

PHOTO ESSAY

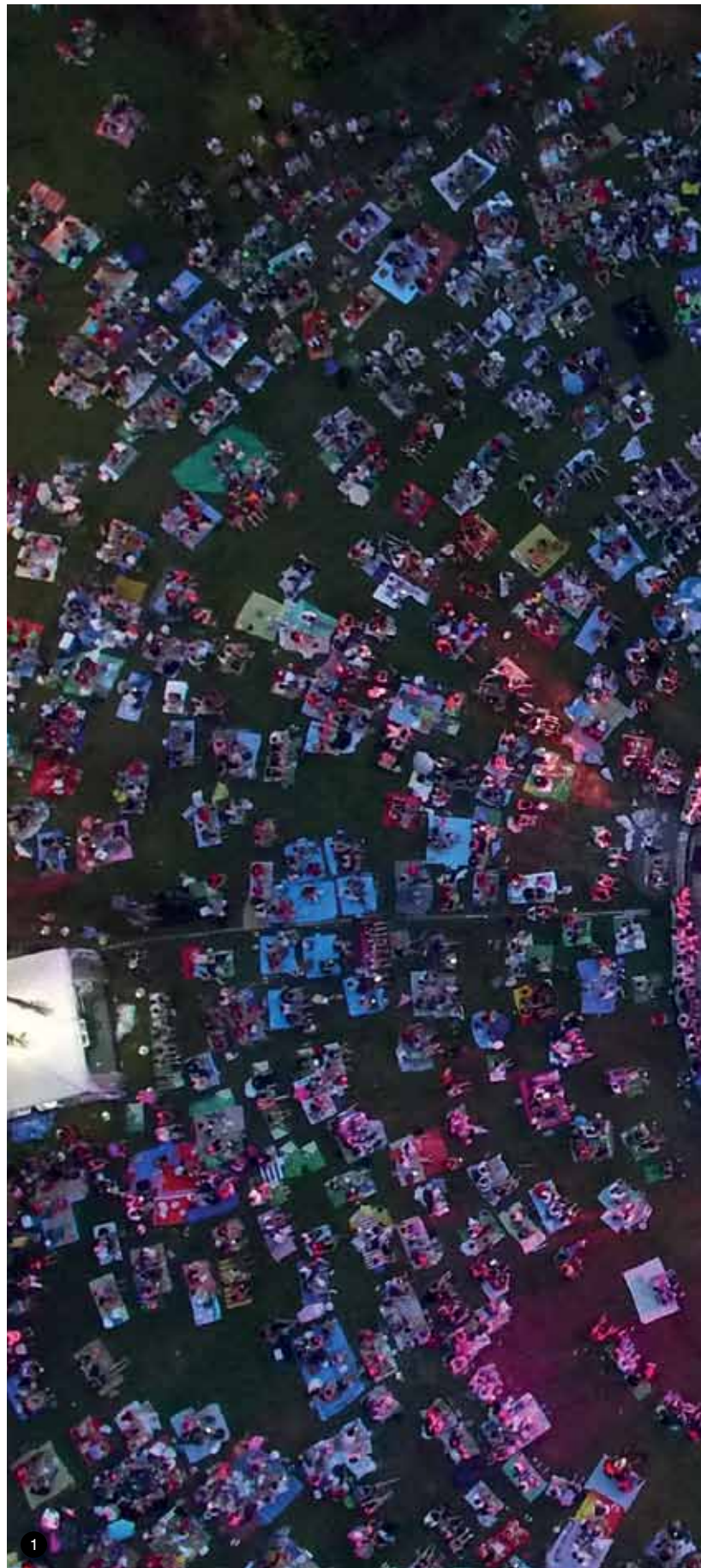
A CELEBRATION OF PARKS

Images by the National Parks Board Drone Team

No other city is as green as Singapore. According to the Centre for Liveable Cities, close to half of the city-state is green, despite having a dense urban population. Nature can be found almost everywhere. Apart from leafy trees that provide shade along the roadsides, there are gardens and parks aplenty—the National Parks Board (NParks) in Singapore cares for over 300 parks and 4 nature reserves.

At the Central Business District and Marina Bay Financial District, office-workers are only a short stroll away from the Singapore River or the park at Gardens by the Bay. Well-maintained, lush neighbourhood parks are built in close proximity, or within residential clusters, while the past years have seen the opening of a number of parks, including Coney Island and Eco-Link@BKE. A large network of park connectors interlinks the myriad green spaces on the island, bringing cyclists and pedestrians through popular nature spots, along the heartlands, and past scenic waterfronts.

Integrating nature within the city means that Singaporeans are only minutes away from enjoying the outdoors. The presence of the parks and communal spaces creates potential for more community-based and recreational activities. The following aerial photographs illuminate Singapore's efforts in bringing nature to its citizens so it can be accessed and admired by all. Captured with the DJI Phantom 2 and the DJI Inspire 1 drones, they provide a unique perspective of Singapore's green landscape as shot from the sky. This series of photographs also documents the outdoor concerts held by NParks in 2015, organised in celebration of Singapore's 50th birthday. Singaporeans and visitors thronged the various parks to listen to musical hit performances and nostalgic melodies by well-known international and home grown artistes, while lounging on picnic mats under the stars, celebrating with nature.









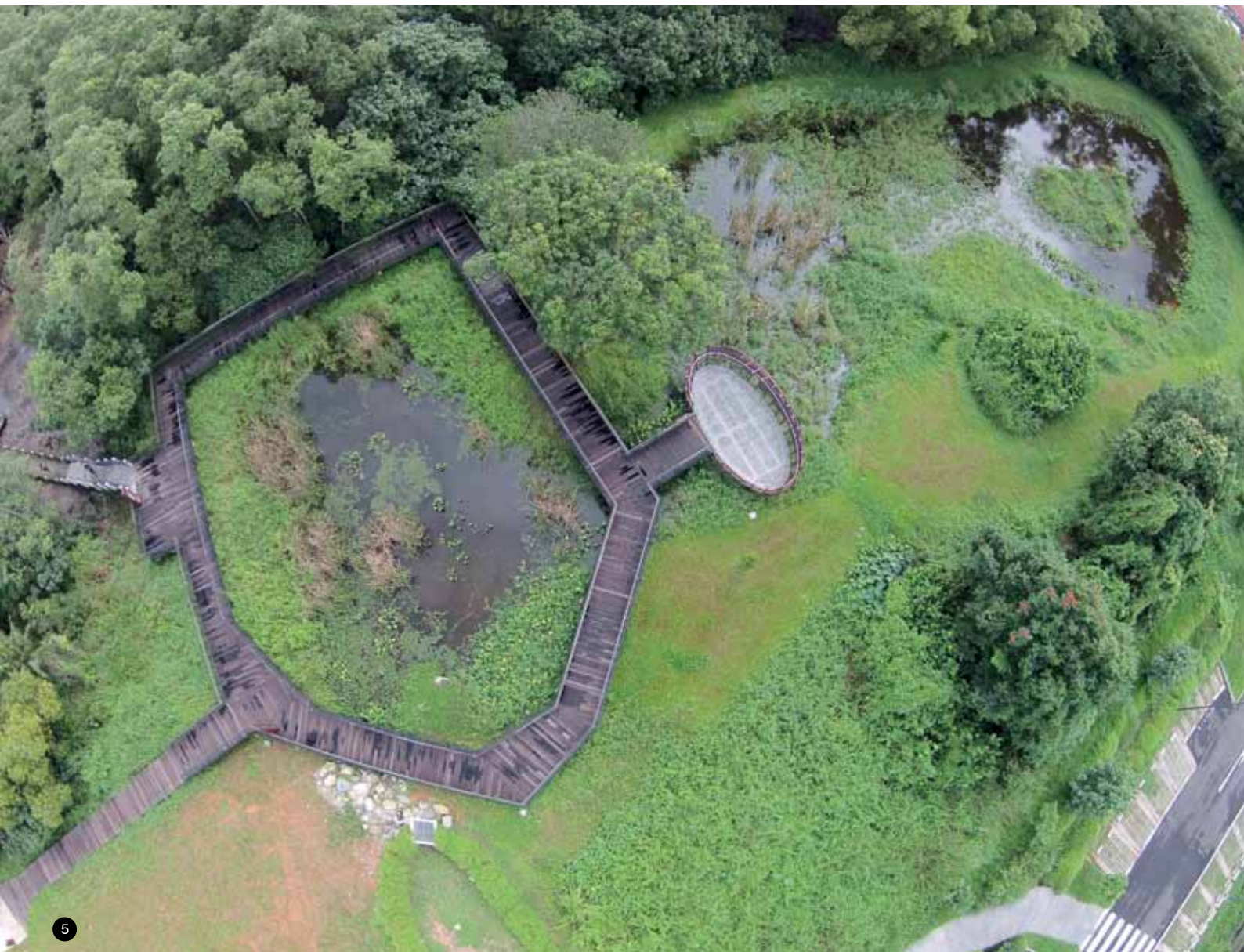
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1. Concert-goers brought their picnic mats down to the Singapore Botanic Gardens to enjoy a night out at the SG50 Concert Series in the Park.
2. Singaporeans and visitors enjoyed instrumental music by the water at the SG50 concert at Bedok Reservoir Park.
3. The SG50 concert at Gardens by the Bay featured Christmas songs and a line up of original songs and popular covers by local artistes.



4. Bishan-Ang Mo Kio Park, a green space within a dense residential cluster, hosted more than 8,000 people at the SG50 Concert Series in the Park.

5. Sungei Buloh Wetland Reserve was recognised as a site of international importance for migratory birds when the Wetlands International included it in the East Asian Australasian Shorebird Site Network in 2002.





6. The upcoming Jurong Lake Gardens is envisioned to be a people's garden with community gardening areas and cycling tracks.

7. The gardens at Jurong will undergo development works over the next decade, with the western area slated for completion in 2018.



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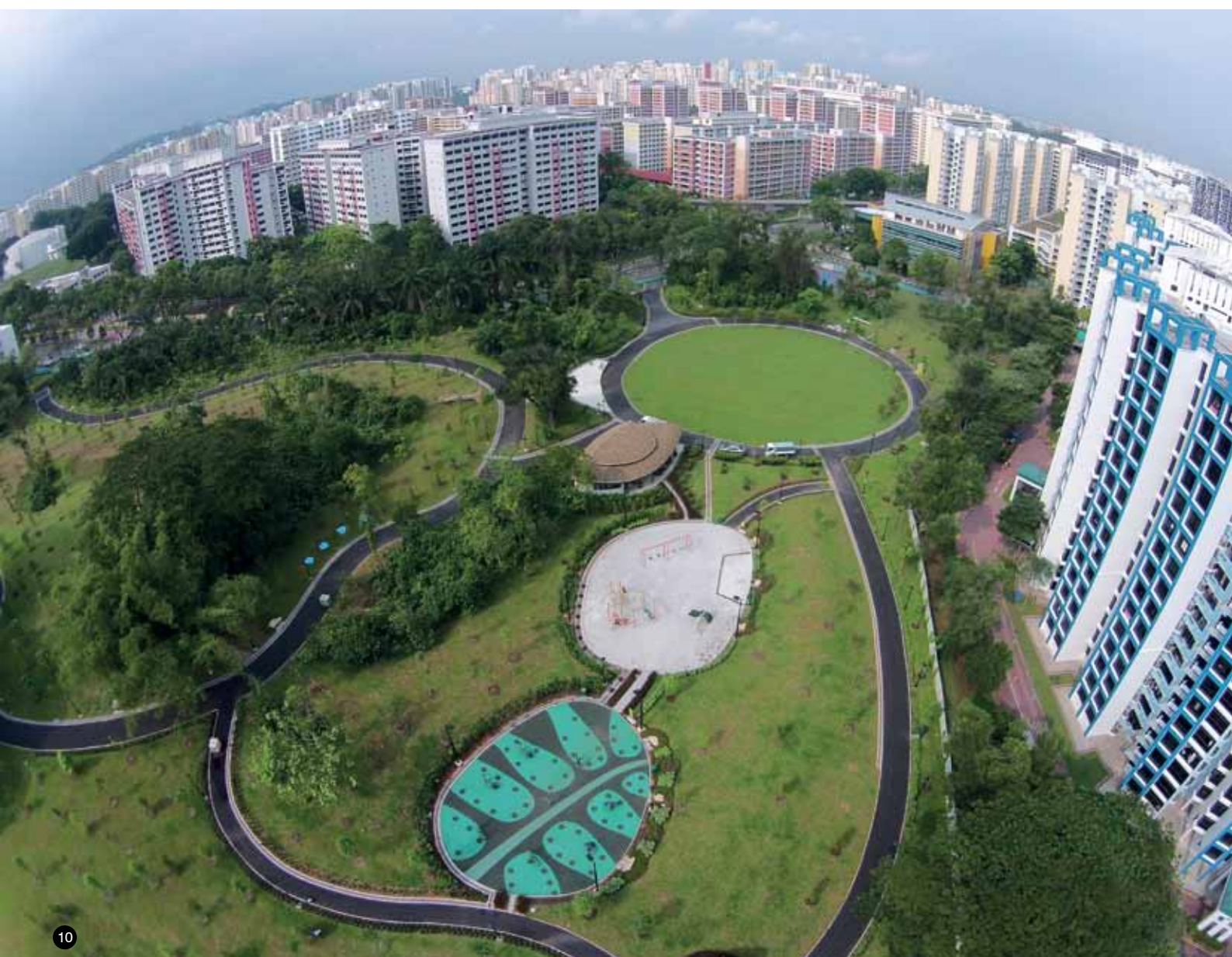




8. The Rail Corridor is envisioned as a community green space. Under the winning concept for the Rail Corridor's Request for Proposal, the Rail Corridor will have playgrounds, community farming plots, and fishing ponds for nearby residents to enjoy.

9. The Eco-Link@BKE provides a safe passage for animals to travel between Bukit Timah Nature Reserve and Central Catchment Nature Reserve.

10. Located in Bukit Panjang, the 17.3 hectare Zhenghua Nature Park features play and exercise facilities amidst nature.



About the Drone Team

The NParks Drone Team was set up in mid-2014 to capture aerial footages of Singapore’s parks, gardens, and nature reserves. These images and videos are shared with the public as part of NParks’ outreach and educational programmes. Led by Wong Tuan Wah, NParks’ Director of Conservation, and staff from the Risk Management Office, the team has trained more than 10 volunteer staff to fly the DJI Phantom 2 and DJI Inspire 1 drones.

Each flight is carried out by a team that comprises a pilot, co-pilot, creative director, and safety officers. The pilot sets up and flies the drone. As he has to maintain eye contact with the drone at all times, the co-pilot controls the camera to take photos and videos, and alerts the pilot of any warning messages on the camera’s live screen. To achieve the desired footage, the creative director advises on the angle, distance, and height of the drone. Safety officers, usually NParks staff that are in charge of the parks to be photographed, help with the application of the permits and crowd control, such as keeping children away from the take-off and landing area.

11. Springleaf Nature Park, which opened in November 2014, buffers the Central Catchment Nature Reserve and helps to reduce visitorship pressure on the reserve.

12. Labrador Nature Reserve is a gazetted reserve that is home to Singapore’s only protected coastal cliff vegetation and rocky shore.



