





# cultivating connections

NParks' greatest strength is its people – their skills and expertise, their willingness to innovate and their passion in the pursuit of excellence. We celebrate their dedication to serve, and their passion to reach out to the community, and strive to build a great workplace at NParks. Our people are also uniquely placed to host and entertain distinguished visitors and international celebrities, who have enjoyed their warm welcome in our parks and gardens.

NParks staff share a love for nature, and a common goal to make Singapore a City in a Garden.



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The majority of NParks' staff committed at least 80 hours to training and development in 2010.



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- 01 The staff of NParks contribute to the Singapore Kindness Movement in various ways, such as leading guided walks in disabled-friendly parks for the Handicaps Welfare Association (HWA), NParks' adopted charity.
- 02 Staff throughout NParks have many opportunities to enrich their knowledge and capabilities through relevant courses and programmes.
- 03 In recognition of NParks' efforts to promote workplace health, the organisation was awarded the Singapore HEALTH Award (Platinum) as well as the Fitness Sub-Category Award. NParks' Director of Corporate Development Dr Nigel Goh received the award from Minister for National Development (then-Minister for Health) Khaw Boon Wan at a ceremony on 26 November 2010.

## A Culture of Learning and Caring

2010 saw NParks achieving a number of awards for excellence. We received the Special Commendation Award at the 2010 Asia Human Capital Summit in recognition of our efforts in building a learning organisation. This award, conferred by the Ministry of Manpower, INSEAD and CNBC, distinguishes our human resource practices as among the best in Singapore. It recognises practices that encourage innovation, people development and sharing of expertise among Asia-based organisations.

As the only public organisation to receive the award, NParks is grateful to staff who have taken the initiative to develop themselves professionally, imparting their skills and experience to fellow colleagues and the industry. This culture of learning and sharing contributes to making NParks a great workplace.

As part of ongoing talent attraction efforts, NParks gives out scholarships to local and

overseas universities in the areas of botany, horticulture, landscape architecture and environment management. In 2010, four undergraduate scholarships, four overseas merit awards and three WDA-NParks Masters of Landscape Architecture scholarships were given out. In addition, two postgraduate scholarships were also awarded to in-service staff.

Besides developing its own staff, NParks also strongly believes in giving back to the community. In 2010, NParks staff continued to organise and host regular outings to parks for members of its adopted charity, the Handicaps Welfare Association (HWA). These included Earth Day 2010, where HWA members were treated to a guided nature walk through Pasir Ris Park. The park's disabled-friendly mangrove boardwalk allowed the wheelchair-bound members to move about with ease. Apart from sharing their love for nature with HWA members, NParks staff also volunteer their time to maintain the gardens in HWA's premises.

### Biodiversity Snapshots



**Tiger Orchid**  
*Grammatophyllum speciosum*

Singapore is home to the Tiger Orchid – the largest orchid plant in the world. It is extremely rare in the wild and has been planted in many parks and gardens under NParks' orchid conservation and reintroduction programme.



**Saga Tree**  
*Adenanthera pavonina*

The characteristic scarlet seeds of the Saga Tree are known for their uniform weight: four seeds make up 1 gram. This tree is hardy, fast-growing, and low-maintenance. It has a large spreading crown, suitable for providing shade in large gardens.



**Peacock Pansy**  
*Junonia almana javana*

This butterfly's wings have large ocelli (i.e. eye-like patterns), which help to deceive potential predators. It is commonly seen in open grassy areas.



### **Parks: Venues of Choice and Distinction**

In our quest to bring biodiversity into urban spaces, NParks has created iconic event spaces within our parks and gardens. Large-scale sporting and entertainment events are regularly held in our green spaces, which also play host to international VIPs and celebrities throughout the year.

In August 2010, several of our parks hosted and witnessed historic moments at the inaugural Youth Olympic Games (YOG). The Youth Olympic Flame, lit in Greece, was carried through MacRitchie Reservoir Park, Bedok Reservoir Park, and Xtreme SkatePark @ East Coast on its 13-day relay. In addition, three NParks staff had the privilege of bearing the flame through the Singapore Botanic Gardens.

The first-ever YOG victory ceremony, for the girls' triathlon event, was held at East Coast Park. The same coastal park also hosted the Games' sailing events, while Bay East at the Gardens by the Bay was the venue for rowing, canoeing and kayaking. During the Olympians' downtime, HortPark provided recreational activities in the form of workshops and guided tours. These were extremely popular among the athletes and officials, who enjoyed learning about Singapore's greenery, gardening and conservation efforts.

Throughout the year, the Singapore Botanic Gardens hosted a number of visiting dignitaries. Orchids were named after nine VIP visitors in 2010, including His Excellencies Benigno S Aquino III, President of the Republic of the Philippines, Ali Bongo Ondimba, the President of the Gabonese Republic, Sir Anand

Satyanand, the Governor-General of New Zealand and Sukhbaatar Batbold, the Prime Minister of Mongolia.

The Gardens was also honoured to provide a retreat venue for Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong and Indonesian President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono. A lush and magical landscape, vibrantly accessorised with red and white orchids, was specially created for the occasion on 17 May 2010. The scenic surroundings provided both countries' leaders and ministers a pleasant environment in which to conduct their meetings.

Besides world leaders, the Gardens also played host to popular celebrities during the YTL Concert of Celebration in May 2010. World-renowned Italian tenor Andrea Bocelli headlined the concert, accompanied by Australian pop singer Delta Goodrem, Slovenian soprano Sabina Cvilak, acclaimed flutist Andrea Griminelli, as well as The Philharmonic Orchestra and The Philharmonic Chamber Choir. Their performances, set amidst spectacularly-lit trees, enthralled 12,000 members of the public. To mark the occasion, two of the Gardens' orchid hybrids were named Vanda Andrea Bocelli and Vanda YTL in honour of Mr Bocelli and the YTL group respectively.

A unique opportunity took place for the Gardens to be introduced to the American prime-time audience, when lifestyle guru Martha Stewart featured Singapore's parks and nature areas on her world-famous television show. During her visit, the American lifestyle celebrity was introduced to some of Singapore's most spectacular orchids and hybrids.

01 The Singapore Botanic Gardens featured prominently on Martha Stewart's eponymous lifestyle television programme, in an episode which showcased Singapore's wealth of greenery. The Gardens' principal botanist Dr Chin See Chung (now retired) guided Ms Stewart (left) and her co-host Memrie Lewis on a televised tour of the Gardens.

02 The torch-bearers for the inaugural Youth Olympic Games included Singapore Botanic Gardens' Deputy Director of Living Collections & Development, Alan Tan (in orange shirt). The flame's progress through the Gardens was cheered by hundreds of NParks staff.

03 In May 2010, the Singapore Botanic Gardens hosted the star-studded YTL Concert of Celebration, featuring international musical luminaries including Andrea Bocelli (right) and Delta Goodrem.

04 Along with the iconic Fort Canning Park, various other parks have distinguished themselves as popular venues for concerts and performances. Korean pop boyband U-KISS performed in the Kings of Freedom Concert at Bedok Reservoir Park in November 2010, delighting a crowd of young fans.

05 His Excellency Benigno S Aquino III (right), President of the Republic of the Philippines, toured the National Orchid Garden on 11 March 2011. An orchid, the *Ascocenda Benigno S Aquino III*, was named in conjunction with his visit. NParks' CEO Poon Hong Yuen (left) presented President Aquino with a symbolic "birth certificate" to commemorate the orchid naming.



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