



NURTURING GREEN



NParks makes it a priority to recognise and nurture talent and dedication, particularly that of the professionals involved in the work of greening and conserving our Garden City. Looking forward, NParks continues to work closely with industry partners and to develop its staff in a diverse array of programmes. Large-scale industry events, including study trips and expos, are held alongside regular training and outreach. Nurturing Green represents a commitment for the future: an investment in the skills and tools of the trade, and also in the hearts and minds of the people in it.

(on left)

The 1.3 million trees around Singapore are cared for by NParks' team of internationally certified arborists. Ms Ow Siew Ngim, an arborist and Streetscape manager, is also a certified tree climber who gets up close and personal with the trees that she manages and maintains.

More than 21,000 workers are employed in Singapore's dynamic and thriving landscaping industry. They play an important role in the development of Singapore into a City in a Garden.

An Expo where Hobbyists and Professionals Meet

Since it started more than a decade ago in 1996, GardenTech has grown from a one-day event for NParks staff into a five-day gardening expo for both the trade and public. This one-stop garden carnival has also witnessed a ten-fold growth in trade participation. GardenTech provides an opportunity for the community to interact with industry professionals, and also encourages gardening as a lifestyle for Singapore's young and old.

GardenTech returned to HortPark in 2009, featuring some 140 booths showcasing the latest gardening trends and technologies, products, and services. With the theme of environmental sustainability, GardenTech 2009 featured a special 'Green Booths' section, where exhibitors offered eco-friendly products. From carnivorous plants to organic skincare, bug-repelling apparel to green cleaning products, there were eco-friendly products that appealed to all who attended.

Organised with a theme of environmental sustainability, GardenTech 2009 offered something for everyone. More than 70,000 visitors and enthusiasts visited HortPark during the five-day gardening expo.



Held concurrently with GardenTech for the first time was Green Thumbs, an annual industry event that showcases the skill sets of the landscape workforce, and celebrates the growth and transformation of the landscape industry to meet the challenges of our Garden City.

In its fourth year, Green Thumbs 2009 attracted over 200 international and local participants in its 12 categories of keenly contested landscape skill-based competition. At this event, the inaugural 'Best Sourcing Initiative' awards were also presented, to acknowledge efforts by local landscape companies to enhance standards of Singapore's landscape industry. Kiat Lee Landscape & Building Ltd and Swee Bee Contractor Pte Ltd received the awards for providing the best value and quality service to their customers.

Green Thumbs is jointly organised by NParks, National Trades Union Congress - Employment and Employability Institute (e2i), Singapore Landscape Industry Council, Singapore Workforce Development Agency and Centre for Urban Greenery and Ecology.



Two hundred landscape practitioners from 26 companies participated in Green Thumbs 2009, up from 160 practitioners and 20 companies in 2008.



Students from various schools participated in GardenTech 2009 as exhibitors. Their booths ranged from exhibitions of landscape models which they created, to new, eco-friendly products which they had developed for sale.



The Kolam Ayer River Revitalisation, carried out in collaboration with PUB for the Active, Beautiful, Clean Waters Programme, sees the blurring of lines between the water and its edges. This project took a gold award at the SILA Professional Design Awards 2009.

An Award-Winning Landscape Industry

Singapore is a forerunner in the area of vertical greenery, and the SIA-NParks Skyrise Greenery Awards encourages this form of urban greenery by promoting and recognising the efforts in high-rise greening developments.

Organised for the second year by the Singapore Institute of Architects (SIA) and NParks, the SIA-NParks Skyrise Greenery Awards 2009 saw local and regional projects vying for honours, which were presented to three local residential and commercial developments. The Awards attracted over 50 per cent more submissions than the previous year, a sign that this event is gaining prominence in the industry.

Entries were assessed by a jury comprising representatives from NParks, SIA, the Singapore Institute of Landscape Architects (SILA) and the Urban Redevelopment Authority. The evaluation criteria includes landscape

considerations to enhance Singapore's cityscape and environment quality, as well as the originality, creativity and sustainability of the ideas.

Meanwhile, NParks added more accolades to its own string of professional achievements, by bagging three awards for landscape architecture at the SILA Professional Design Awards 2009. The Kolam Ayer River Revitalisation and the Sungei Buloh Wetland Reserve Master Plan won gold awards, and the Berlin Wall Project at Bedok Reservoir Park took a silver award.

In the Landscape Industry Association of Singapore Awards of Excellence 2009, where outstanding landscaping work is recognised and commended, NParks took the bronze award in the Commercial, Industrial, Recreational and Institutional category, for its work on the Garden Carpark at the Singapore Botanic Gardens' Nassim Entry Precinct.



Central Horizon, which took second prize in the Built Category of the SIA-NParks Skyrise Greenery Awards, renews the sense of communal living by creating generous rooftop landscaped gardens. These are joined to and independently accessible from each apartment block in the precinct.

‘Skyrise greenery’ is a term coined in Singapore. It reflects this country’s collective approach towards greening in an urban, high-density environment.

Vertical Greenery Rises to New Heights

To boost the level of skyscraper greenery and enhance the city’s image in high activity corridors, NParks encourages owners of existing buildings to green their rooftops. Under the Green Roof Incentive Scheme, NParks will fund up to 50 per cent of the cost of installing green roofs on buildings in the Downtown Core, Orchard Road, Rochor, Museum, Singapore River and Outram planning areas.

During the SIA-NParks Skyrise Greenery Awards Presentation on 20 October 2009, the Centre for Urban Greenery and Ecology (CUGE) launched *Vertical Greenery for the Tropics*, a publication that promotes vertical greenery within the city. This book was published by NParks, the National University of Singapore and the Building and Construction Authority. It introduces and evaluates vertical greenery systems and validates the benefits of urban greenery within tropical urban environments. It also presents current global and local trends of vertical greenery as well as maintenance and design considerations.



Besides their aesthetic benefits, green walls – such as this one in Fusionopolis – also help to cool their surroundings, cleanse the air of dust particles, and provide additional habitats for urban biodiversity. They can also optimise land use in high-rise environments, and boost the value of properties.

The Centre for Urban Greenery and Ecology (CUGE) was established by NParks as a regional centre of excellence to advance urban and green living environment, and a one-stop training and knowledge hub in urban greenery and ecology.

Advancing the Growth of Tropical Urban Greenery and Ecology

The greening of our Garden City would not be possible without the constant development of related knowledge areas. To this end, CUGE launched a number of resource and research initiatives in October 2009 that contribute to furthering the growth of urban greenery in the tropics.

To provide a new and needed set of reference benchmarks for quality assurance for the landscape and horticulture industry, CUGE launched a series of Standards, developed in consultation with industry sectors. These CUGE Standards cover five broad areas: properties of planting media, landscape construction & management, urban ecology, landscape design and skyrise greenery.

In the same month, CUGE initiated a turfgrass research programme aimed at improving the design, construction and maintenance of turf in the tropics. Turfgrass, the most extensive plant type used in Singapore, is a key component of our Garden City. Its environmental benefits include reducing ambient temperature,

A new generation of turfgrass varieties is being tested for adaptability to Singapore's tropical climate. These are native to Southeast Asia and may be more suited to local use with their dense, fine leaves, lush colour and greater trampling tolerance.



minimising soil erosion, and cleaning water run-off. Different species and new varieties of turfgrass are now undergoing research at a new facility at HortPark under different planting conditions, to test their suitability for planting in our tropical climate.

This research is the most comprehensive of its kind in the region. It has attracted collaboration with related overseas centres such as the Texas Agrilife Research of the Texas A & M University, and Queensland Primary Industries and Fisheries to further the knowledge of turf management in the tropics.

CUGE also launched a periodical, CITYGREEN, conceived as a platform to document knowledge, share ideas and increase the awareness of the latest trends and technologies in urban greenery and ecology of cities. A biannual publication, CITYGREEN's development is guided by an advisory panel comprising local and international leaders in various fields.



MY E-CO FRIENDS

Joshua Quek

St Gabriel's Primary School

This colourful painting of a lively mangrove swamp habitat shows how the eco-friendly birds, the crane, the monkey and the frog can survive together in their natural environment.



THE WAITING GAME - OWL AND MOUSE

Vivien Pradeep

Raffles Girls' Primary School

This is a humorous sculpture that depicts the 'waiting game'. The owl wants to eat the mouse, but it can't catch the mouse as it is in the log. So it waits for the mouse to come out. The mouse does the same thing - waiting for the owl to fly away.



THE 'BIODIVERCITY' OF SINGAPORE

Chung Ka Yi, Myo Thandar Aung, Wang Shuya, Zhang Zhihui

Ping Yi Secondary School

The artists aim to magnify the biodiversity surrounding the Integrated Resort, showcasing to the world how nature and urbanisation can co-exist harmoniously.

A Productivity Trip Down Under

NParks and CUGE organised a Landscape Productivity Study Tour to Australia from 24 November to 1 December 2009. The 23-strong delegation was led by NParks' Dr Leong Chee Chiew, Deputy Chief Executive Officer (Professional Development & Services). It comprised decision makers from 11 landscape companies as well as representatives from the Singapore Workforce Development Agency and the Employment and Employability Institute (e2i).

The delegates visited four cities – Cairns, Brisbane, Gold Coast and Melbourne – to understand how the Australian landscape, horticulture and arboriculture industries managed the relationship between labour productivity and skill levels, and the benefits of good corporate practices and policies, among other areas. Participants visited a number of sites for observation and hands-on engagement, and also met with Australian contacts for further dialogue and exchange of ideas.



Delegates of the Landscape Productivity Study Tour had opportunities to view on-site work demonstrations, and to engage in discussions and networking sessions with owners, managers and workers in the cities they visited.



BLOOM
Tan Lyann
St Anthony's Canossian Primary School
 Bloom, to this artist, means lots of flowers. Colourful crayon shavings were used to represent the many different communities living in harmony. She also drew bees, ladybugs and caterpillars, which balance the eco-system.



FLORA AND FAUNA
Cheryl Ong Chen Sin
Damai Secondary School
 The artist aims to present the image of Singapore as a clean and green city. Although Singapore is a developed country with plenty of modern buildings, it is fortunate that our environment is filled with lush and bountiful greenery.



THE MORE WE GET TOGETHER
Brenda Ng
Raffles Girls' Primary School
 The painting represents the children's happiness when they come together, playing in the beautiful garden.

Training and Development

An emphasis on people development is one of the many ways through which NParks meets the growing and changing needs of the landscape industry. The professional certification of staff has been expanded with the launch of the Certified Park Manager (CPM) Programme in October 2009. This programme addresses the unique requirements of park management in urban Singapore, and positions NParks as the certifying body for park management in the region. Developed by CUGE in consultation with international experts, the CPM is also endorsed by Parks and Leisure Australia, a professional body of park managers in Australia.

As part of ongoing talent attraction efforts, NParks also gives out scholarships to candidates pursuing degrees in botany, horticulture, landscape architecture and environmental management in local and overseas universities. In 2009, two undergraduate scholarships and two postgraduate scholarships were awarded. One candidate was also awarded the WDA-NParks Masters of Landscape Architecture Scholarship. In addition, three Overseas Merit Awards were given out. The awardees will pursue one-year Bachelor in Applied Science programmes at the University of Queensland, Australia.

At the Staff Conference 2009, NParks launched a new Service Tagline: 'Your Experience is Our Passion'. The Y.E.O.P! launch was followed up by the year-long Passion-for-Service training programme. From senior management to junior staff, all NParks staff attended the programme's workshop sessions to get in tune with the organisation's service principles and expected level of service standards. Concurrently, a committee of Y.E.O.P! champions was appointed to drive service excellence in NParks.



As a testament to NParks' dedication to service excellence, Ms Jennifer Toh Ah Boey was conferred the PS21 Star Service Award on 6 May 2009 by Deputy Prime Minister Teo Chee Hean, also the Minister for Defence and Minister in charge of the Civil Service. Also pictured here are Chia Seng Jiang, NParks' Director of Corporate Development (extreme left), and Koh Poo Kiong, NParks' Assistant Director (extreme right).

The park managers in the pilot batch of the Certified Park Manager Programme met with facilitators from Parks and Leisure Australia: Dr David Aldous, the Frank Stuart Winner for significant contributions to parks education in Australia, and Garry Henshall, CEO of Parks and Leisure Australia.

