

THE YEAR AT A GLANCE



from top left to top right

Senior Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Defence & Environment and Water Resources¹, Assoc Prof Koo Tsai Kee graced the launch of the National Skills Recognition System. (Apr '03)

Student volunteers sharing tips on recognising a Para Rubber Tree with Minister, PMO & Second Minister (National Development)², Mr Lim Swee Say, at the launch of MacRitchie Trails. (Jun '03)

NParks' exhibits at City Developments Limited provided practical tips on starting a highrise garden. (Jun '03)



bottom right

His Excellency President S R Nathan's address at the launch of 'Gardens of Istana' book highlighted how the Istana gardens reflects Singapore's determination to create a Garden City. (Jul '03)



APRIL 2003

Upgrading the Horticultural/ Landscaping Industry

NParks launched the National Skills Recognition System (NSRS) for the industry on 28 April 2003. Senior Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Defence & Environment and Water Resources¹, Assoc Prof Koo Tsai Kee, graced the launch as the Guest-of-Honour.

NParks also led the Landscaping/Horticultural Industry Skills Standards Committee to identify job competencies, establish work performance standards as well as to certify skills acquisition as part of NSRS.

JUNE 2003

Launch of MacRitchie Trails

The new trails at Central Catchment Nature Reserve, MacRitchie, was launched on World Environment Day 5 June 2003 with Minister, PMO & Second Minister (National Development)², Mr Lim Swee Say, as Guest-of-Honour.

Ranging from 450 m to 2,200 m, the six trails vary in hiking grade and offer visitors different experiences through nature. To enhance the Nature Reserves experience for the visitors, NParks installed boardwalks, nature interpretive signs and friendly reminders on trail etiquette along the walks.

Helping homeowners set up their 'Garden in the Sky'

In partnership with City Developments Limited, NParks conducted a series of talks in June and July 2003 on the Do's and Don'ts of Starting a Highrise Garden. Some 140 people attended the talks, which covered areas such as the different types of skyrise greenery, benefits, and practical tips on how to set up your own garden.

JULY 2003

Launch of 'Gardens of Istana' book

His Excellency President S R Nathan launched the 'Gardens of Istana' book at the Istana on 30 July 2003. The eight-chapter, 204-page book delves into the historical and botanical aspects of the Istana, and offers readers a visual feast of over 500 photographs. Recounting the fascinating history of the Istana domain, the book traces how the Istana and its gardens came to be, its transformation and glimpses into the history of our Garden City.

¹ Then Senior Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of National Development and Ministry of Defence

² Then Minister for the Environment



from left to right

Visitors to the first Singapore Orchid Festival were treated to a variety of orchid-related activities and exhibits. His Excellency President S R Nathan (second from right) was there with N Parks' CEO, Dr Tan Wee Kiat. (Sep '03)

The Ginger Garden features over 250 species of gingers and related plants. Acting Minister for Community Development, Youth and Sports & Senior Minister of State (Trade and Industry)³, Dr Vivian Balakrishnan officiated its launch. (Oct '03)

'Mokara Laura Bush' was named in honour of the First Lady of the United States of America, Mrs Laura Bush. (Oct '03)

SEPTEMBER 2003

Launch of Singapore Orchid Festival

Over 50,000 people visited the first Singapore Orchid Festival over four days from 18 to 21 September 2003. Organised by the Singapore Botanic Gardens, National Parks Board and Orchid Society of South East Asia (OSSEA), the Orchid Festival offered a myriad of orchid-related activities and exhibits for visitors of all ages.

Official Opening of Kranji Nature Trail

A new green corridor linking Sungei Buloh Wetland Reserve (SBWR) and Kranji Reservoir Park, Kranji Nature Trail is set to enrich the experience for visitors to SBWR. Nestled amidst a natural setting, the trail was officially opened by Acting Minister for Community Development, Youth and Sports & Senior Minister of State (Trade and Industry)³, Dr Vivian Balakrishnan, on 20 September 2003.

OCTOBER 2003

Launch of Raffles Terrace

The latest addition to Fort Canning Park, Raffles Terrace, was officially launched on 10 October 2003 with Acting Minister for Community Development, Youth and Sports & Senior Minister of State (Trade and Industry)³, Dr Vivian Balakrishnan as the Guest-of-Honour.

Apart from learning about the historical communication landmarks at Raffles Terrace, visitors can also find out more about the rich history of Fort Canning Hill and early Singapore through the two mural carvings. Storyboards detailing historical and cultural information accompany the new additions to Fort Canning Park, and enable visitors to appreciate and learn about life in the early days.

Launch of Ginger Garden

Nestled in the heart of the Singapore Botanic Gardens, the 1-ha Ginger Garden features a rich and carefully documented collection of over 250 species and their relatives. This garden's lush landscape also includes a 'walk behind' waterfall

that provides special planting niches for some of the rarer and more difficult to grow gingers. It was launched on 18 October 2003 by the Acting Minister for Community Development, Youth and Sports & Senior Minister of State (Trade and Industry)³, Dr Vivian Balakrishnan.

Opening of Jelutong Tower

To enhance the recreational experience and appreciation of nature for visitors, an observation tower was opened in October 2003. Named after a forest tree found in the nature reserves, the Jelutong Tower allows visitors to have a bird's eye-view of the varied terrain of MacRitchie and the skyline beyond the reservoir park.

Visit by the First Lady of the United States of America

To commemorate the visit by the First Lady of the United States of America, Mrs Laura Bush, to the Singapore Botanic Gardens on 21 October 2003, an orchid hybrid was named 'Mokara Laura Bush' in her honour.

³ Then Minister of State for National Development and Trade and Industry



from left to right

The aerial boardwalk offers a panoramic view of Kent Ridge Park's surroundings. (Nov '03)

Prime Minister & Finance Minister⁴ Lee Hsien Loong at the launch of the Garden City Fund in December 2003. The Fund is a platform through which the public can take a personal stake in sustaining the Garden City efforts. (Dec '03)

School adopters showcasing their 'nature works' to Minister for National Development, Mr Mah Bow Tan, at the 10th Anniversary of Sungei Buloh Wetland Reserve. (Dec '03)

NOVEMBER 2003

Clean and Green Week 2003

Together with community and corporate partners, NParks held some 170 activities during Clean and Green Week (CGW) in November 2003. Prime Minister & Finance Minister⁴ Lee Hsien Loong marked the official launch of CGW 2003 by planting a Rain Tree at Zhenghua Square on 1 November 2003. A total of 77 constituencies/divisions planted some 1,200 trees island wide during CGW 2003.

Kent Ridge Park's New Aerial Boardwalk Open to Public

A 280 m-long aerial boardwalk, providing a link between Kent Ridge Park and the museum, Reflections of Bukit Chandu, was completed in November 2003. Designed to blend in with the natural surroundings of Kent Ridge Park, this boardwalk also enables the park and museum to be more accessible to the public, especially for the elderly and the handicapped.

DECEMBER 2003

Launch of the Garden City Fund

To encourage greater public involvement and participation in steering the Garden City development, the Garden City Fund (GCF) was launched by Prime Minister & Finance Minister⁴ Lee Hsien Loong on 2 December 2003. Monies donated to the Fund will be used to supplement the growth and development of Singapore's Garden City. Minister Mentor⁵ Lee Kuan Yew is the Patron of the GCF.

Sungei Buloh Wetland Reserve Turns 10

Sungei Buloh Wetland Reserve (SBWR) celebrated its 10th Anniversary on 6 December 2003, a decade after Senior Minister⁶ Goh Chok Tong officially opened it in 1993. At the anniversary ceremony, Minister for National Development, Mr Mah Bow Tan, as the Guest-of-Honour, witnessed the launch of the wetland reserve's commemorative book, 'Sungei Buloh Wetland Reserve - A Decade of Wetland Conservation'.

Just days after its 10th anniversary, SBWR was declared Singapore's first ASEAN Heritage Park.

⁴ Then Deputy Prime Minister & Finance Minister

⁵ Then Senior Minister

⁶ Then Prime Minister



from left to right

The yellow Peanut Plant, or *Arachis pintoi*, is featured in the '1001 Garden Plants in Singapore' book. (Jan '04)

The ISA Arboriculture Certification Programme is part of NParks' efforts to upgrade the horticultural industry. (Feb '04)

'*Dendrobium Michael Jeffrey*' was named in honour of the Governor General of the Commonwealth of Australia, HE Major General (Retd) Michael Jeffrey. (Mar '04)

JANUARY 2004

Launch of '1001 Garden Plants in Singapore' book

Designed to cater to a wide cross-section of the public, '1001 Garden Plants in Singapore' is a quick pictorial reference of more than 1,200 species and varieties of plants available locally. Some 6,000 copies of the book were produced at its first print and, at the same time, the on-line version of the e-plant reference was also updated, providing an easily accessible database for the public to use.

Monkey and Man

For the first time, NParks - together with the National Library Board - held a series of talks and exhibitions in the libraries to educate the public on why they should not feed monkeys, what they can learn about conservation and how they can play their part.

FEBRUARY 2004

Increasing the Profile of Arboriculture in Singapore
NParks' second ISA Arboriculture Certification Programme saw 37 arborists being certified by the International Society of Arboriculture (ISA). Part of NParks' efforts to build up the horticultural industry, the programme this year also saw 12 tree-care practitioners from other organisations participating.

MARCH 2004

Visit by the Governor General of the Commonwealth of Australia
To commemorate the visit by the Governor General of the Commonwealth of Australia, HE Major General (Retd) Michael Jeffrey, to the Singapore Botanic Gardens on 10 March 2004, an orchid hybrid was named '*Dendrobium Michael Jeffrey*' in his honour.