

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

### **NParks celebrates 30 years of community stewardship and conservation at Sungei Buloh Wetland Reserve with new curated programmes for the public**

- *Public can look forward to a slew of community programmes and activities across the Sungei Buloh Nature Park Network, including specially curated programmes at Cashin House starting progressively this year*
- *Former Main Bridge at the Wetland Reserve converted to new lookout platform following community suggestions, offering more opportunities for nature appreciation*
- *Five Heritage Trees dedicated to donors who have contributed to Singapore's greening efforts, in appreciation of strong community support over the years*

*Singapore, 25 November 2023* – In conjunction with celebrating 30 years of community stewardship and conservation at Sungei Buloh Wetland Reserve, the National Parks Board (NParks) announced today that the public can look forward to an exciting lineup of volunteer-led programmes and activities across the Sungei Buloh Nature Park Network. This includes specially curated programmes at the reconstructed Cashin House, such as guided tours and nature photography, which will start progressively this year.

As part of the celebrations, NParks also opened a new lookout platform at the Wetland Reserve that overlooks Sungei Buloh Besar, providing visitors with a prime vantage point to observe wildlife in their natural habitat. The new lookout platform exemplifies the strong community involvement at the Wetland Reserve, as it was partially retained and converted from the original Main Bridge, following suggestions from the community to preserve the popular birdwatching spot.

In appreciation of the community's continued support of the Wetland Reserve as stewards of our City in Nature, Minister for National Development and Minister-in-charge of Social Services Integration Mr Desmond Lee joined Friends of Sungei Buloh Wetland Reserve, volunteers as well as corporate and community partners to celebrate the anniversary at the Wetland Reserve today. Beyond the Wetland Reserve, NParks also dedicated five Heritage Trees to donors who have supported NParks' projects in other areas through the Garden City Fund,



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acknowledging the importance of community stewardship in transforming Singapore into a City in Nature.

### **Sungei Buloh Wetland Reserve rooted in 30 years of community stewardship**

The early roots of NParks' volunteer programme can be traced back to Sungei Buloh Wetland Reserve, where volunteers had been helping out since 1994. The Sungei Buloh Volunteer Programme was formally established in 1997, the first of its kind for NParks, which saw the recruitment, training and development of volunteers to facilitate the public's participation in the Wetland Reserve's conservation activities. Over time, similar volunteer programmes have been also introduced at other green spaces, with the Singapore Botanic Gardens starting one in 2001, and Central Catchment Nature Reserve and Pulau Ubin following suit in 2002. This further extended into the Friends of the Parks initiative, which has grown to 12 communities with over thousands of volunteers.

This includes the Friends of Sungei Buloh Wetland Reserve which was launched in 2016, with members playing a more active role in promoting active and responsible uses of the Wetland Reserve through ground-led programmes and initiatives.

Aside from volunteers, NParks also works closely with an array of diverse stakeholders such as members of the nature community, researchers and scientists, international organisations and various sponsors. Corporate partners have long supported the Wetland Reserve's nature outreach programmes, dating back to 1997 when HSBC set up the Sungei Buloh Education Fund. To date, more than 20 sponsors have contributed towards conserving and protecting the Wetland Reserve.

*For more information on community stewardship at Sungei Buloh Wetland Reserve, please refer to [Factsheet A](#).*

### **Conserving the natural capital of Sungei Buloh Wetland Reserve**

Sungei Buloh Wetland Reserve (formerly known as Sungei Buloh Nature Park) officially opened on 6 December 1993, before it was gazetted as a Nature Reserve in 2002. It is home to the largest mangrove forest in mainland Singapore and is the only Wetland Reserve in Singapore. To strengthen the conservation of the area's wetland biodiversity, NParks has

sensitively conserved several ecologically important sites around the Wetland Reserve over the years, including the 31 ha Wetland Reserve extension and Kranji Marshes, which opened in 2014 and 2018 respectively. This was further built upon with the establishment of the Sungei Buloh Nature Park Network in 2020.

The Sungei Buloh Nature Park Network is more than triple the size of the Wetland Reserve and is part of NParks' holistic conservation approach to protect and extend our natural capital. It safeguards a variety of ecologically complementary habitats buffering the Wetland Reserve, such as Mandai Mangrove and Mudflat, Kranji Marshes and Lim Chu Kang Nature Park. These green buffers protect the Wetland Reserve from edge effects and abutting developments, and enhance ecological connectivity for its biodiversity, which includes rare waterbirds such as the Lesser Adjutant (*Leptoptilos javanicus*) and Great-billed Heron (*Ardea sumatrana*).

*For more information on the key milestones of Sungei Buloh Wetland Reserve, please refer to [Factsheet B](#).*

*For more information on Nature Park Networks, please refer to [Factsheet C](#).*

### **Curated programmes for public across Sungei Buloh Nature Park Network**

To celebrate Sungei Buloh Wetland Reserve's 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary, NParks will be organising a suite of programmes and activities for the public across the Sungei Buloh Nature Park Network. Aimed at strengthening awareness on the importance of conserving our wetlands, the lineup of programmes includes a special exhibition commemorating the Wetland Reserve's anniversary, guided nature walks and tree planting. There are also children-friendly programmes such as the Young Naturalist Programme and SUN Club Programme to foster nature appreciation among the younger generation.

Starting progressively this year, NParks will also offer specially curated programmes and activities at Cashin House and Lim Chu Kang Nature Park. The 18 ha Lim Chu Kang Nature Park consists of intertidal mangrove and mudflat, and habitat restoration is ongoing at the Nature Park.



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The colonial-era Cashin House was built in 1921 and is located within the Nature Park. It has been sensitively reconstructed to serve as a research and community node for the Wetland Reserve. The 160 sqm Cashin House, which houses a visitor gallery and small seminar room, will offer programmes such as nature journalling workshops and guided tours covering topics such as heritage and nature appreciation. The public can sign up for these programmes at [www.go.gov.sg/sbwr30](http://www.go.gov.sg/sbwr30).

Cashin House and Lim Chu Kang Nature Park will only be accessible through sign-ups for specially curated programmes and activities that include habitat restoration and enhancement such as citizen science surveys and tree planting, as well as guided programmes at Cashin House. For these programmes, transport will be arranged for participants.

*For more information on the list of programmes across the Sungei Buloh Nature Park Network, please refer to Factsheet D.*

*For more information on Cashin House at Lim Chu Kang Nature Park, please refer to Factsheet E.*

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**About National Parks Board (NParks)**

The National Parks Board (NParks) is responsible for enhancing and managing the urban ecosystems of our City in Nature. We are the lead agency for greenery, biodiversity conservation, and wildlife and animal health, welfare and management. We are also working closely with the community to enhance the quality of our living environment.

NParks manages some 400 parks, 3,347 hectares of nature reserves, the Singapore Botanic Gardens, Pulau Ubin and the Sisters' Islands Marine Park. Adding to this is the extensive network of Nature Ways, and the over 300 km Park Connector Network that links major parks, nature areas and residential estates island-wide. Every year, we run over 3,500 educational and outreach programmes across our various green spaces.

NParks has developed an urban biodiversity conservation model, which aims to conserve representative ecosystems in land-scarce Singapore. NParks also monitors and coordinates measures to enhance the presence of biodiversity in our urban landscape.

NParks is working closely with partners in the landscape, horticulture, veterinary and animal sectors to increase productivity, and provide training for all levels of the workforce. Enhancing competencies of the industry will support Singapore's vision of being a City in Nature.

For more information, visit [www.nparks.gov.sg](http://www.nparks.gov.sg) and [www.facebook.com/nparksbuzz](https://www.facebook.com/nparksbuzz)