obtained from recovered birds is the enabling of longevity records and the survival of the different bird species in the wild to be determined. The longevity records based on birds recovered in 2005 are provided in Table 2.

One notable recovery is worth highlighting. An Oriental Scops Owl mist netted in February is the first migratory owl to be recovered at SBWR. **This is believed to be the first evidence of site fidelity (faithfulness) exhibited by a migratory owl in Singapore to its wintering grounds.**

**Table 1**

Summary of individual birds ringed and retraps at Sungei Buloh Wetland Reserve in 2005 and preceeding years (2000 to 2004)

S/N	Species	Ring 2000	Retrap pre-	Ring 2001 2000	Retrap pre-	Ring 2002 2001	Retrap pre- 2002	Ring 2003	Retrap pre- 2003	Ring 2004	Retrap pre- 2004	Ring 2005	Retrap pre- 2005
1	Abbott's Babbler	2		2	1	3		0		0		0	
2	Arctic Warbler	3		2		0		2		0		1	
3	Ashy Minivet	0		0		0		1		0		0	
4	Ashy Tailorbird	20	1	18	2	19	4	19	6	12	2	13	3
5	Asian Brown Flycatcher	2		0		0		1		1		0	
6	Asian Dowitcher	1		0		0		0		0		0	
7	Asian Glossy Starling	53	1	18		23	1	20		7		9	
8	Asian Koel	2		1		0		1		0		1	
9	Asian Paradise Flycatcher	0		1		1		1		1		0	
10	Baya Weaver	60		22	3	23		16		7	1	11	
11	Black Bittern	5		3	1	4	1	5		2	1	2	
12	Black-browed Reed Warbler	1		0		0		0		0		0	
13	Black-capped Kingfisher	6		3	1	4	1	5	1	5	1	2	2
14	Black-naped Oriole	5		2		2		2		1		1	
15	Black-tailed Godwit	1		0		0		0		0		0	
16	Blue Magpie	1		0		0		0		0		0	
17	Blue-eared Kingfisher	0		0		1		0		1		0	
18	Blue-tailed Bee-eater	3		1		0		1		1		3	
19	Blue-throated Bee-eater	6		2		6		4		3		0	
20	Blue-winged Pitta	0		0		0		1		0		0	
21	Brown Shrike	4		7		1	1	1		0		0	1
22	Brown-chested Jungle-Flycatcher	0		0		1		1		0		0	
23	Chestnut Munia	2		0		0		0		1		3	
24	Chestnut-winged Cuckoo	4		2		0		0		0		0	
25	Cinnamon Bittern	5		0		2		2	2	3		1	
26	Cinnamon-headed Pigeon	1		0		0		0		0		0	
27	Collared Kingfisher	43	8	48	12	32	16	26	16	11	11	23	5
28	Collared Scops Owl	5	1	5	2	3	4	3		3		2	
29	Common Flameback	1	1	2		3	3	1	2	1		1	
30	Common Greenshank	0		2		1		1		0		1	
31	Common Iora	6		5	1	4		2		0		5	
32	Common Kingfisher	15		13		4	2	7	1	6	1	3	
33	Common Redshank	263	24	117	21	72	13	26	2	32	4	32	8
34	Common Sandpiper	9	1	17	3	5	3	6	3	4	3	8	2
35	Common Tailorbird	15		14	1	16	3	13	2	6	3	19	1
36	Copper-throated Sunbird	0		1		9	1	2	1	2		0	
37	Crimson Sunbird	0		0		0		1		0		0	
38	Crow-billed Drongo	1		0		0		1		0		1	
39	Curlew Sandpiper	26		34		9		0		0		8	
40	Dark-necked Tailorbird	3		1		0		2		0		2	
41	Drongo Cuckoo	1		0		0		0		0		0	
42	Eastern Crowned Warbler	0		0		0		2		1		0	
43	Emerald Dove	13	1	3	6	2	1	2		5		6	4
44	Eurasian Curlew	1		0		0		0		0		0	
45	Forest Wagtail	0		1		1		0		0		0	
46	Greater Sand Plover	1		0		0		1		0		0	
47	Grey Heron	0		0		1		0		0		0	
48	Grey-tailed Tattler	0		1		0		1		1		0	
49	Indian Cuckoo	0		1		0		0		0		0	
50	Japanese Sparrowhawk	2		1		0		1		0	1	1	
51	Javan Munia	80		124	3	60	2	35		10	1	4	
52	Laced Woodpecker	4		3	2	3	2	5	4	5	1	2	3
53	Large-tailed Nightjar	1		4	1	4	3	4	2	0		1	
54	Lesser Coucal	1		1		0		0		0		0	
55	Little Bronze Cuckoo	1		1		0		0		0		1	
56	Little Egret	0		0		0		0		0		1	
57	Marsh Sandpiper	25		60	5	48	3	46	9	5	0	4	
58	Mongolian Plover	61	2	96	4	10	1	8	3	9		9	
59	Olive-backed Sunbird	1		15	1	4		1		2		0	



Summary of individual birds ringed and retraps at Sungei Buloh Wetland Reserve in 2005 and preceeding years (2000 to 2004)

S/N	Species	Ring 2000	Retrap pre-2000	Ring 2001	Retrap pre-2001	Ring 2002	Retrap pre-2002	Ring 2003	Retrap pre-2003	Ring 2004	Retrap pre-2004	Ring 2005	Retrap pre-2005
60	Olive-winged Bulbul	7	1	9	4	6	1	6	1	7	1	8	3
61	Oriental Magpie Robin	12	1	7	3	9	2	5	1	3		5	4
62	Oriental Reed Warbler	2		2		1	1	0		0		0	
63	Oriental Scops Owl	1		0		0		0		0		1	1
64	Pacific Golden Plover	27	1	86	2	52	8	87	12	103	14	82	10
65	Pacific Swallow	7		3		0		0		1		2	
66	Pallas' Grasshopper Warbler	0		2		0		1		0		2	
67	Pied Fantail	10	1	9	2	6	2	13	2	5	3	8	2
68	Pied Triller Warbler	1		1		0		0		0		0	
69	Pink-necked Pigeon	8		3		2		3		4		0	
70	Pintail Snipe	0		1		0		0		2		1	
71	Plain-throated Sunbird	73	4	47	14	36	3	26	9	18	6	13	4
72	Red-legged Crake	1		0		0		0		0		0	
73	Red-necked Stint	0		0		1		0		0		0	
74	Ruddy Kingfisher	1		1		0		0		0		0	
75	Ruddy Turnstone	0		1		0		0		0		0	
76	Ruddy-breasted Crake	0		0		0		0		0		1	
77	Rufous Woodpecker	0		2		0		2		0		1	
78	Rufous-tailed Tailorbird	15		10	3	8	1	6	1	2	1	2	
79	Rusty-breasted Cuckoo	1		0		2		0		0		0	
80	Scaly-breasted Munia	45		49		23		7		13		66	
81	Scarlet-backed Flowerpecker	1		2		0		1	1	0		2	
82	Siberian Blue Robin	3		0		1		0		0		0	
83	Slaty-breasted Rail	1		0		0		1		0		0	
84	Spotted Dove	3		1		1		0		0		3	
85	Stork-billed Kingfisher	9		6	4	6	2	7	4	0	3	1	
86	Streaked Bulbul	0		0		1		0		0		0	
87	Streaked Weaver	0		0		0		0		0		1	
88	Striated Heron	9		6	4	3		3	1	2	1	1	2
89	Striped Tit Babbler	0		0		3		1		2		3	
90	Terek Sandpiper	16	1	2		0		0		0		0	
91	Tiger Shrike	16		8		4		8	1	9		11	
92	Watercock	1		0		0		0		0		0	
93	Whimbrel	13		27		6		8	1	1		0	
94	White-breasted Waterhen	5	1	11	1	0		0		3		0	
95	White-browed Crake	1		2		0		0	2	0		0	
96	White-chested Babbler	0	1	0		0		0		0		0	
97	White-headed Munia	0		1		0		0		0		3	
98	White-rumped Shama	0		0		1		0		0		0	
99	White-throated Kingfisher	10		10	1	5	1	3	1	6		6	
100	Yellow Bittern	17		10	3	5	1	6	3	9	9	2	
101	Yellow-bellied Prinia	3	1	3	2	5	4	5	1	3	6	1	
102	Yellow-rumped Flycatcher	5		2		4		1		3		8	
103	Yellow-vented Bulbul	60	3	22	11	20	8	52	4	28	1	48	4
104	Zebra Dove	6		6		3		3		1		4	
TOTAL		1156	54	1003	124	595	99	535	97	373	60	479	62



Table 2

Longevity Records (Selected species)
At least 6 months for resident birds or 1 season for migrants



Species	Date Ringed	Date Recaptured	Interval (mths)
Baya Weaver	6 Aug 02	26 May 05	33
Brown Shrike	17 Apr 02	6 Jan 05	32
Common Tailorbird	17 Jul 02	22 Nov 05	40
Laced Woodpecker	18 Apr 01	11 May 05	48
Olive-winged Bulbul	12 Sep 01	4 May 05	43
Oriental Magpie Robin	6 May 96	23 Nov 05	114
Oriental Scops Owl	22 Nov 00	23 Feb 05	51
Plain-throated Sunbird	28 May 97	13 Dec 05	102
Yellow-vented Bulbul	28 Feb 97	18 May 05	98

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This article is possible because of the field studies supported by NParks. Thanks to fellow ringers Ramakrishnan, Charles Lim, Mustaffa Hajar, Abdul Khalid and Ong Hai Chwee for contributing to the ringing work. Many others assisted with the ringing including staff, volunteers and friends especially Halilah Ahmad, Supardi Mohd Shariff, Jack Wong and Jeanne Tan. Jeremy Ang, Tay Soon Lian and Ramakrishnan took a number of photographs and catalogued them for documentation purposes.

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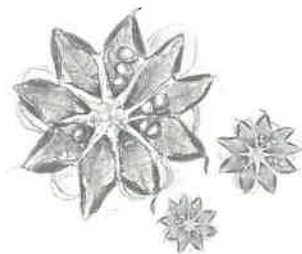
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2005 also saw the first records of Yellow-rumped Flycatchers in Sungei Buloh mist netted during mid winter and at the start of the northward migration. One flycatcher each was ringed in January and February.

In summary, bird ringing in 2005 has continued to reveal surprises in the presence of bird species, their movements, abundance and survival in Sungei Buloh. Data collected is invaluable for the long-term conservation and management of the wetland reserve.

Visitors can continue to enjoy the sights offered by SBWR as there has been no reported case of bird flu in Singapore. The Agri-Food and Veterinary Authority of Singapore (AVA) and the National Parks Board (NParks) have an on-going surveillance programme for bird flu in wild birds at Sungei Buloh. For information about bird flu, look up the Singapore Government Flu Website (<http://www.flu.gov.sg>) which also provides links to the World Health Organisation (WHO) and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) websites. It also has useful information on hotlines to call for any enquiries."

Comments or feedback? Email us at sbwr@pacific.net.sg 



Of birds, people, and wetland centres

Jacqueline Lau

(A volunteer with SBWR, currently on an undergraduate study in Ecology at the Imperial College London, UK)

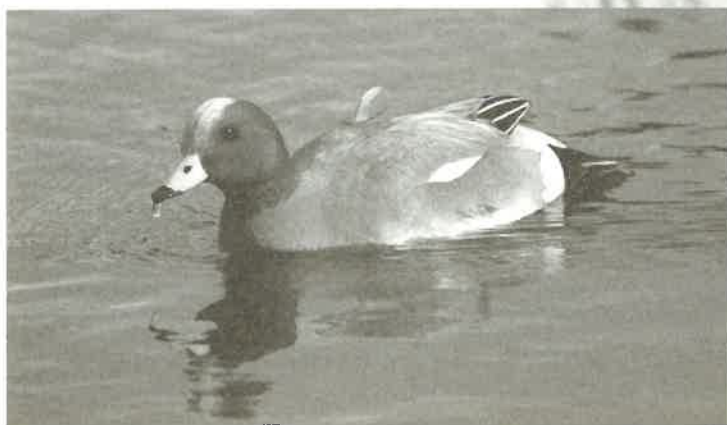


Being used to playing "Where's Wally?" with our sunbirds and tailorbirds that hop in and out of the dense mangrove foliage at Sungei Buloh Wetland Reserve (SBWR), and lugging my scope around to see those little

brown specks on the mudflat a bit better, I was unprepared for the close encounters that awaited me at the London Wetland Centre. This was easy game. It's a photographer's paradise — chuck away those 'monster' telescopic lenses; the birds there are so close that you'll be forced a few paces back to focus.

The London Wetland Centre is a 40ha piece of wetlands, half an hour's travel from Central London. The centre was opened in 2000, created from several unused reservoirs and is now maintained by the Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust (WWT). Despite its small size and patchy beginnings, it has already established itself

as an important breeding centre and as a sanctuary for numerous endangered bird species, in particular the Gadwall and Shoveler duck. The UK recognises it as a Site of Special Scientific Interest — WWT notes that the Centre attracts more than 150 bird, 20 dragonfly and damselfly, six bat, four amphibian, and over 300 butterfly and moth species each year. Considering that this is a place in London we're talking about, this is impressive indeed.



But how? How does the Centre achieve this?

Like SBWR, the area was already of considerable wildlife interest to begin with. All the developers had to do was to further enhance the habitat, add in more doses of greenery, and put an innovative visitor centre planning design into operation. This is by no means a true nature reserve – it is a wildfowl centre. It is designed to bring people and wildlife together, for, what use would a wildlife reserve cum centre be if there are only the animals, and no people there to appreciate them, to learn and be educated about them? Visitor facilities need to attract and engage people – a welcoming focal point, attractively-presented information, comfort, and special group facilities on-site will enhance that appreciation and involvement. Such a concept is not alien to us; SBWR has actively been pursuing this path – its efforts to enhance its Visitor Centre facilities, public services, and boardwalk experience are evidence of this. Thanks to this and the excellent experiences it offers to visitors, the Centre receives widespread support from the community.


And the birds, well, they play their role. They respond well to the care shown to their habitats (ponds, pools, lakes and reed beds)... their refuge and shelters. WWT has no doubt been actively engaging teams of scientists in ensuring that the Centre remains attractive to wildfowl. For some sections of the Centre – those which house birds with a fussier appetite and a need for more nutritional diets – there are feeding sessions. The birds enjoy nutrient-rich diets, and this enhances their breeding and

reproductive successes. The Centre is somewhat akin to an open zoo or a bird park, only that the birds are all wild, and none are in captivity. They come and stay on their own free will.

Some 50% of the world's wetlands have been lost in the past century – through unsustainable development, increasing air travel, building projects, degradation of water quality, industrial development, and destructive tourism. It is not impossible to halt this trend. The environmental sector around the world has been evolving. It now addresses important social elements in addition to scientific and ecological concerns. The WWT's mission is "saving wetlands for wildlife and people", and this should also be the



objective of any conservation-related organisation. We should always be aiming at sustainability and access, and initiating public awareness and education programmes. People should have the chance to engage meaningfully with wildlife, if they are to ultimately protect it.

WWT is bringing this notion to newer heights – it has recently established Wetland Link International (Asia), of which Sungei Buloh Wetland Reserve is a member wetland centre. Wetland Link International aims to promote the communications, education and public awareness (CEPA) process between its global network of wetland education centres. Let us all hope to give the world's wetlands a chance. 

Useful links:

The Wildfowl and Wildlife Trust

www.wwt.org.uk

London Wetland Centre

www.wwt.org.uk/visit/wetlandcentre

Wetland Link International

www.wli.org.uk

Programmes

for April-July 2006

Compiled by Jeanne Tan,
Senior Outreach Officer



Free guided walks on mangroves and marine fish

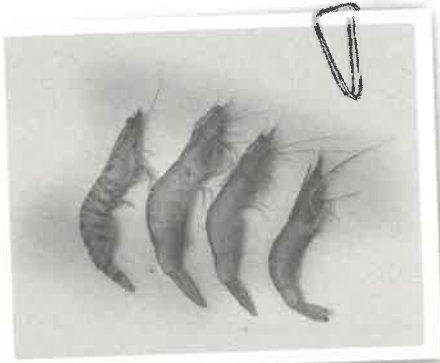
Every Saturday

Time: 9am, 10am, 3pm & 4pm (except for public holidays)

Venue: Mangrove Boardwalk (mangrove tour)

Main Bridge (marine fish tour)

Have you ever wondered what is it about the mangroves that make them such a special habitat? Join us for a journey of discovery as we take you for a walk among the unique and beautiful flora and fauna of the Reserve. Walks are weather permitting. Please check our website at <http://www.sbwr.org.sg/events/guidedtours/> for updates and specific time slots for the marine fish tour. Admission charges apply.



PrawnWatch

29th May, 3rd June and 17th June 2006 (Saturdays)

Time: 9.30am

Prawn Watch showcases the traditional use of ponds at Sungei Buloh Wetland Reserve. The scale of the harvest is kept very small as the demonstration is for educational purposes. This programme is weather permitting. Please assemble at the Visitor Services Counter at 8.50am. A guide will take you into the Reserve (Prawn Pond) for this programme.

Updates are available at the SBWR website <http://www.sbwr.org.sg/events/prawnwatch/>
Admission charges apply.



Young Naturalist Passport (YNP) Programme

Ever wonder how birds build their home, why kingfishers shout at the top of their voice, what is a horseshoe crab or how fish thrive in a watery world? Come and listen to these interesting talks. Have a go at building a nest or create your own colourful mudskipper or horseshoe crab from paper clay. For those who are interested to join in the fun, we could run additional session for groups of 5 to 15 people. This programme is linked to the Young Naturalist Passport (YNP) programme. Passports may be purchased at the Visitor Services counter at 50 cents each. Don't miss out on the YNP camps designed for young children between the age of 6-12. Please see our website at <http://www.sbwr.org.sg/youngnaturalist/> for more details. Admission charges apply.



World Environment Day (5th June 2006)

Venue : Visitor Centre

Date : 3rd June 2006 (Saturday)

Time : 9am-1pm. Admission charges apply.

World Environment Day was established by the United Nations General Assembly in 1972 to mark the opening of the Stockholm Conference on the Human Environment. Another resolution, adopted by the General Assembly the same day, led to the creation of UNEP.

Once again to acknowledge the importance of this day, we are working with our partner schools to raise funds for conservation. Come and support our cause by buying our handmade items, made by the students themselves. Every item has a unique nature motif.

The Day a Super St___ flew into Bulohwood

by Scott Jam (Conservation Officer)

It was a brilliant day with clear blue skies, as clear as crystal, with a sun that was typically hot in Buloh. I made my way to "Hide 1C" to check if anything unusual was happening at "A3 Pond" before calling it a day. As I entered the hide, the cool shade provided a retreat from the blazing heat. Sitting in the cool hide, looking out on the glittering water and vivid green mangroves covered with an ever moving multitude of birds, is always a new experience for me. There was so much going on that it was difficult to decide what to focus on. Even in the hide itself my attention was constantly distracted by the mosquitoes buzzing near my ears. As I peered into my pair of binoculars, what seemed like hundreds of waders came to life! There were sandpipers, greenshanks and redshanks, pattering along the mudflats like schoolgirls in their first high heels. Plovers were bickering among themselves, many of them foraging for food. As I looked for flagged birds among the hive of activities, a pair of long red legs immediately caught my attention, I rubbed my eyes to have a second look at the "lady in red" bird, making sure it was not a mutated redshank with legs on red stilts.

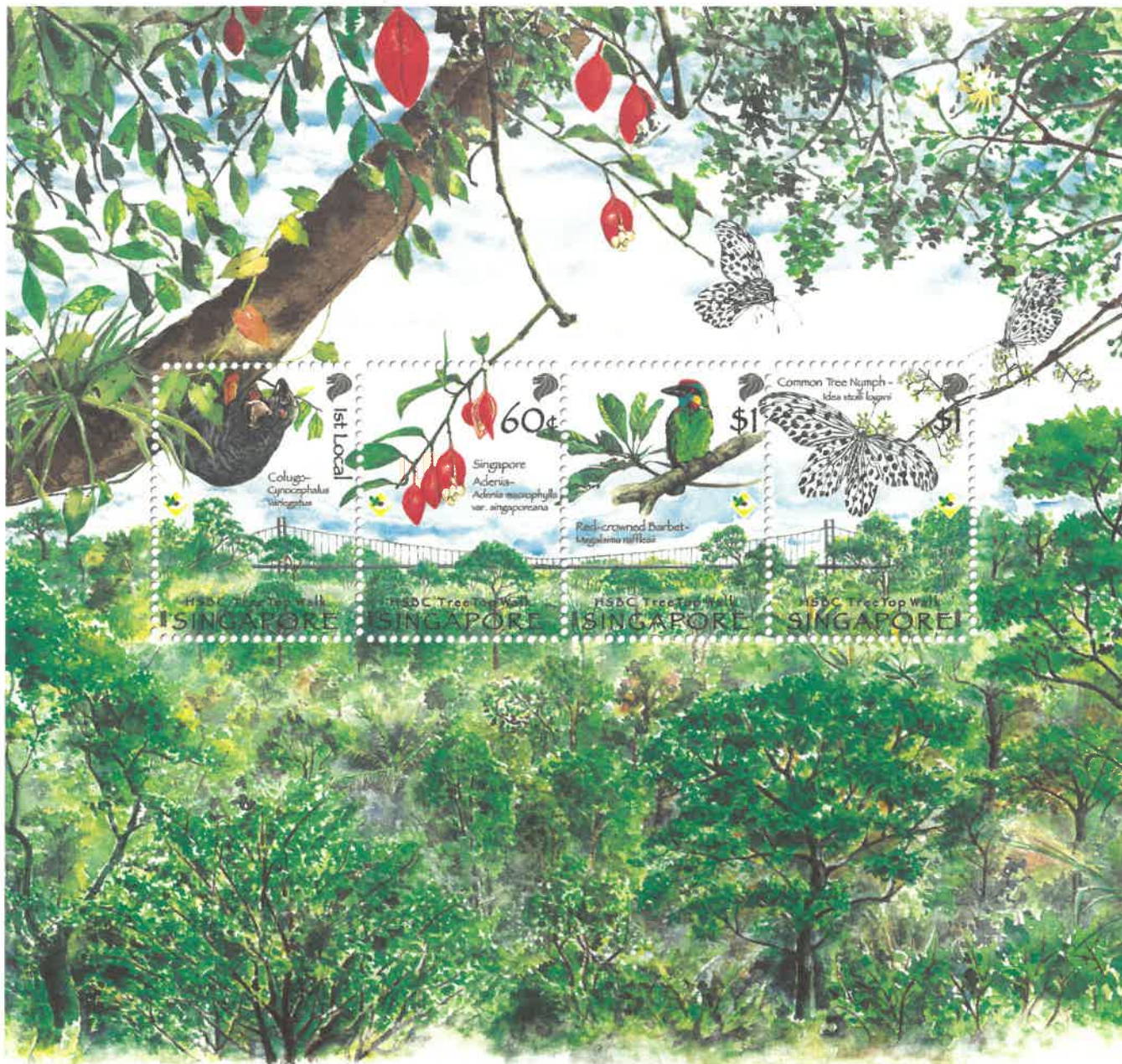
The bird looked normal enough with lovely legs like that of super models one would see on television, whose long legs seems to start immediately from under the chin! Jeremy our Conservation Officer confirmed it was special indeed. It was later confirmed to be a Black-winged stilt by Su Hooi our Outreach Officer. She claimed to have seen a similar bird six years ago at the same pond. This would unlikely be the the same bird as this latest finding was a "juvenile". The inexperienced little one must have strayed from its flock as it migrated from southern and eastern Europe, the Mediterranean region, the Middle East, central and southern Asia, central and eastern Africa. All these regions that these birds frequent had both tidal and freshwater marshes, lagoons, mangroves, saltpans and irrigation reservoirs.

With Jeremy's camera clicking away, we sat quietly watching it move elegantly on tomato-red legs in a black and white suit, obviously designed by the most expensive Paris fashion-house! With its delicate nose being occasionally dipped in water, it moved gracefully from side to side to scoop up small fish, aquatic insects, mollusc and worms. For some strange reason, all over the world, man seemed to think that wetlands are inimical to him. As soon as he comes across a wonderful swamp or wetland teeming with wildlife he becomes unhappy. That is, until he has covered it with pesticides, shot out all the edible animals, drained it, ploughed it, planted a series of useless crops on it and finally, through his non eco-friendly activities, create a sterile piece of eroded earth which was once a rich, balanced tapestry of life. Fortunately, Sungei Buloh Wetland Reserve (SBWR) was saved from going through this same fate, and I would say she has become one of the five-star haven for many migratory birds. SBWR is nothing like Hollywood or Bollywood for that matter, but I'm sure the Black-winged stilt which became a super star the very day it arrived in Singapore did not mind stopping over at "Bulohwood" (SBWR), and well, the mozzies were not that bad after all!

Reserve Information

Opening Hours: Mondays to Saturday from 7.30am to 7.00pm.
Sundays & Public Holidays from 7.00am to 7.00pm. Free entry except Sat, Sun, & Public Holidays. Admission: \$1.00 per adult and \$0.50 per child/student/senior citizen.
Audio-visual Show: Mondays to Saturdays at 9.00am, 10.00am, 1.00pm and 5.00pm. Sundays and Public Holidays: Hourly from 9.00am to 5.00pm.
TIBS 935 from Kranji MRT Station. Alight at Kranji Reservoir Carpark. TIBS 935 will stop at the Reserve entrance.
Sungei Buloh Wetland Reserve, 301 Neo Tiew Crescent, Singapore 718955. Tel: 6794 1401 Fax: 6793 7271
Email: sbwr@pacific.net.sg Website: <http://www.sbwr.org.sg>



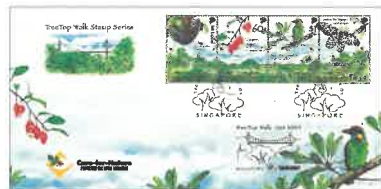


For nature's sake, take a piece home.

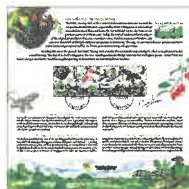
The HSBC's TreeTop Walk at the Central Catchment Nature Reserve is one of the many initiatives supported by HSBC in Singapore. A natural refuge to a rich diversity of flora and fauna, the Reserve is also home to our precious source of drinking water. It is now in our hands to help conserve what is left of this lush rainforest

and protect its inhabitants. This year's Care-for-Nature Stamp Series features the HSBC TreeTop Walk and the interesting forest residents. All proceeds for the stamp series will be donated to the Care-for-Nature Trust Fund, which in turn funds nature conservation and education initiatives.

HSBC Care-for-Nature Stamp Series



Care-for-Nature Collector's Cover (11cm x 22cm) **S\$9.90 each**



4-in-1 Limited Stamp Print Collection (24.3cm x 24.5cm) **S\$8 each**

Get your stamp series from 19 October 2005 at:

- Any HSBC branch in Singapore
- Singapore Post main branches (only for Collector's Cover)

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Do your part for nature today and take a piece of it home with you.



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