

MEDIA FACTSHEET

NParks Volunteer Programme

Volunteers receiving long service awards

14 NParks volunteers were awarded long services awards on 6 Dec 2014. Thirteen of the volunteers were recognised for 10 years of service and one for 15 years of service.

10-year long service award:

1. Mr Jerome Pang Tiang Chai
2. Mr Tan Hang Chong
3. Ms Chiam Siew Tiat
4. Mr Francis Chan
5. Ms Hitomi Miyashita
6. Mr Raymond Clement
7. Ms Wong Siew Kwun
8. Mr Edward Wee
9. Mr Yap Yee Tharm
10. Mr Yap Tat Ming
11. Mr Edwin Lim Yee Phing
12. Ms Iris Li TianZhi
13. Ms Deborah Tay Wei Lynn

15-year long service award:

14. Ms Jacqueline Lau

History of the Volunteer Programme

The National Parks Board (NParks) has been working closely with our volunteers since 1993. The history of our volunteer programme started as a ground-up initiative in NParks' Conservation division by a group of avid bird watchers at the former Sungei Buloh Nature Park (now known as Sungei Buloh Wetland Reserve). In 1996, a volunteer programme, which included the recruitment, training and development of volunteers, was formalised so that members of the public who were interested in nature and conservation could participate in our conservation activities at Sungei Buloh.

Over time, the volunteer programme was also introduced to other parts of NParks operations. In 2001, the Singapore Botanic Gardens started its volunteer programme. Then in 2002, Central Catchment Nature Reserve and Pulau Ubin followed suit. May 2005 saw the launch of our Community in Bloom programme.



The Volunteer Programme today

To-date, NParks has more than 1,500 active volunteers who participate in a wide range of volunteer activities. Active volunteers are those who have served at least four times in a year. They are important to us as they play an integral role in helping us achieve our vision of making Singapore our City in a Garden. Our volunteers participate in areas such as visitor services, guided walks, gardening, outreach programmes, conservation programmes and marine biodiversity surveys.

Many of our volunteers sign up with our programmes because they appreciate the opportunity to learn and contribute to conservation in Singapore. They are also able to play their part in sharing with others about environmental issues. More people can then step forward to care for and conserve the rich biodiversity in Singapore.

NParks volunteers are encouraged to participate in all our activities. While some activities allow volunteers to be trained on the job, others require volunteers to attend courses before they can conduct or lead the activities.

Places where volunteers can choose to contribute their time and effort are Bukit Timah Nature Reserve, Community in Bloom gardens, Fort Canning Park, HortPark & the Southern Ridges, the Istana, Pasir Ris Park, Pulau Ubin, Singapore Botanic Gardens and Sungei Buloh Wetland Reserve.

Our volunteers comprise both males and females, aged nine to over 80 years old. They range from students, homemakers, working professionals to retirees. Interested parties can visit www.nparks.gov.sg/volunteer to find out more.

Volunteer Opportunities

Gardening

Those with green fingers will find a suitable fit when they volunteer in this area. As gardening volunteers, they will be involved in maintaining an area of a garden, from the sowing of seeds, pruning, weeding, fertilising and composting to identifying the various plants and labelling them.

Conservation Programmes

Volunteers who sign up for these programmes will get the opportunity to improve the quality of habitats through various restoration programmes such as planting, weed management, flora and fauna surveys, and forest and coastal clean-ups.

Outreach Programmes

Those who enjoy meeting new people and have a desire to share their knowledge and expertise will be interested to sign up for our outreach programmes. Volunteers who serve in this area facilitate or conduct educational workshops and programmes for members of the public in our parks and nature reserves.

Volunteers who sign up for visitor services are responsible for providing general information to park visitors, answering phone queries, gathering feedback and managing notice boards and brochure stands. People who enjoy hospitality and love interacting with people would likely enjoy volunteering here.

Guided Walks

Our volunteer guides are “faces of our parks”. Having undergone prior training, they are able to share interesting information about our parks and the flora and fauna found within them. Our guided walks and tours are often conducted on weekends at our parks and nature reserves.

Community in Bloom Programme

Those who enjoy gardening and interacting with others can volunteer in this programme which provides opportunities for individuals to play an active role in fostering the love for gardening among communities. Volunteers get to share their knowledge and experience for developing and sustaining community gardens. They help to manage and maintain community gardens and also participate in roadshows to help spread the love for gardening.

Other areas

There are many other areas which need volunteers. Some of these areas include the building up of databases, photo-taking, repairing and mounting herbarium specimens, etc.