

# A DIY Guide to Labrador Nature Reserve Walking Trail



## Introduction

Labrador Nature Reserve is a gazetted reserve containing an indigenous ecosystem that houses Singapore's rich biodiversity. This includes Singapore's only protected coastal cliff vegetation and rocky shore. Lying adjacent to the reserve is a 10-hectare park.

Experience the fascinating connection between the landscape and historical themes by tracing the journey back to the 1870s. Follow the landmarks with interpretative signage that show how Labrador transformed from a thick coastal forest and mangroves to what it is today - a tranquil nature reserve with relics of Singapore's World War II past.

This trail will take you into the dense secondary forest housing diverse flora and fauna. You will walk through Singapore's only coastal cliff vegetation and enjoy a spectacular view of Singapore's offshore islands from the lookout deck. The trail will then lead you down the cliff and into the park.

After your walk, spend a relaxing afternoon basking in the sun along the sea. Have a picnic and watch the waves lapping against the shore. Or, sit back and soak in the breathtaking view of the South China Sea, the Southern Islands and passing ocean liners and cruise ships.

## How to get there

### By Bus:

- Bus services 10, 30, 51, 143 and 176 take you to Pasir Panjang Road. From there, proceed on foot via Labrador Villa Road.
- Bus services 61, 93, 97, 100, 166 and 963 take you to Alexandra Road. Alight on the same side or opposite NOL Building along Alexandra Road and proceed on foot via Labrador Villa Road.
- Service Parks 408 is a direct service that plies between HarbourFront Bus Interchange and Labrador Park (Saturdays, Sundays and Public Holidays from 11 am to 9 pm). The service departs from the interchange every 30 minutes.

### By Car:

Enter Labrador Villa Road, off Pasir Panjang Road, and park at Carpark A, B or C



# A DIY Guide to Labrador Nature Reserve Walking Trail



## Highlights

- Be transported into Singapore's historical maritime and war past
- Get up close and personal with diverse flora and fauna
- Walk through Singapore's only coastal cliff vegetation (Guided tour only)
- Enjoy the panoramic view of Singapore's offshore islands from lookout deck
- Appreciate the beauty of the sea from vantage points along the promenade



Dragon Teeth's Gate



Red Beacon



Machine Gun Post



Portcullis



6 Inch Quick Firing Cannon



Fish Poison Tree

## LEGEND

Legenda 图例

Sea Laut 海边	Track Denai 小径	Shelter Tempat Berteduh 亭子	Playground Taman Permainan Kanak-kanak 游乐场	Wonders of the Wind Kajaiban Bayu 风铃	War Memorial Plaque Tugu Peringatan Perang 战争纪念馆	Picnic Area Kawasan Perkelahan 野餐区	Berlayar Creek Plaza Plaza Teluk Berlayar 布莱雅溪广场	iPost Pos Matlumat 询问处
Park Taman 公园	Road Jalanraya 大路	Toilet Tandas 洗手间	6 inch Gun Meriam 6 inci 六吋口径大炮	Casemate Benteng Tentera 地堡	Storyboard Papan Cerita 故事图版	Fitness Course Sudut Senaman 健身道	Gazetted Nature Reserve in 2002 Diwartakan Kawasan Simpanan Alam Semulajadi pada 2002 2002年划定为自然保护区	Restaurant Restoran 餐馆
Jetty 码头	Car Park Medan Kereta 停车场	Look-out Deck Dek Menjengah 了望台	Gun Emplacement Tapak Meriam 炮位	Event Area Kawasan Acara 活动场所	Restaurant & Wellness Centre Restoran & Pusat Kesihatan 餐馆和保健中心	History Walk Laluan Jalan Sejarah 历史走道	BBQ Pit Dapur BBQ 烧烤台	Drop Off Point Tempat Turun Penumpang 下车处
	Dragon Teeth's Gate Batu Berlayar 龙牙门	Obelisk Batu Obelisk 方尖塔	Old Fort Entrance Pintu Masuk Kubu Lama 旧炮台入口	Tunnel Terowong 隧道				Beacon Suar 坐标

# A DIY Guide to Labrador Nature Reserve Walking Trail



## Maritime History Trail

Begin the trail at Carpark C. Walk along the Promenade that overlooks Keppel Harbour and Fort Siloso on Sentosa Island and you will arrive at the Dragon's Teeth Gate (1).

Also known in Chinese as *Long Ya Men*, it was originally a natural rock outcrop that stood in the waters just off Labradors' shore. These waters now house Keppel Harbour, Singapore's main port since the 19<sup>th</sup> century. This rock outcrop used to serve as the gateway to Keppel Harbour's western entrance, acting as a navigational guide to sailors traveling through the narrow channel.

The landmark was blown up in 1848 to widen the channel for modern ships to sail through. What stands today is a symbolic replica of the original. It was installed in 2005 for the commemoration of the Singapore Celebrations for the 600<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Admiral *Zheng He*, the famous Chinese explorer.

A stone's throw away stands a red beacon (2), which also served as a navigational guide in the maritime history and marks the shortest distance between Sentosa and mainland (about 240m).

## War History Trail

Besides its maritime history, Labrador played a significant role during World War II. Military installations were built on the highest points (now inside the nature reserve) overlooking the reserve below.

A machine gun post (3) in this area is one of several war relics you will see. This bunker was built to guard 12-pounder guns on the hill right above. Another machine gun bunker is located behind Toilet B.

As you walk along the promenade before heading towards the forested part of the trail, enjoy the spectacular view of the sea and southern islands. This area, which used to be part of the old Pasir Panjang (or Long Beach), was a popular seaside resort with private pavilions and beach houses from the late 19<sup>th</sup> century.

During the late 1930s, the British felt that Pasir Panjang beach would be an easy place for the enemy to land. By 1940 the jetties and pavilions had been replaced by machine gun posts and barbed wire obstacles, and Pasir Panjang beach ceased to be a place of recreation.

The next part of the trail takes you to the forested areas of the reserve. Walk through the Old Fort Entrance (4) next to Carpark B. The brick walls you see here are remnants of the wall of an old fort built around 1886. A portcullis (or vertical iron gate) spanned the gateway of this sea-wall, closing off entry into the fort from the seaward side. The fort was also protected by the thick mangrove swamp and steep cliffs, which made it impossible for anyone to climb. Only infantry could pass through this portcullis, and all supplies, ammunition and garrison support to the fort had to arrive by sea. This makes it the only gateway to the fort until a road was built from the landward side in 1892.



## A DIY Guide to Labrador Nature Reserve Walking Trail



You will walk past another war relic - a display of 6-inch quick firing cannon (5). The barrel displayed here is authentic. This relic was discovered at the former Beach Road Camp in 2001. These cannons, aimed south and seaward with concrete barriers behind them, were originally intended as defence from coastal attacks. However, during the 1942 invasion, the Japanese attacked from the North. In the battle for Pasir Panjang, these guns aided the Malay Regiment by firing high explosive shells at enemy troops advancing along the coastal road. Tunnels and bunkers beneath the battery were used to supply ammunition and to house the troops.

### Nature Trail

The secondary forest beyond the 6-inch quick firing cannon was formed by a process called succession. It provides a habitat for a diversity of trees, shrubs, plants and climbers. The forest canopy consists mainly of tall sea apple trees (*Syzygium grande*), and some sea almond trees (*Terminalia catappa*). From March to May, and from August to October, the synchronised flowering and shedding of leaves give the tree crowns a different colour.

The crown of *Syzygium grande* is dense with massive widespread branches and can grow up to 30m tall. Its leaves are thick and leathery. Flowers are white, and fruits are oblong and fleshy.

Commonly called *ketapang* or Sea Almond (6), this is a common fast growing tree that can grow up to 25 m in height with a spreading pagoda-shaped crown. Its big leaves are arranged in rosettes. Flowers are greenish-white in colour. The fruits are oblong, flattened and thick. The name of the tree is derived from the almond taste of the seed.

Look out for lianas while walking along this nature trail.

### Fauna

As you walk through the secondary forest looking out for signs of wildlife, be mindful that these mammals, reptiles, birds and insects, all play important roles in the forest. Some 50 species of birds and 11 species of butterflies have been recorded here and the species lists are still growing.

Plantain squirrels feeding on fruits are also a common sight. They are usually found in a wide range of habitats and are identified by their orange bellies, with black stripes that run down the sides of their bodies.

On a lucky day, you may even get to spot Malayan monitor lizards (7) and skinks roaming around the nature reserve. Listen to the cicadas which live in the forest with their loud singing.



### Promenade

Back at the promenade, look out for a number of interesting coastal trees. The Fish Poison Tree (*Barringtonia asiatica*) (8) contains saponin that fishermen use to stun fish. Look down at the ground for its fluffy flowers, which open at night to release strong scents to attract nocturnal pollinators such as moths and bats.

Another coastal tree you can see at the promenade is the Sea Grape tree (*Coccoloba uvifera*) (9). This tree bears reddish, fleshy fruits that resemble grapes. This tree is easy to spot; just look out for the rusty red colour of the trunk and round-shaped leaves with clear veins.

After your walk, linger at the promenade and enjoy the sea-breeze and spectacular view of the sea.