

wetlands

Sungei Buloh Wetland Reserve • Wetlands is sponsored by HSBC • December 2006 • Vol. 13:3




Establishing links

Wetlands Vol 13:3

EDITORIAL

Many interesting things happened in Sungei Buloh Wetland Reserve while I was away in Canada pursuing my Master degree. I was fortunate to be back in time for this year's bird migratory season. A Common Redshank that was flagged in the Gulf of Thailand was sighted at our Wetland Reserve (See cover page). The black over green flags on the bird's legs enabled us to link the migration pathway to Thailand, which highlights the international linkage and the importance of wetlands as refueling and stop-over sites for this species. On the local front, 12 farmers around the vicinity of the

Wetland Reserve got together to form the Kranji Countryside Association to promote this rustic countryside as an agri-tainment site. Collectively in June 2006, these farmers together with Sungei Buloh Wetland Reserve introduced the Kranji Express, a bus service that links the various sites so that people can explore and learn about Singapore's countryside with ease. Whether international or local, links promote understanding and growth. Join us and make the link! 

— Linda Goh

Sir David Attenborough took time off his shoot to meet the staff and volunteers at Sungei Buloh Wetland Reserve.

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'Wetlands' is sponsored by HSBC under its Care-for-Nature programme.

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.

Please call 6530 1845 if you wish to know more about HSBC's Care-for-Nature Programme.
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Cover Picture of a Flagged Common Redshank
by Jeremy Ang, Conservation Officer



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Is That a Crocodile or a Monitor Lizard?

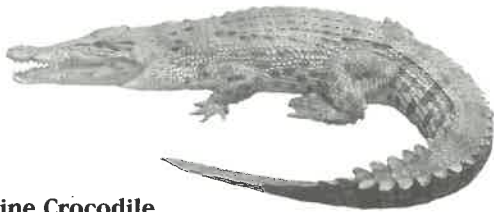
Ramakrishnan Kolandavelu, Assistant Conservation Officer

Many who have visited Sungei Buloh Wetland Reserve could have mistaken a monitor lizard for a crocodile. One of the most commonly seen reptiles in the Wetland Reserve is the Malayan Water Monitor Lizard (*Varanus salvator*). This reptile is often mistaken for an estuarine crocodile (*Crocodylus porosus*), which is also found in the Wetland Reserve. Compared to the monitor lizards, crocodiles are rarely sighted. That has changed recently as one particular crocodile has chosen to be a special attraction. Often seen with its eyes just peering out of the water surface, this crocodile has established its territory along Sungei Buloh Besar (the main river of the Wetland Reserve). It is often seen swimming under the Main Bridge, and on occasions crosses overland to the brackish water ponds to thermo-regulate (cooling down or warming up).

If you do come across a crocodile along the route or are not sure of the identity of the animal, remain calm and back away slowly. Do not try to walk pass it or get close for a photograph. Note that these animals are wild

and have a reputation for being aggressive. Crocodile warning signs have been posted at various parts of the Wetland Reserve where they are most often spotted. For your own safety, please heed these warning signs.

You can report crocodile sightings to our information counter staff. Take note of the location, date, time and number of crocodiles seen. The information will help us monitor and track the crocodiles' movements.



Estuarine Crocodile

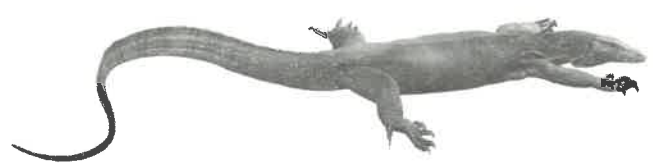
(*Crocodylus porosus*)

Distribution:	Most widely distributed of crocodilians. It is found throughout the tropical regions of Asia and the Pacific.
Habitat:	Brackish and freshwater areas.
Size:	The largest crocodile can grow up to 8m. Some in captivity weigh up to 1000 kg.
Diet:	Birds, fish, and mammals.
Physical Description:	It has a very large triangular head, a pair of ridge that runs along the centre of the snout and a receding tongue.

Its eyes are situated at the top of its head.

The tail is made up of rows of pointed plates, which is grey with dark bands.

The younger crocodiles have scales that are oval in shape and pale yellow in color with black stripes and spots on the body and tail. The adult is much darker, with lighter tan or grey areas.



Malayan Monitor Lizard

(*Varanus salvator*)

Distribution:	Asian subcontinent from India (and Sri Lanka) Southeast Asia to Indonesia, the Philippines and in Indian Ocean and South China Sea.
Habitat:	Both fresh and saltwater, common in mangrove, banks of large rivers. Also found in forests, swamps, beaches and even cultivated land.
Size:	The males are 1-1.3m and females are 0.5-1.2m. It can weigh up to 25kg.
Diet:	Tiny insects to crabs, molluscs, snakes, eggs (of birds and crocodiles), fish, eels, birds, rodents and even other monitor lizards.

Physical Description: This large greyish lizard has an elongated head with a forked tongue, which it sticks in and out regularly to "smell" its prey.

Its eyes are situated more to the side of its head.

Juveniles are more brightly colored with bright yellow markings on the body and yellow bands on the tail.

Its compressed tail can be twice as long as its body

References

Cox, M.J., Paul van Dijk, P., Nabhitabhata, J. and Thirakhupt, K., 1998. *A Photographic Guide to Amphibians and other Reptiles of Peninsular Malaysia, Singapore and Thailand*. New Holland.
Lim, K. K.P and Francis L K Lim, F. L. K, 1992. *A Guide to The Amphibians and other Reptiles of Singapore*. Singapore Science Centre.



Special projects to Understand Nature (SUN Club)

Jeanne Tan, Senior Outreach Officer

Even as grey skies looked set to stay for a while, and the haze still hovered within the moderate range, these did not dampen the spirits of guests and staff of National Parks Board (NParks). The students of Grace Orchard School were geared for something different from their regular school hours. They were in for a treat. It would be a morning of learning about nature and having fun in a wetland reserve. NParks Chairman, Professor Leo Tan was guest of honour for the launch of SUN Club programme at Sungei Buloh Wetland Reserve. Despite a light rain in the morning, the launch took off well, with some seventy guests attending, including the students from Grace Orchard School.

The launch started with a video presentation of students with special needs visiting three nature sites, namely, Bukit Timah Nature Reserve, Pulau Ubin and Sungei Buloh Wetland Reserve. It was aptly accompanied with Lyle Lovett's husky rendition of "You've got a friend in me". Upon the flag off by Professor Tan, the special needs children from Grace Orchard School, with much excitement and constant happy chattering, started their programme with the wetland reserve's volunteer guides, Deborah and Teck Chye. The rain eased off just in time for everyone to move out to the main hide for a time of bird watching. Some of the guests most unexpectedly spotted our resident crocodile basking under the main bridge. The students then moved back to the education workroom to try their hands at the jig-saw puzzles. This was fun, teamwork and discovery all in a jig-saw package. As the programme finally came to an end, we knew the students and teachers of these special schools would bring back with them memories of wild Singapore, and an understanding of their roles as a critical link in nature's web of life.



Guided walk at Bukit Timah Nature Reserve.




More on Sun Club...

Initiated by NParks and sponsored by SPH Foundation, the SUN Club programme is founded on the idea of 'nature for everyone'. The SUN Club is an inclusive programme that strives to include students whose needs were previously not adequately met by existing nature appreciation programmes. SUN Club offers nature appreciation projects that these special needs children can enjoy and participate fully in.

Special schools will have a choice of three of Singapore's most fascinating nature areas to visit: Sungei Buloh Wetland Reserve, Bukit Timah Nature Reserve, and Pulau Ubin.



They will have trained guides to bring them on their nature walks and show them the richness of Singapore's natural heritage. They will learn about plants and animals as they explore and observe. They will create their own interpretations of what they have experienced, through drawings, field notes and discussions with their friends and guides. They may even have a go at piecing together jigsaw puzzles of the creatures they have seen in the wild.

We welcome special schools who are interested to give their students a SUN Club experience to contact us at: info@sbwr.org.sg or tel: 67941401. 



Piecing the jigsaw puzzle in Sungei Buloh Wetland Reserve.

*Brachydiplax
chalybea*



Orthetrum sabina



Dragonflies and Damselflies of Sungei Buloh

James Gan, Senior Conservation Officer

Did you know that the Sungei Buloh Wetland Reserve is home to more than 32 species of dragonflies and damselflies (D & D)? This fact was revealed in a brief and preliminary survey early this year by the wetland staff and volunteers. To put into perspective, Singapore has about 100 species of D & D.



Crocothemis servilia

You could choose to help out in the following areas:

Photography

Breeding

Nature interpretative guiding & teaching

Conduct D & D counts

Water quality testing

Biological research

Educational worksheets for children

Arts & craft

Contact us at

Tel: 67941401 or info@sbwr.org.sg

D & D are fascinating insects. They have an interesting life cycle where they start out as an egg, hatch into a water loving predatory larva and undergo a series of moults before becoming a winged adult. As winged adults, they can fly relatively fast at speeds of up to 40km/h. Many are brightly coloured and male and females can often be distinguished based on colours and patterns on their wings and bodies.

You do not need to walk very far from the Visitor Centre to watch D & D. In fact, at least 17 species of D & D can be found around the freshwater ponds and mangroves of the Visitor Centre. Check out some of the species such as the Common Blue Sprite (*Pseudagrion microcephalum*), Sabine's Skimmer (*Orthetrum sabina*) and the Red Darter (*Crocothemis servilia*). Other good areas to watch and photograph D & D is at the freshwater pond areas at the western edge of the wetland around Hide 3A, the dipping pond at the outdoor classroom and the aquatic plant pond along route 1.

While we know some facts about the dragonflies in Singapore and Sungei Buloh, we are also ignorant about many aspects of their behaviour and biology. This is a group of insects that definitely needs more people to take an interest in them.

For example, we would like to know what types of food dragonflies feed on. Do they feed on different food items as larvae and as winged adults? Do different species of dragonfly have different food preferences and if so what are those preferences? Are there gender preferences in a species? It is believed that dragonflies prey on winged adult mosquitoes and mosquito larvae. Are there specific dragonfly species that can be reared to control mosquitoes in Singapore and will they be effective biological agents? Many of these questions seek answers and there are many questions that remain to be asked.

Interested to make a contribution to the body of knowledge and understanding of D & D at Sungei Buloh? Contact us. We need interested volunteers like you.

Come explore
Singapore's very own
countryside with Linda
Goh, Senior Outreach
Officer and Andrew
Tan, Visitor Services
Officer.

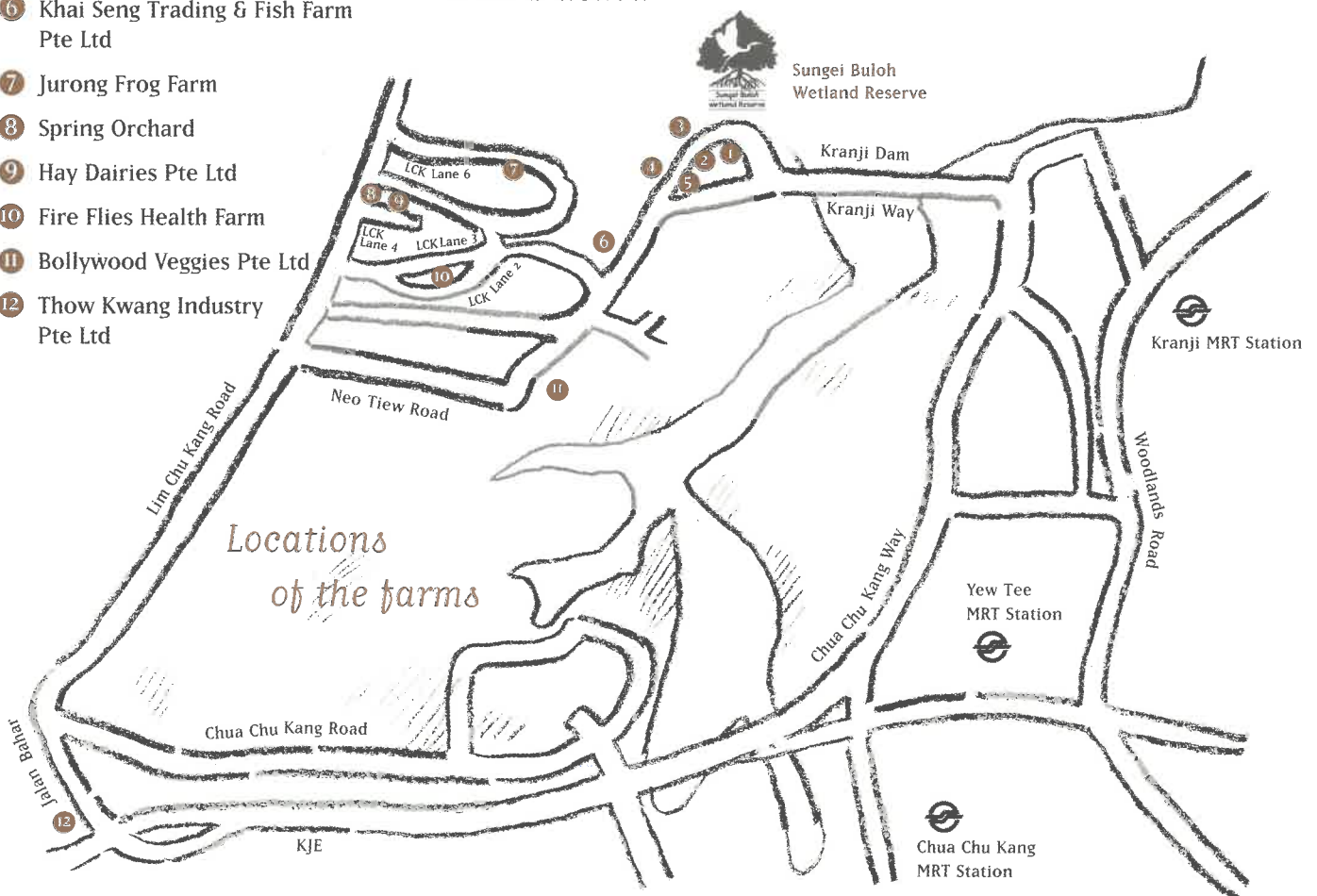
The Kranji Countryside... Singapore's very own Countryside

- 1 Aero-Green Technology (S) Pte Ltd
- 2 Nyee Phoe Group
- 3 Hausmann Marketing Aquarium
- 4 Max Koi Farm
- 5 Kin Yan Agrotech Pte Ltd
- 6 Khai Seng Trading & Fish Farm Pte Ltd
- 7 Jurong Frog Farm
- 8 Spring Orchard
- 9 Hay Dairies Pte Ltd
- 10 Fire Flies Health Farm
- 11 Bollywood Veggies Pte Ltd
- 12 Thow Kwang Industry Pte Ltd



Since 1 July 2006, the Kranji Countryside Association together with Sungei Buloh Wetland Reserve introduced the Kranji Express, a bus service that links the various farms in the Kranji Countryside so that you can explore them with ease.

Find out where you can go and what you can do with your family and friends after watching birds and fishes at Sungei Buloh Wetland Reserve.



The Kranji Countryside Association

1 Aero - Green Technology (S) Pte Ltd

260 Neo Tiew Crescent, Singapore 718899 Tel: 6792 4298
www.aerogreentech.com.sg enquires@aerogreentech.com.sg

Opening hours: 9am to 5pm daily **What can you do:** Go on a 1-hour guided tour (\$3 per head for group of 30 or more 30 people, \$3.50 for group with less than 30 people) and you get to bring home a bottle of lettuce juice or a packet of butterhead lettuce or fresh single serve salad. In this tour, you get to learn how the aeroponics growing system differs from hydroponics and soil cultivation. See the different types of plants grown in the farm and learn about their uses. Go online to book your tour.

2 Nyee Phoe Group

Nyee Phoe / Petals & Leaves / Gardenasia
240 Neo Tiew Crescent, Singapore 718898 Tel: 6793 6500
www.nyeephoe.com www.gardenasia.com info@gardenasia.com

Showroom and Gallery: 9am to 6pm daily. Nyee Phoe has over 90 years of history in Singapore. From a humble nursery in 1911, the Nyee Phoe brand has blossomed and matured into a purveyor of landscaping and lifestyle related products and services, uniquely identified by the Nyee Phoe Experience... a desire to create green spaces within and around us. **What can you do:** Come and experience Singapore First Agritainment Farm. Go on an Agri-T guided Tour (pre-booking required) Min 30 paxs, \$2.50 each with a souvenir. Hold a corporate retreat for 40 or a wedding banquet for 300. Enjoy the intimate venue for truly special occasions. Have a meal at the Petals and Leaves bistro. **Bistro opening hours:** Saturday 11am to 10pm, Sunday and PH : 10am to 6pm.



3 Hausmann Marketing Aquarium

291 Lot 113, Neo Tiew Crescent, Singapore 719099 Tel: 6792 1318
www.hausmann-aqua.com info@hausmann-aqua.com

Opening hours: 10am to 7pm daily. A back to the nature fish farm where visitors can get to enjoy unlimited fresh air and escape from the hectic urban lifestyle. **What can you do:** See the largest fresh water fish, the Arapaima, in the farm. Feed the Koi fish. Catch and bring home fishes from the 'longkang'.

4 Max Koi Farm

251 Neo Tiew Crescent, Singapore 718835 Tel: 68626363
www.maxkoi.com max@maxkoi.com

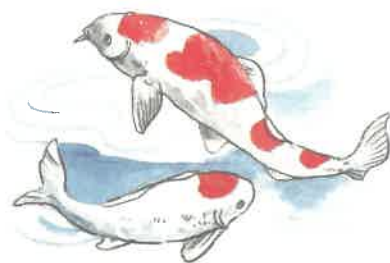
Opening hours: 10am to 6pm daily. **What can you do?** Come visit the farm for the first-hand pick of the latest koi import from many leading breeders in Japan. Wide range of quality koi food, bacterial culture, bio-filtration system are also available for your picking.

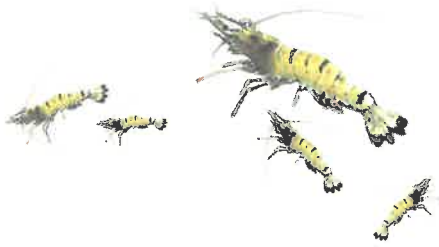


5 Kin Yan Agrotech Pte Ltd

220 Neo Tiew Crescent Singapore 718830 Tel: 6794 8368
www.kinyan.biz kinyan@singnet.com.sg

Opening hours: 9am to 5pm daily Kin Yan Agrotech is the largest commercial organic wheatgrass production farm in Singapore. **What can you do:** Buy organically cultivated health crops such as wheat grass, buckwheat sprouts, edible cactus, aloe vera, mushrooms and tropical herbs. Go for the Life Science Edutour programme and learn about the organic cultivation processes. Join the aloe vera cooking demo and healthy wheatgrass juicing demo. Participate in the products tasting session.





7 Jurong Frog Farm

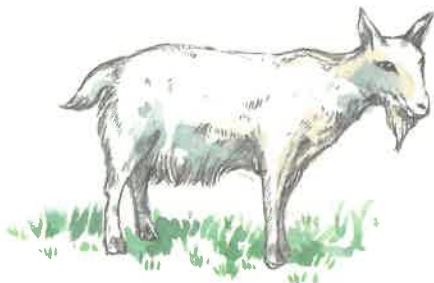
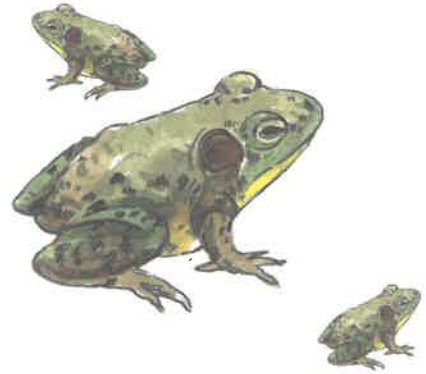
56 Lim Chu Kang Lane 6, Singapore 719164 Tel: 6791 7229
www.jurongfrogfarm.com.sg sales@jurongfrogfarm.com.sg

Opening hours: 7am to 6pm daily. **What can you do:** Go for a 35-minute tour and learn how to differentiate between a male or female frog! (\$2 per person or \$3.50 per person with either a bottle of bullfrog essence or an educational booklet).

8 Spring Orchard

1 Lim Chu Kang Lane 4, Singapore 718859 Tel: 6310 1884
kn1881@singnet.com.sg

Opening hours: 9am to 6pm (Tuesday - Sunday including public holidays). **What can you do:** Indulge in the vibrant hues of the Dragonfruit plant and the Adenium.



9 Hay Dairies Pte Ltd

3 Lim Chu Kang Lane 4, Singapore 718859 Tel: 6792 0931
www.haydairies.com.sg goat_farm@haydairies.com.sg

Opening hours: 9am to 4pm daily. **What can you do:** Attend the milking demonstrations and briefings that are held at 30 minute intervals during the following times: 9am, 9.30am, 10am & 10.30am. Book an educational tour at \$3.00/pax and it comes with a 250-ml bottle of milk and souvenir with Hay Dairies logo. Buy the original or chocolate flavored goat's milk.

10 Fire Flies Health Farm

62, Lot 75 Lim Chu Kang Lane 2, Singapore 719842 Tel: 6793 7875
www.fireflies.sg info@fireflies.com

Opening hours: 10am to 5pm daily. **What can you do:** Visit the farm and see how the vegetables are grown. Entry to the farm is free. Buy organically grown vegetables and other produce.



11 Bollywood Veggies Pte Ltd

100 Neo Tiew Road, Singapore 719026 Tel: 6898 5001
www.bollywoodveggies.com bollywoodveg@singnet.com.sg

Opening hours: 9am to 6pm (Wednesday to Sunday and Public Holidays). **What can you do:** Discover the farm on your own (\$2 per head above 12 and below 60) or go on a package tour (check online for different packages). Buy organically grown vegetables, herbs and medicinal plants. Have a meal at the bistro. The vegetables used in the meals are gathered fresh from the farm!



12 Thow Kwang Industry Pte Ltd

85 Lorong Tawas, Singapore 639823 Tel: 6265 5808
www.tkpotteryjungle.com pottery@thowkwang.com.sg

Opening hours: 9am to 5pm daily. **What can you do?** Visit Thow Kwang and discover the widest variety and range of pottery porcelain ware. Browse at your own leisure amongst a fabulous selection of vases, urns, statues, plant holders and lamps from all over Asia. Create something unique. Hands-on children's programme are available.



MIGRATION MONITORING AT PRINCE EDWARD POINT BIRD OBSERVATORY ONTARIO, CANADA

by Ray Knock, Businessman, SBWR Volunteer Bird Ringer
based in the United Kingdom



Relaxing afternoon: Cold beer in hand and binoculars slung around my neck. I'm at the shore of Lake Ontario watching Ospreys (*Pandion haliaetus*) wing their way over the lake, and Ring-billed Gulls (*Larus delawarensis*) fly round and land to pick food from the beach, while Turkey Vultures (*Cathartes aura*) soar, wings spread out, on the thermals. Ahh, Prince Edward Point is a great place for a birding experience of a lifetime.

Prince Edward Point Bird Observatory is situated in the Prince Edward county of Ontario, 200kms north-east from the city of Toronto. The county includes an island that sits in Lake Ontario, one of the five great lakes of North America. The Observatory is located in a national wildlife area at the most easterly point of the island and is set among scrub and mature trees complete with cheeky Chipmunks and Red Squirrels that scurry around all day. The island is a focal point for migrating passerines and raptors, so in 1995 the Observatory was established to help monitor the spring and autumn migration of birds. In 1999 the observatory became part of the Canadian migration monitoring network that comprises 22 observatories and monitoring stations in Canada. Information from the ringing studies and bird counts is collated by Bird Studies Canada where analysis of the information helps towards the understanding of the status of birds in the Americas. Much of northern Canada, particularly the expansive boreal forests, is inaccessible. Consequently, breeding birds that nest in these forests during the summer are not well studied. However, because the migration monitoring network uses standardised ringing and counting methods, the population trends of these breeding birds in the northern forests can still be determined.

I visited the Observatory in September 2005, to participate in the ringing programme that monitors the autumn migration. It was also my first visit to

North America so all the bird species I encountered were new to me. To identify, age and sex a new array of birds was both daunting and exciting, particularly so, as between 80 & 90 different species are regularly caught and ringed at the Observatory.

The most colourful group of birds I encountered were the warblers with over 20 species caught. The commonest species are the Yellow-rumped or Myrtle Warbler (*Dendronica coronata*) and the Magnolia Warbler (*Dendronica magnolia*). Both species can winter as far south as Mexico and Central America. Apart from the common species, I was lucky too to ring an Orange-crowned Warbler (*Vermivora celata*) and a Tennessee Warbler (*Vermivora peregrina*) both of which occur as rare migrants.

There was a diverse range of size in the birds that were caught. The very small Kinglets, Golden-crowned



(*Regulus satrapa*) and Ruby-crowned (*Regulus calendula*) were only 8 to 11cms long and weigh 6 to 9 grams. It is not unusual to catch up to a thousand individuals of each of these species during the autumn. At the other end of the size scale was the Sharp-shinned Hawk (*Accipiter striatus*). Although considered small for a hawk, they still weighed in at over 200 grams and had wingspans of over 56cm. These hawks hunt in the taller trees and the Observatory had special large mesh nets that could be raised into the canopy using a pulley system and then lowered again to enable the extraction of the trapped hawk. The hawks had bright colourful evil-looking eyes and I had to be careful to keep uncovered flesh (like fingers!) away from their needle sharp talons!

Slightly smaller than the hawk is the Blue Jay (*Cyanocitta cristata*), an abundant bird of North America, with stunning blue and white plumage. When the peak passage of the jay takes place, it is not unusual to count up to 5,000 jays per hour passing over the Observatory. This fact impressed me, as our European Jay (*Garrulus glandarius*) is a secretive bird and normally I am lucky to see one at a time!


Notwithstanding this fact, I consider the most amazing bird to be the Ruby-throated Hummingbird (*Archilochus colubris*). It is the only hummingbird that breeds in eastern North America and it is a really tiny bird, weighing in at just 4 grams! These birds are caught in special hummingbird traps and as the technique of ringing them is also very different from the usual assortment of birds, a special license is required for one to ring them. I was fortunate that the warden of the Observatory was licensed and allowed me to ring one under his



expert tuition. The "rings" are supplied on a flat sheet of aluminum with the numbers photo-etched on, and the ringer has to cut out the ring and form it himself using a small jig. The fitting of the ring is done under a large magnifying lens and closed with a special pair of pliers - a really delicate operation I should say. Holding the tiny bird in my hand, the realization that these birds actually migrate to Mexico and Central America, crossing the Gulf of Mexico in one non-stop flight is nothing short of amazing!

During major movements, bird numbers caught can be quite large. On one Sunday we caught and ringed nearly 700 birds! It was fortunate that we had two other local ringers join us for the day. As we worked through ringing the many warbler and thrush species we noted the more unusual ones such as the Rose-breasted Grosbeak (*Pheucticus ludovicianus*), Slate-coloured Junco (*Junco hyemalis*) and Yellow-bellied Sapsucker (*Sphyrapicus varius*) that is actually a species of woodpecker. As it turned out, that day's catch was a record in terms of bird numbers ringed in a single day at the Observatory and we all had a nice celebration with the wardens' whisky!

Many birds are caught using mist nets but we also made use of a selection of ground traps that are essentially baited wire mesh cages. These traps have openings for the birds to enter easily but with no way of exiting on their own. They are designed to catch finches and we managed to obtain the stunning black and yellow plumaged American Goldfinch (*Carduelis tristis*) and several species of sparrows. The Swamp Sparrow (*Melospiza Georgiana*), quite a scarce species, was one of five different species I ringed in Canada - that made my day as I've been studying sparrows, albeit of a different species in my home area in the United Kingdom.

Towards the tail end of the autumn migration, one species that the Observatory targets to trap is the Northern Saw-whet Owl (*Aegolius acadicus*). In a good year, 700 to 800 of these small owls are ringed when they migrate through the Observatory. The owls are lured to the nets by repeatedly playing a tape recording of the bird's call. Each night, we sat in the observatory and listened to the owl's call emanating from the tape players. No luck though. The owls were late that year. The nightly vigils however were not fruitless as two Whip-poor-wills (*Caprimulgis vociferous*) that are a type of Nightjar, were netted. I was delighted to be able to add this unusual species to my Canadian ringing list. Guess I will just have to return to the Observatory for another attempt at the owls! 

SELAJ Endau Rompin Johor National Park

23 to 25 Sept 2006

Tham Pui San, Operations Manager in aviation engineering,
nature artist, SBWR Volunteer



Scenic spots.

The entrance to base camp is eye-catching, not grand but simply imparting a powerful sense of the imposing forest around us.

Along the kubuk (stream) beside the dining area, the water flows with just audible sounds, soothing to our ears

and soul. This also serves as a perfect background for cameras and my sketching.



ARBORETUM WALK.

Jasin our Takun guide led the way with lots of interesting notes about the flora there.



Trekking up to the waterfalls.

This was the highlight of our stay. The entourage was split in 3 groups of different levels of fitness. I was in the slowest group which did not do so badly. We completed half the trek and managed to enjoy the rainforest for its wide variety of plants and insects etc.

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My Journal at Selai Forest Reserve, Endau Rompin
23 to 25 Sept. 2006

Pui San
Volunteer at
SBWR.



The base camp has 15 wooden chalets. Each measuring 3 m square. Basic, but comfortable for two persons each.

A picturesque prayer house (Surau) faces the kubuk (stream) next to the dining area, for visitors and staff.

CHALET #8



My Chalet

Born Hui and I shared unit #1. Nearest hut to the toilets, backs and nearest hut to the toilets. As it was the 8th time the month I hung up paper lanterns to decorate the rustic surroundings just like in the old kampong days.



Cold Water Showers

The water is very cold, but refreshing when our bodies become adjusted. Very therapeutic for tired muscles after trekking.



Entertainment

Nightly Kwok Peng and Sutarai would entertain us with their impressive repertoire of oldies. And Ali our friend from Uluin demonstrated his dancing skill to the delight of all.



Chow-time

Our resident cook (a Takun lady) prepared authentic kampong dishes, using jungle produce like payas, palm, tapioca, banana, trunks, fern leaves and durian.



We were flanked by the flowing water on one side and the slope of the foothill on the other. Though slippery at times, and some trees absorbing the minor misses and slips, none of us were deterred from continuing.

FIELD STUDY.

Along the way Sutarai would point out interesting species of plants and insects to us. I was able to see a lantern bug for the first time, but a jungle orchid spotted by Ali.



RIVER CROSSINGS.

The local authorities have made it easier for trekkers to cross over streams with the installation of rope bridges at the right places. They were sturdy but very securely anchored.

TIME OUT.

Even in the midst of this rich and engaging environment we had time to relax, gather our thoughts and share our experiences. The dining at base camp provided a perfect spot for this respite.



Page 4

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Page 5

NATURAL SPAS.

The Lubuk contains pools of water trying to squeeze pass the volcanic rocks on the river bed. When the water emerges the pressure was high enough to create pulsating actions in your legs and body like a jacuzzi. This is so soothing so naturally.

ACTIVITIES AT A GLANCE -

a summary of the 2 days at SELAI. This sketch

says it all of most of what we did there.

Try to recall and spot the following:-

1. Tongkat Ali
2. Rope bridge at Takan Pandan
3. 3 birds
4. A common brown-wing b/fly.
5. A volcanic rock named eddie
6. All our friends there.



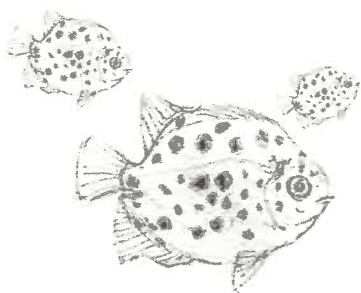
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the footpath on the other side the flower
Though slippery at times, and
some bums absorbing the minor
misses and slips, none of us
were deterred from continuing.

Calendar of Events

Compiled by Halilah Ahmad, Outreach Officer.

Admission charges apply on Saturday, Sunday, Public Holidays and School Holidays for all events except otherwise stated.



Free guided walks

Every Saturdays at 9am, 10am, 3pm and 4pm.

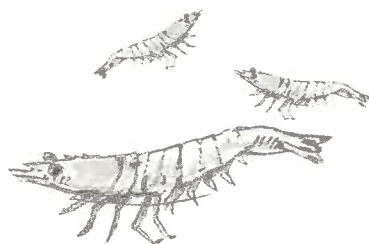
Join us for a free guided walk through the serenity of the mangroves habitat. Get to know the marine fishes that swims pass Sungei Buloh Besar during our marine fish walk on certain Saturdays. Walks are subjected to weather conditions. Check out our website at <http://www.sbwr.org.sg/events/guidedtours/> for timeslots and updates.



"Be still" stone Art Exhibition

March 2006 to March 2007

This exhibition, featuring stone artworks by SBWR volunteer, Mr Tham Pui San, aims to showcase some of nature's gifts found in Sungei Buloh Wetland Reserve. Much of the images presented are based on the artist's personal encounters and observations of the flora and fauna here, and the people who visit the reserve.



Prawn Watch

March 2007

Come and witness the traditional prawn harvesting activity. Please be at the information counter by 8.45am and a guide will lead you to the prawn harvesting demonstration site. Check out our website at <http://www.sbwr.org.sg/events/prawnwatch/> for updates.



Significant days for observation:

January 2007 - April 2007

World Wetland Day

2 February 2007

World Bird Migratory Day

9 April 2007

International Earth Day

22 April 2007



A Feathered Friend from Thailand

Abdul Khalid bin Hamid, Park Ranger

Thursday, 12 Oct 06, 2:30pm

weather: humid and hazy – not friendly at all

I went about my usual routine doing shorebird counts with my trusted Swarovski binoculars. While counting the different species and myriad numbers of shorebirds, I noticed a bird that looked different. It had a colour flag that did not look like the usual colours of green over white – the colours that Sungei Buloh Wetland Reserve use to flag its migratory shorebirds. Instead it was black over green! Thinking that the white flag may somehow have turned black due perhaps to discolouration, I wondered who might have flagged the bird with the colours upside down.

Comparing the colours with the other redshanks, I noticed that the white flags were only slightly discoloured with tinges of light brown. However, the flag of this bird I spotted was totally black! There was even a ring on its left tibia. We, on the other hand, ring our birds on the tarsus.

By then I was convinced that we did not ring this bird. The first person I informed about my finding was my "Guru" Krish. Within minutes he was there together with Linda, James and Jeremy. Jeremy took photos of the Common Redshank.

When he zoomed in to one of the photos, he spotted the lettering THAI engraved on the ring. I was elated to know this bird was flagged in another country.

A few days later, James called the Thai representative for verification and confirmed that the Common Redshank was most likely flagged in the inner Gulf of Thailand, at Laem Phak Bia, Ban Laem District.

Editor's note: Colour flags are easily visible with binoculars and allow us to track the shorebirds without having to catch them. In addition, any observer can contribute to the body of information by reporting shorebird colour flag sightings to us at Sungei Buloh Wetland Reserve. This information aids in the protection of shorebirds by tracing the migration pathway in which the birds are coming from and going to.

Reserve Information

Opening Hours: Mondays to Saturday from 7:30am to 2:00pm;
Sundays & Public Holidays from 7:00am to 7:00pm. Free entry except Sat, Sun,
Sundays & School Holidays. Admission: \$6.00 per adult and \$3.50 per child/student/senior citizen.
Audio-visual Show: Mondays to Saturdays at 9:00am;
Sundays and Public Holidays: Hourly from 9:00am to 5:00pm.
TBS 935 from Kranji MRT Station. Alight at Kranji Reservoir carpark
TBS 935 will stop at the Reserve entrance.

Sungei Buloh Wetland Reserve, 301 Neo Tiew Crescent, Singapore 718025. Tel: 6794 1401 Fax: 6793 7271
Email: sbwr@pacific.net.sg Website: <http://www.sbwr.org.sg>

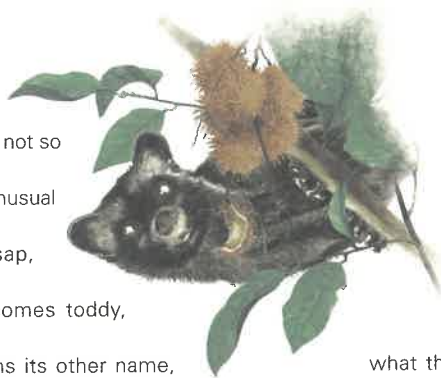
The Common Palm Civet loves toddy. But it's more likely to disappear from our ignorance than its passion.

The Common Palm Civet has a not so common habit. It exhibits an unusual fondness for palm flower sap, which when fermented, becomes toddy, a sweet liquor. Which explains its other name, Toddy Cat. However, it's not the habit that's harmful to the Civet. It is what we do to its home that is. You see, our rainforest area, and other natural habitats, are under threat. In fact, only about 3% of our island is covered by rainforest. This habitat loss makes the animal vulnerable. No home, no animal. It's that simple. But we've already taken a step in the right direction with HSBC's Fun With Nature programme. It aims to educate our children about our amazing wildlife.

Help our children learn about our amazing wildlife through HSBC's Fun with Nature programme.



And the importance of preserving our rainforest and its other residents, such as the Common Flying Dragon, Common Tiger Butterfly and Black-spotted Sticky Frog.



The logic is simple. By getting our children involved and excited about wildlife we can get them to care for the future of our habitats. Because, they will not protect what they don't love. They won't love what they don't appreciate. And it's difficult for them to appreciate what doesn't exist. **Care for Nature. Care for Our Heritage.**

The Care-for-Nature stamp series is an HSBC initiative to protect what little we have. This year's Fun with Nature stamp series features the endangered residents of our nature areas. You can support the cause by purchasing these stamps. The proceeds will go towards educating our children to become more environmentally aware. The HSBC Care-for-Nature Collector's Cover (\$\$9.90), and the Limited Edition Stamp Prints (Set-of-4 for \$198 and 4-in-1 at \$88), can be bought at any HSBC branch across the island. Or you can place your order online at www.hsbc.com.sg. Help save the Toddy Cat, he needs his drink.



Care-for-Nature
PROTECTING OUR LIVING RESOURCES

HSBC 
The world's local bank