

wetlands

Sungei Buloh Wetland Reserve • Wetlands is sponsored by HSBC • August 2006 • Vol. 10:8



Sungei Buloh

Wetland Reserve

"We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give."

- Winston Churchill



Volunteerism at Sungei Buloh Wetland Reserve (SBWR)

Wetlands Vol 10:8

EDITORIAL

In recognition of a decade of volunteerism at SBWR and to extend our appreciation to our volunteers, we have brought together in this issue, a collection of their reflections and inspirations. Every Sungei Buloh volunteer, from the newest to the most experienced, has played a commendable and valuable role in contributing to the Wetland Reserve's objectives of conservation, education, research and recreation. The spirit of volunteerism has been with this Reserve since its genesis, and has lived on till today, inspiring people of all ages and from all walks of life.

- 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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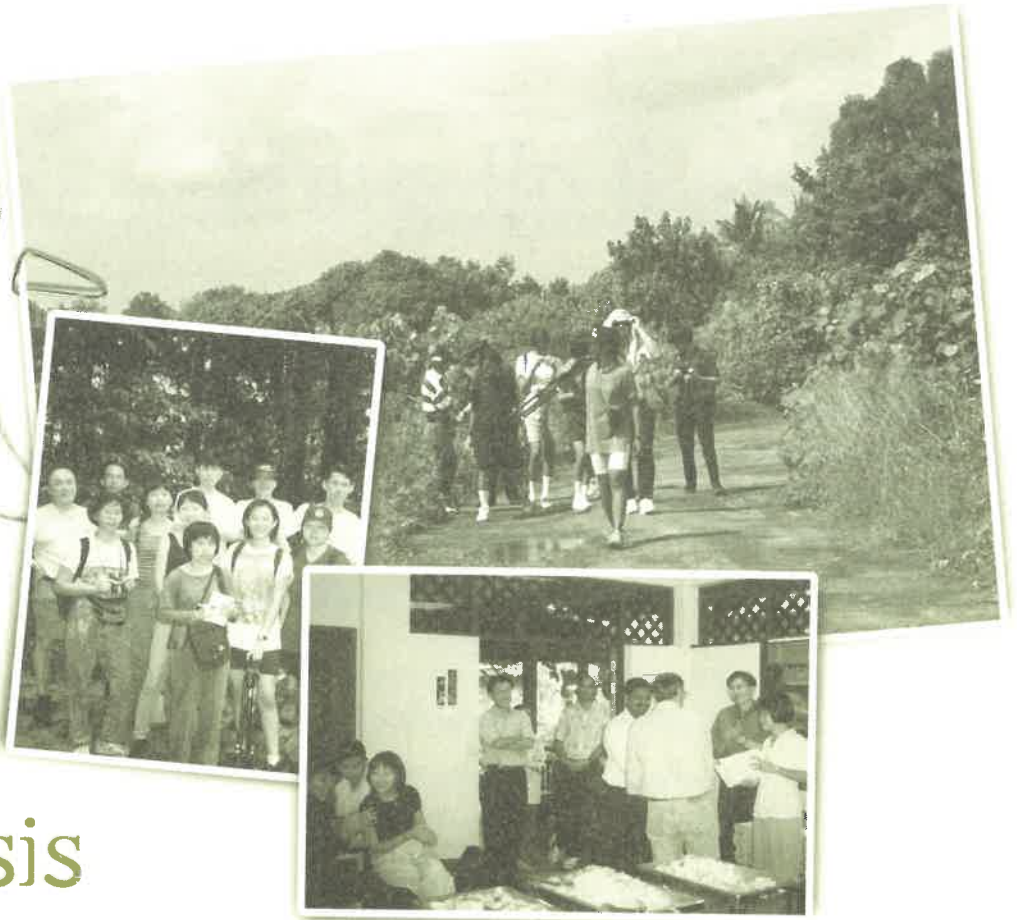


The photo montage on the front cover is designed by SBWR volunteer David Tan. It depicts our volunteers at work, as well as our volunteer outings and recognition events



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The Genesis

Chan Su Hooi, Outreach Officer


In the earlier years of the 90s, few people knew about the existence of Sungei Buloh, and the urgent need to create more awareness. To do that, we knew we would need volunteers. Before the official opening of Sungei Buloh Nature Park on 6 December 1993, a "Volunteer Guide Network" was set up. Volunteer previews were conducted for people who were keen to volunteer at Sungei Buloh.

In 1996, a formal Volunteer Programme was set up to involve the volunteers in our public and research programmes. The Volunteer Programme actively garnered community involvement. We advertised our Volunteer Programme through the radio station, FM 92.4, to recruit more people. Most people signed up to be a volunteer for the same reasons – they know the need

to create awareness on Sungei Buloh, they have a passion for nature, an eagerness to share their knowledge with others and they know the importance of conserving this precious piece of land.

By the late 90s, we had a small but dedicated group of core volunteers, and a number of them have stayed on with us till today. We held our first Volunteer Recognition Event in 1996 and in the same year, we organized our first volunteer outing cum training.

Sungei Buloh's volunteer group grew as the years went by. People from all walks of life continued to join our volunteer programme with the same vision as those who had joined us in the earlier days. Through the years, our volunteers have been more involved in other activities, programmes and trainings organized by the Reserve. We have also progressed to letting our experienced volunteer train the new volunteers-to-be.

This year, Sungei Buloh celebrates the Volunteer Programme's 10th Anniversary, since it was made official in 1996. Sungei Buloh Wetland Reserve (SBWR), to this day, is fortunate to have a group of dedicated and committed volunteers, who have a keen heart for SBWR and for nature. We appreciate all the work that the volunteers have done tirelessly, and their efforts and time. We look forward to see the volunteer group grow together with us, and always staying together as one happy "Sungei Buloh family"! 

Where it all starts...

Keith Hillier, Shipping Consultant, SBWR volunteer

It is great to be a volunteer – almost any kind of voluntary work brings that satisfaction of helping others. For those who are interested in the natural world around us, there is the double pleasure of being a volunteer at Sungei Buloh. Firstly in serving the community and secondly in diffusing light and knowledge of the wonders of nature.

To quote Debra Yeo, one of our first guides:-

"A chance for me to do my small bit to conserve whatever remaining natural habitat left in an increasingly crowded Singapore. It matters little that there is no monetary reward. So long as one visitor has learnt a new nature fact, I am satisfied; it is after all, a small step towards nature appreciation by the whole"

It is relatively easy to be passionate for such a place – it is different and interesting! Where else in Singapore would you see a crocodile in the wild, just basking on the mud banks? Or a two metre long monitor lizard trying to digest a three metre long pit-viper?

Look at the trees in the mangroves; again different from all others. Mangroves exist in that transient world between land and sea and have to endure the relentless march of the tides, in and out every day. Life here is harsh, yet these trees have triumphed over the adverse environment with each developing its own survival tactics and contributing to a dynamic ecosystem.

Apart from nature guiding, there are several other activities available to volunteers, including education activities, scientific programmes and photography.

These are also tangible rewards such as training, special programmes, social gatherings and a recognition ceremony.

So come and help us spread the magic of our wetlands to visitors. If you are interested to volunteer your time and expertise, do sign up with us. Just go to our website www.sbwr.org.sg and click on "Friends of Wetlands", then "Volunteers" and "Sign up as Volunteer". Hear from you soon!



Reflections

Guiding at Sungei Buloh Wetland Reserve

gave us opportunities to enjoy nature, meet new people and challenge ourselves physically and mentally as we guide visitors through the reserve. We have enjoyed learning from other guides about plants, birds and animals as much as the 'fellowshipping' that comes from regular outings together. Guiding at SBWR has also enriched us spiritually as we discover the mysteries of nature by opening our eyes, ears and hearts when we walk quietly through the reserve.

*AC Ho, Director of Rights Management Consultants and SBWR Volunteer and trainer for Volunteer Programme,
and Helen Ho, retired teacher, SBWR volunteer*



Yesterday,

I would not have known what a horseshoe crab is, but today, I can easily spot them. My experiences with Sungei Buloh has a long way to go. I am sure my learning journey with this Reserve will explain a great deal about what I am going to tell others about her.

Channe Lim, Sales Planning Executive, SBWR volunteer

Sungei Buloh's volunteer programme

is one of the most efficient and supportive that I know. The staff and experienced volunteers have been incredible in sharing their enthusiasm for nature with us, and their passion is infectious! With them, we saw a crocodile at close range, an Atlas Moth cocoon, a feeding kingfisher and much, much more. Being part of this community has been wonderful, and I look forward to sharing the joy with the public.

Edna Koh, Bank Executive, SBWR Volunteer

The training was helpful and interesting

as they taught us how to identify the various species of mangroves trees, the type of birds and creatures found in Sungei Buloh. With a field trip after each lecture, it enabled me to better appreciate nature in Singapore. I feel that the role of a nature guide to spread the message of conservation is really meaningful.

Roy Tan, Teacher, SBWR Volunteer

There is nothing like having first-hand experience

of seeing, hearing and touching the wonders of nature at SBWR, and that, I would say, is one of the nicest memories I have of the volunteer programme. I look forward to more wonderful moments of time spent at SBWR.

Low Yi Juan, Social Worker, SBWR Volunteer

Volunteering at Sungei Buloh

is an excellent opportunity to help educate the public about the importance of the wetlands. Singapore's mangrove cover is a ghost of what it was in the past and it is our responsibility to care for what is left and to bring home the message of conservation.

Trond Lovdal, Conservationist, SBWR volunteer

As a trainer

I feel extremely happy when I see volunteers who had attended my training doing a tour. It does not matter if they are fully making use of what had been communicated to them by me or another trainer. My conclusion is that I have contributed and done what is expected of me

and the "graduate" is now a full-fledged volunteer contributing towards SBWR's Volunteer Program. In a way, appreciating the kind effort of SBWR by repaying the effort which SBWR had unselfishly disseminated and provided free-of-charge through her volunteer trainers.

So to all you active volunteers out there who came to my training sessions, thank you very much for rewarding my efforts!

Edie Lim, Self employed, SBWR volunteer and trainer for volunteer programme



Volunteer quotes @ Sungei Buloh Wetland Reserve

Coastal Clean Up

It was a day out for coastal cleaning in a nature reserve! Many were excited and looking forward, but some were a little hesitant. Our community is doing a great job; senior citizen volunteers are the handy lot who take it seriously. Somebody once said "I never knew we have so much trash along the coast"! Our younger ones from schools are energetic and curious and they need strong supervision to fulfill their duty hours, but yet still lots of laughter... keep it up!

Chai Kian Hin, Senior Software Engineer, SBWR volunteer for coastal cleanup



Mangrove Salvaging

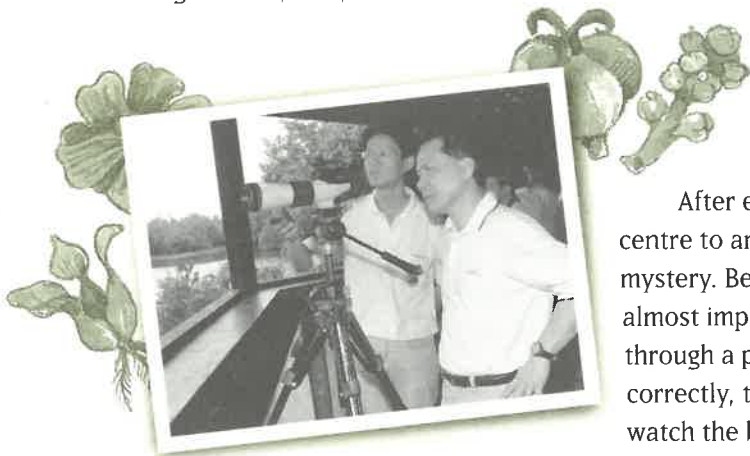
Recently, I had the chance to once again get my feet muddy and simultaneously, put in new lives in the reserve by planting salvaged mangroves at Kranji Nature Trail and salvaging mangroves saplings from mudflats meant for migratory birds. The latter, if not rescued, would be cleared when the migratory season starts again. Kudos to the helpers, who for a morning, contributed to the massive effort of mangrove reforestation! Locally, our remnant mangroves are fragile ecosystems, susceptible to man-made effects such as coastal modifications, battling against substrate changes and recruitment problems. Globally, we have lost about 25 percent of the mangroves determined since 1980 (FAO report, 2003). There is definitely a serious need for mangrove reforestation and restoration.

Chua Siew Chin, SBWR volunteer for mangrove salvaging

Freshwater pond cleaning

Together with some students from Hillgrove Secondary and other SBWR volunteers, we were tasked with clearing the water lettuce growing wild outside the visitor centre. Wading about in boots, and armed with trash bags and gloves, we earned both curious glances from visitors and irate glares from sun-worshipping Water Monitors. Still, there was no better job than one involving fresh air, mud, sweat and friends to work with. So let them stare. I was in "longkang kia" heaven.

Iris Li, NUS undergraduate, SBWR volunteer for Freshwater Pond Cleaning



Bird Ringing

After each trip out to the ponds, we would head back to the visitor centre to and continue with the ringing. To us, every bag contains a mystery. Being so close to the birds was unforgettable because it is just almost impossible to carefully note their details while viewing them through a pair of binoculars. After all the information is recorded correctly, the birds are immediately released back to the wild. As we watch the birds fly into the darkness of the night, all of us have one thing in mind, to see it come back to see it come back again in the next migratory season...

Lua Wai Heng, Technical support officer, SBWR volunteer for bird ringing

Bird Ringing

I have been fortunate to ring birds in many parts of the world and the most satisfying part of the experience is to share knowledge with my fellow ringers. I have, on many occasions, been involved with the ringing programme at Sungei Buloh. My ringing experience of 25 years enabled me to pass on some ideas on techniques, such as ageing criteria, which I had learnt previously in Europe. When I first visited the Reserve, I had little knowledge of Singapore's birds. With a good field guide and the enthusiastic help of the park staff, I learnt to recognise the species we were catching. The only way field ornithology can progress is for us to share ideas and experience. I gained a great deal from my experience at the park and hope that the knowledge and techniques contributed in some small way to the development of the ringing team. Although not having visited the park recently, I am in regular contact and still feel part of the "team". When I next visit, I am sure that there will be something new for us to learn and to add to the understanding of birds and their conservation for the benefit of future generations.

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

Marine Fish Survey

When Sungei Buloh asked for volunteers in the "Marine Fish Survey", I promptly volunteered for it as I thought it was a chance to relive my childhood memories of catching fish. However, the efforts required were much more and we worked till the wee hours of the morning catching and moving live specimens of prawn, catfish, tripod fish, halfbeaks, milkfish, scats, just to name a few.

The marine fish survey provided useful data towards the compilation of an educational book for students. This was done to create much awareness on marine fish for the public as well. It was an interesting experience, not just for me, but for everyone in the program as well, working together towards a common scientific cause and to aid in the education of future volunteer guides. I will definitely make an effort to volunteer again for the next marine fish survey.

Andy Teng, HR Manager, Asia, SBWR volunteer for Marine Fish Survey

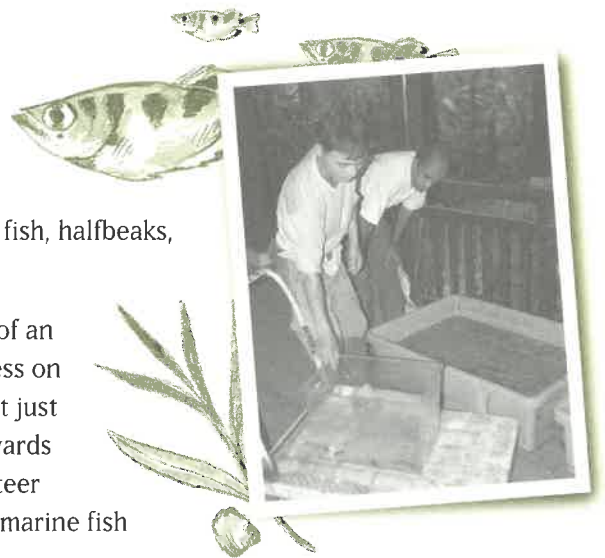
Snake Survey

Early in 2002 I was asked if I could undertake a survey of the snake fauna of Sungei Buloh. The objectives were to determine which snake species inhabited Sungei Buloh, and to gain an understanding of species distribution in relation to habitat.

I made a weekly visit to the reserve to locate snakes, undertook a review of snake specimen records at the Zoological Reference Collection at the Raffles Museum of Biodiversity Research, and created an internet-based form for other volunteers to report their snake sightings. The survey proved a total of 22 snake species resident in the reserve - this is a significant level of diversity given the small size of the reserve and the limited range of habitats. Since the close of the survey in 2003 two more species have been added to the list making a total of 24.

The experience was rewarding and I have learnt so much about these elusive creatures and I believe this survey has raised awareness of the great diversity of species in the reserve.

Nick Baker, Petroleum Geologist, SBWR volunteer with snake survey





Nature for me and my boys

Allan Teo, self-employed, SBWR volunteer of twelve years

My involvement with Sungei Buloh began way back when my twins were doing a nature project called "Bird Watching in Singapore". With the help and kind support of the Education Officer at Sungei Buloh, we were granted permission to use the library which provided us with lots of useful information. With the knowledge and information gathered from the numerous books and outings with Nature Society, my children and I picked up a lot of information and knowledge about local birds, fauna and flora. With that we were asked to be volunteers for the Reserve, which we have been till today.

The satisfaction is immeasurable and the wonderful feeling of guiding groups around SBWR and seeing that I have made their time worth while, is enough to make me want to come back to conduct more nature walks for the public.

Thank you for making my association with SBWR so wonderful!

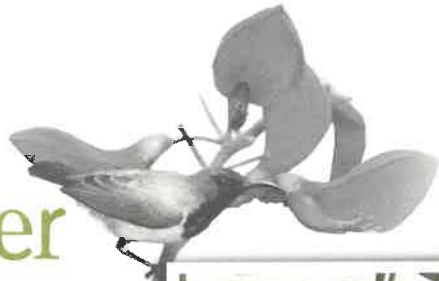
A decade of satisfaction

Keith Hillier, Shipping Consultant, SBWR volunteer of ten years

So it must have been ten years ago that I figured out for myself that doing volunteer work at Sungei Buloh would match my criteria for an ideal retirement activity - sun, fresh air, exercise, something interesting every time and no end to the learning.

Every time I conducted a guided walk, there was something new to pick up. I remembered once I took a party of staff and their families from the National Library Board (NLB). There was a little old Malay lady - one of the staff's grandmother. I was pointing out a Bakau putih mangrove and she asked why it was called "putih". I did not really know but suggested that it might be because the apical buds were whitish, as distinct from the red ones of the Tumu (Bakau merah). Her response was a scathing "You are only guessing young man, you should know for sure". Incidentally, she could not have been much older than me. Thoroughly chastised, I went to the library and looked it up and then emailed the grand-daughter at the library to tell her to inform her grandmother that the real reason was because it was the wood (timber) that was white. A couple of days later, I received a reply of thanks and a query if I could answer some more questions that her grandmother was posing. Certainly this was one way of constant learning, not to mention the satisfaction of having someone else interested in nature.





Birds of a feather

Kenneth Kee, Projects Executive, SBWR volunteer of ten years

I have been bird watching in Sungei Buloh even before it was officially opened in 1993. It was my favourite weekend retreat to relax, be close to nature and enjoy my breakfast with the company of hundreds and thousands of waders.

It was during one of those occasions, ten years ago, when a charming lady approached me at the main hide to become a volunteer guide at Sungei Buloh. "Why not share your passion of bird watching with members of the public?"

I enjoy imparting my knowledge and sharing my passion of bird watching. It has always been a joy to me when they expressed delight and amazement that such beautiful birds exist in Singapore. It was my hope that they will be better informed, encourage their friends to come and slowly spread the message that this wonderful place is worth preserving. I was overjoyed when Sungei Buloh was officially announced as a wetland reserve in 2001.

It has been a good ten years. I wish Sungei Buloh and its dedicated staff all the best and every success in its Volunteer program. Happy 10th anniversary!



Savouring the rustic charms of nature

KS Wong, Semi retiree, SBWR volunteer of ten years

My first acquaintance with Sungei Buloh Wetland Reserve (SBWR) started in 1994. It was then a nature park. I was on a reconnaissance for a nature outing for my former colleagues. I was awed by the rustic beauty of the Reserve.

Soon after, I made frequent weekend trips to savour its charms. Hence, when SBWR asked for volunteer guides, I signed up. What better way to help conserve its charms and share its wonders with others than as a volunteer.

Over the years, I have volunteered in various areas, with varied and very enriching experiences. I have led guided walks for visitors from different ages, backgrounds and countries. I have helped out in conservation work and assisted in various activities, programmes and events organised. I have also conducted training for new volunteers and "green clubs" from schools and organisations.

Through volunteering, I have gained knowledge, skills, experience and much enjoyment!





Witness for the wetlands

W. Calvin Ho, Attorney, SBWR volunteer of ten years

It was at first difficult to imagine the beautiful but gregarious-looking kingfishers to be vocal, but their quarrels have since become for me the audio insignia of Sungei Buloh. Furthermore, who would have thought huge monitor lizards to be shy or otters could be so bold! I once witnessed a Grey Heron slurp up an unfortunate Oriental Whip Snake much like one would a thread of noodle. And one can hardly underrate the stunning display of coordination in flight as winged migrants overreact to a disinterested White-bellied Sea Eagle. Of the many facades of nature, I learnt that rustling leaves could mimic the sound of rain even as the sensation of it was reconstructed by a shower of seeds from tall-standing mangrove trees. Looking up, one could not but marvel at the spectacle of light displaced by shield bugs as dazzling metallic colours against a moving pallet of green. Such have been aspects of my education, not only as a volunteer, but also about being Singaporean. I am delighted to find that we have a natural heritage that is uniquely Singapore. In the past 10 years, it has been my privilege, as well as honour, to have served with a team of wonderful people at Sungei Buloh – both past and present. This anniversary is appropriately a celebration of the dedication, inspiration and vision that have enriched the Singaporean identity. Congratulations Sungei Buloh!



A vessel for nature

SK Kwan, Manager in a shipping company, SBWR volunteer of ten years

Back in the 80s, one of my well-liked places was Sungei Buloh prawn farms where I watched the baya weavers. I was very happy when it was officially opened as a nature park on 6 December 1993, and looked forward to enjoying the place with more people

It was great fun showing visitors that the little brown blobs on the mudflats were actually birds (usually the Pacific Golden Plovers which remains quite still). I have seen their amazement when I point out to them the colours of the kingfisher through the binoculars, or telling them how smart the Tilapia was in making little ponds to stay in when the tide went out. So, when I learnt that volunteer guides were needed, I signed up.



I am glad that Sungei Buloh today is now designated a Wetland Reserve and is even a member of the East Asian-Australasian Shorebird Site Network.

It is great fun being a volunteer and at times, we, as volunteers, could be on the "receiving end" of a simple guided walk.



My love affair with nature

Yeo Swee Cheong, Process Engineer, SBWR volunteer of ten years

In those early days, volunteering was pretty much devoted to the week-long event of "Birdwatch" in November, bird count/census, bird ringing and some weeding. The volunteering activities have since evolved much with weekend free guided tours, prawn harvesting demonstrations, art workshops, coastal cleanup and lots more to do.



With time, my knowledge of mangroves grew and my oratory skills had improved. Dispensing nuggets of interesting information of otherwise dull looking plants, interwoven with the intrigues and dramas of natural behaviours and interactions made visitors sit up and listen. It was immensely satisfying when the visitors, after the guided tour, would come up to me and say that they had truly enjoyed the visit and my "nature talk" had greatly contributed to their experience. I am proud to be a part of this "volunteer family" in Sungei Buloh, which includes many volunteers of whom I had known for many years now, and to bear witness to all that has come to pass, especially in becoming a Wetland Reserve in 2002 that it rightly deserves to be.



The Sungei Buloh Wetland Reserve Volunteers' Song



Composed by:
Linda Fang, Section Head/ Language and Communication
Temasek Engineering School, Temasek Polytechnic ; SBWR Volunteer

*Specially presented
by the SBWR Staff at the 10th Anniversary SBWR
Volunteer Program Celebration, Aug 2006*

[Spoken]

Somewhere in north-west Singapore
Where mangroves still abound
You'll find a group of volunteers
Impassioned about nature conservation

A special group that they are
With such varied expertise
They come from near and far
To make our green dreams come true

They'll participate in any activity
To promote and protect our precious
Wetlands

They're always giving, learning and
sharing
To make each year's programs more
exciting

And if you are wondering who they are
.....

[Sung]

They are the champions of Sungei Buloh
Ambassadors at all our nature walks
They share their love for the fauna and
flora

At Sungei Buloh, year after year.

You'll find them regularly guiding
groups

Inspiring them to take more routes
They'll share the joys of each new
sighting
At Sungei Buloh, year after year.

[Spoken]

Yes, they are our indispensable
volunteers,
The valuable team who have added
much to our programs

They have supported us in our projects
and our plans
And you have encouraged us constantly.

[Sung to the volunteers]

We sing our grateful thanks to you
For being there for us each time
From ringing birds to counting snakes
At Sungei Buloh, year after year

[Repeat and fade off]

At Sungei Buloh, year after year

[Spoken reflectively]

And before we realize it, ten wonderful
years have passed
These have been fruitful years filled
with poignant memories
With such a dynamic group, we can
safely say that the next ten years
Would be even more exiting

Engaging Nature

Tham Pui San, Operations manager in aviation engineering, nature artist, SBWR volunteer

It was not just a lucky break that I got on to the right track to harness my passion for art to make my contribution to the reserve. I had to engage nature with art.

A casual chat with SBWR staff led to exploration of some very interesting ideas. The follow-up of a few resulted in running workshops and courses on painting landscapes of Sungei Buloh, printing of postcards, exhibitions of artworks and the monthly paint-along sessions. My latest project is stone art painting.

An objective of these activities was to encourage the use of art as a creative way to interpret nature. This is one way people can make a connection with nature and then becoming increasingly engaged on a personal basis.

Looking beyond the mangrove greenery and mudflats we will encounter many beautiful and meaningful moments with nature in this setting. We will learn not only to appreciate its grace, harmony and infinite power of design but also its calming tranquility on us, and be able to connect with it in very personal ways.



A Special Visit by Champion of the Earth, Dr Tewolde Egzjabher

Ng Sock Ling, Assistant Director (SBWR)



Earth Day was special in more ways than one this year. Sungei Buloh Wetland Reserve received a visit from none other than a Champion of the Earth, Dr Tewolde Berhan Gebre Egziabher of Ethiopia.

Dr Tewolde is one of seven 'green' leaders celebrated as the 2006 Champions of the Earth by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) in Singapore. A well-known champion against the patenting of life forms and a tireless proponent for community rights in Africa, Dr Tewolde has made major contributions at various biodiversity-related fora, including the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO).

Hence, it was indeed an honour for Sungei Buloh to receive such a distinguished guest. On 23 April 2006, I met Dr Tewolde at the Shangri-la

Hotel lobby, and accompanied him in a special white limousine bearing the number plate 'EARTH 12' to Sungei Buloh. Dr Tewolde was on his first visit to Singapore, and wanted to visit a nature reserve before he left for home.

Krish and I showed Dr Tewolde around the Mangrove Boardwalk, the Main Bridge and the Main Hide. He was particularly captivated by a Little Heron, which darted about catching fish after fish in the shallows near the Mangrove Boardwalk. It was the smallest heron he had ever seen, Dr Tewolde said. He also saw the crocodile partially submerged in the river as we crossed the bridge.

All too soon, the limousine was back to pick up Dr Tewolde, who had a flight to catch that evening. Dr Tewolde graciously agreed to a photograph for our keepsake.

References: www.unep.org
www.rightlivelivelihood.org

Happenings @ SBWR

Compiled by Jeanne Tan, Senior Outreach Officer and Chan Su Hooi, Outreach Officer.



Free guided walks

Join us on Saturdays for a guided walk among the tranquillity of the mangroves. Walks are weather permitting. We also run marine fish guided walks on Saturdays. Please check our website at <http://www.sbwr.org.sg/events/guidedtours> for updates and specific time slots.

Admission charges apply during weekends and school holidays.



Prawn Watch

2 and 30 September 2006 (Saturdays)

An activity that takes you back to history. Come and experience the traditional ways of harvesting prawns. This programme is weather permitting.

Please assemble at 8:45am at the Visitor Services Counter. A guide will take you to the prawn pond. Admission charges apply during weekends and school holidays.



Stone Art Exhibition

March 2006 to March 2007

This exhibition by SBWR volunteer, Tham Pui San showcases some of nature's gifts found in Sungei Buloh Wetland Reserve. Much of the images presented are based on personal encounters and observations of the flora and fauna here, and the people who visit the Reserve. Admission charges apply during weekends and school holidays.



SBWR volunteer programme 10th Anniversary Celebration

26 August 2006

This year, Sungei Buloh celebrates her Volunteer Programme's 10th Anniversary. Staff and volunteers come together for a worthy celebration this very special day!

Volunteer Recognition Event

18 November 2006

SBWR hosts this annual event to thank the volunteers for their contributions to the Reserve. Certificates of appreciation, renewed volunteer passes and complimentary tickets to SBWR are given to the volunteers during this day.



Allow Me to Introduce myself...

Robert Heigermoser, Technical Translator (German/English), SBWR volunteer

Oh, hi there and welcome to Sungei Buloh Why, you look surprised! Never seen a crocodile? Ah, you mean you never expected to see a wild one, and least of all in Singapore. Well, yes, I am hearing that a lot these days. But seriously, what do people expect to see when there are crocodile awareness signs about?

To be perfectly honest, there are not too many of us about, only two or three as rumours have it. Most of the time visitors confuse me with one of those big monitor lizards the reserve is so full of. Let me ask you, do I look like a monitor lizard? My snout is much longer, my eyes are at the top of my head and I also have those scary-looking "dragon" scales on my back and tail and my tongue certainly does not hang out of my mouth all day long. This case of mistaken identity really gets me down. You see, I am still a juvenile, as you can tell from the yellow tinge of my skin. But once I reached my impressive adult size, nobody will mistake me to be a monitor anymore.

Now let me tell you how I pass my day. Nothing much I suppose. I have to keep my body temperature constant and not lead a very active lifestyle. Most of my time, I lie at my favourite spot along Route 1, watching telescopium shell races or letting myself be admired by those who walk through the park open-eyed while I do my thermo-regulating. On other days, when the tide is right – not too high or too low, but just nice – I slide over to the river and float motionless in the waters around the sluice gate, with only my eyes and my nostrils popping out so that nobody detects my presence there. I could spend hours observing people exclaimed "Crocodile! Crocodile!" when a monitor lizard appears and there I am, smack in the middle of all the drama, and nobody me. Hilarious!

Having said this, it is usually the rangers or volunteers who blow my cover. Some of them know my whereabouts rather well. Not that I am so bothered because I get to see all kinds of expressions and incredulous looks. Yes, I'm certainly having a good time here at the reserve.

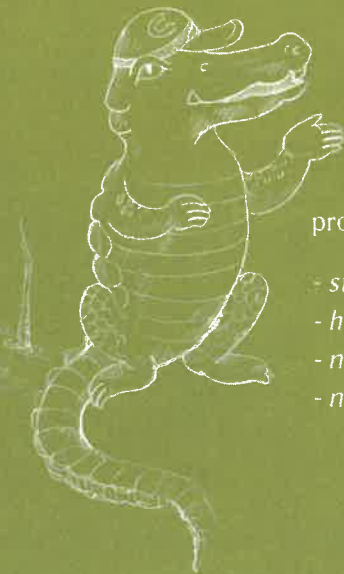
Well, its time to go and get myself some fish for dinner. Thanks for the surprised look on your face - it made my day!

I have a reputation as a wild and dangerous animal. I may inflict a nasty bite if provoked. Unless you want to be my lunch, you would

- stay on the visitor trails and not venture into the mudflats
- heed the crocodile warning signs
- not feed me
- not provoke me

A note on visitor safety:

The estuarine crocodile inhabits the mangroves of India, South East Asia and Australia. Please be aware of the crocodile warning signs around the Reserve.



Reserve Information

Opening Hours: Mondays to Saturday from 7:00am to 7:00pm, Sundays & Public Holidays from 7:00am to 7:00pm. Free entry except Sat, Sun, Public Holidays & School Holidays. Admission: \$1.00 per adult and \$0.50 per child/student/senior citizen for a 15 min walk to the Reserve. Sundays and Public Holidays, Hourly from 9:00am to 5:00pm. Audio-visual Show: Mondays to Saturdays at 9:00am. Sun. Sundays and Public Holidays. Hourly from 9:00am to 5:00pm. Sun. Sundays and Public Holidays. TIBS 9:35 will stop at the Reserve entrance.

Sungei Buloh Wetland Reserve, 301 Neo Tiew Crescent, Singapore 716925. Tel: 6794 1401 Fax: 6793 7271. Email: sbwr@pacific.net.sg Website: <http://www.sbwr.org.sg>





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