

NATURE NEWS

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ACTIVITY CALENDAR

Activity	Date
Birdwatching at Rifle Range	18 Jan
Thomson Nature Park Ramble	18 Jan
Birdwatching at Kranji Marsh	19 Jan
Ramble at Singapore Botanic Gardens	15 Feb
NSS Kids' Fun With Primates at Thomson Nature Park	15 Feb
Valentine's Day Coastal Clean-up at Kranji Mudflats	15 Feb
Birdwatching at Kranji Marsh	16 Feb
Butterfly Walk at Singapore Botanic Gardens	16 Feb
10 th Parrot Count	22 Feb

TRIPS LED BY NSS MEMBERS

Activity	Date
4D/3N Lombok & Bali Shark Conservation and Adventure Trip	7 – 10 Mar '20

JANUARY

18 Jan '20, Saturday

Birdwatching at Rifle Range

Meet Yeo Seng Beng at 7.30 am at the junction of Rifle Range and Dunearn roads. We will carpool to the starting point at the end of Rifle Range Road. This is a good time to look for wintering birds like the Forest Wagtail, Arctic Warbler and the elusive Ferruginous Flycatcher. We will also search for resident birds such as the Asian Fairy Bluebird, Blue-winged Leafbird and Short-tailed Babbler. Bring rain gear, drinking water, and wear comfortable walking shoes (preferably waterproof) as the trail is uneven in parts. Members only.

18 Jan '20, Saturday

Thomson Nature Park Ramble

Start the year with a ramble at Thomson Nature Park with Pandian. Meet at 8am at Casuarina Road Car Park. Ramble terrain: Easy to Difficult. Participants must be medically fit. The walk is not suitable for children below 14 years old. Things to bring: 1.5 litres water bottle, poncho, walking stick, and proper walking/trekking shoes. Recommended items to bring include a hat and a pair of binoculars for spotting wildlife. Time: 8am to 1.30pm. Members only.

19 Jan '20, Sunday

Birdwatching at Kranji Marsh

This walk is offered in collaboration with NParks. Join Lee Ee Ling in exploring Kranji Marshes' paths and hides for excellent views across the freshwater marshes. Birding highlights here include the Red-wattled Lapwing, Purple Swamphen, Common Moorhen, Yellow Bittern, White-browed Crane, Changeable Hawk Eagle and Grey-headed Fish Eagle. Time: 7.30 am to 10.30 am. Please register with Ee Ling (ellee1584@gmail.com/HP: 96935870) by 13 January. Max: 24 pax. Registrations are subject to email confirmation. The walk is free but participants need to cover transport cost at \$10 per person (\$12 per person if payment is via PayPal). A hired bus will ferry us from the meeting point at Sungei Buloh Wetland Centre Visitor Centre (60 Kranji Way) to the starting point at Turut Track. Please send your cheque payable to 'Nature Society (Singapore)' to the NSS Office or fund transfer to DBS a/c: 0339023574. Payment, which is non-refundable, should be made only after confirmation. Open to the public.

FEBRUARY

15 Feb '20, Saturday

Ramble at Singapore Botanic Gardens

Join in this afternoon ramble with Pandian at Singapore's only UNESCO Heritage Site, the Singapore Botanic Gardens. Meet at 3pm at Tanglin Gate. Ramble terrain: Easy. Participants must be medically fit and healthy. The walk is not suitable for children below 14 years old. Things to bring: 1.5 litres water bottle, poncho, walking stick, and proper walking/trekking shoes, a hat and a pair of binoculars for spotting wildlife. Time: 3pm to 8pm. Members only.

15 Feb '20, Saturday

NSS Kids' Fun With Primates at Thomson Nature Park

Thomson Nature Park and its environs are home to the rare Raffles Banded Langur and the common Long-tailed Macaque. Join James Chua to learn about these primates: their lifestyle, diet, behaviour and how humans can peacefully co-exist with them. We hope to spot the langurs as they leap from tree to tree in search of succulent leaves, and observe families of macaques as they go about their monkey business. Cost per child: \$2 (NSS Member)/\$10 (Non-member). Please register your children (4 to 12 years old) at <http://tinyurl.com/nsskidsevent>. The trip is limited to 30 pax only, so please register early. Confirmation details will be emailed only after the closing date. Fees will be collected on the spot. Parents, caregivers and older siblings are encouraged to join in at no charge. For enquiries, contact Gloria at gloria_seow@yahoo.com. Closing Date: 7 February, Friday. Time: 8am to 10am. Open to the public.

15 Feb '20, Saturday

Valentine's Day Coastal Clean-up at Kranji Mudflats

Show your love for Mother Nature this Valentine's Day! Join us to clean up Kranji Mudflats to benefit the wildlife that thrives there. Designated as a Key Biodiversity Area, this coastline is a key habitat for horseshoe crabs and an important feeding site for wading birds. Please register at <http://tinyurl.com/nsscoastalcleanup>. Closing Date: Saturday, 8 Feb '20. Details will be emailed upon successful registration. For enquiries, contact Bryan at nssccu@gmail.com. Time: 8am to 11am. Open to the public.

16 Feb '20, Sunday

Birdwatching at Kranji Marsh

This walk is offered in collaboration with NParks. Join Yap Wee Jin in exploring Kranji Marshes' paths and hides for excellent views across the freshwater marshes. Birding highlights here include the Red-wattled Lapwing, Purple Swamphen, Common Moorhen, Yellow Bittern, White-browed Crake, Changeable Hawk Eagle and Grey-headed Fish Eagle. Time: 7.30 am to 10.30 am. Please register with Ee Ling (ellee1584@gmail.com)/HP: 96935870) by 10 February. Max: 24 pax. Registrations are subject to email confirmation. The walk is free but participants need to cover transport cost at \$10 per person (\$12 per person if payment is via PayPal). A hired bus will ferry us from the meeting point at Sungei Buloh Wetland Centre Visitor Centre (60 Kranji Way) to the starting point at Turut Track. Please send your cheque payable to 'Nature Society (Singapore)' to the NSS Office or fund transfer to DBS a/c: 0339023574. Payment, which is non-refundable, should be made only after confirmation. Open to the public.

16 Feb '20, Sunday

Butterfly Walk at Singapore Botanic Gardens

Inscribed as the first and only Tropical Botanic Garden on UNESCO's World Heritage list, the Singapore Botanic Gardens is home to a rich variety of tropical trees, shrubs and vines. We shall explore primarily the Herb Garden and also the edge of the Evolution Garden to look for a variety of butterfly species. Past visits have yielded sightings of the Rustic, oft thought as a forest species. But with the presence of its host plant in the garden, the Rustic is fairly easily seen here. Other butterflies usually encountered on good sunny days include Leopard, Plain Tiger, Cycad Blue, Common Palmfly, Painted Jezebel, Ciliate Blue, Chocolate Pansy, Common Mormon. Less common sightings are Common Rose, Common Birdwing, Tailed Jay, Hoary Palmer. Meet at 9am at the Visitor Centre (Nassim Gate) in front of the Garden Shop. Bring hat and water. For queries, pls contact Amy Tsang (HP 98175549). Open to members and their friends.

22 Feb '20, Saturday

10th Parrot Count

Join us to count parrots at their roosting sites. The census starts at 6 pm just before these birds return to their roosts. Native and introduced parrots, parakeets, lorikeets and cockatoos will be recorded. If possible, do note down the tree species used as roosts. Please email Lee Ee Ling (ellee1584@gmail.com) for information on sites and site leaders, and please register with her before 15 February if you wish to participate in the census. Time: 6pm to 7.30pm. Open to the public.

Trips Led by Members

The private trips here are the initiative of members who wish to travel to nature locations with other members or like-minded people. Arrangements will be made through a travel agency.

4D/3N Lombok & Bali Shark Conservation and Adventure Trip

Dates: 7 to 10 Mar '20

Closing Date: 23 Feb '20

Cost: \$450/\$500 per member/non-member

Minimum: 4 pax to go

Join Kathy Xu on a marine conservation responsible holiday. Activities include snorkelling in pristine waters, beach hopping, mini cliff trekking, as well as nature trail and waterfall trekking. Your participation will aid in shark conservation by providing an alternative income to shark fishermen. Cost includes accommodation with WiFi and breakfast, land transfers, full-day beach hopping and snorkelling boat trip with a visit to Pink Beach's pink sand and dramatic cliffs, full-day waterfall trek, snacks, drinks, packed lunch and snorkelling gear. Cost excludes flights, insurance and dinners. Please ensure that flights are still available before signing up for the trip. For registration or enquiries, email Kathy at kathyxtt@gmail.com. Read Kathy's article 'Reality Bites – A View to Lessen the Kill' in Nature Watch Jan-Mar 2014 for more information. Open to the public.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF NATURE SOCIETY (S)

With this Newsletter we have started a new year and a new decade. 2019 saw some major developments within the Singapore nature community in general and the Nature Society in particular.

To start with the bread-and-butter issues of the society, the Executive Committee (Exco) and Council debated at length whether it was finally time for the society to raise our yearly membership subscription fees. The last adjustment took place in 1995, and had we adjusted for inflation or wage growth along the way, current membership for a single member would be \$66 and \$120 respectively. After much consideration, Exco decided not to raise fees for the time being and to keep membership at \$40. We want to make membership affordable for everyone in Singapore and abroad. Instead, we appeal to all members who feel that they can afford it, to voluntarily make an extra monetary contribution to the society. We need all the support we can get in order to remain an effective nature conservation society and to be better placed to meet important biodiversity challenges ahead, for the benefit of nature, our members, and for society as a whole.

In 2019, our participation in the Bicentennial Community Fund (BCF) was confirmed. This means that any donation to the society will be matched dollar-for-dollar by the Singapore government (see my appeal in the Sep-Oct 2019 Newsletter available online from our website for details). Many members have taken advantage of this opportunity, and we are grateful for their generous contributions. There is still time to help: Any donation made to the society **before 31 March 2020** will have a double impact on our finances. It is also worth reminding all of our members who qualify, who have been a member for at least 10 years, that becoming a life member only costs \$1,000, giving one a lasting voice in support of nature in Singapore and beyond.

We could and should have a lot more members in NSS. The Nature Society can capture the explosive growth in environmental awareness and concern among the public of our time and transform it into effective policy and advocacy initiatives. I ask all members to help us in our membership campaign: Every member can recruit more help for nature. If you know someone who appreciates the importance and value of nature, encourage them to join, or consider sponsoring them for the first year as a gift? We have recently updated our website, our mobile platform and we are working on our printed brochure to make it convenient to join and to renew memberships; it has never been easier to help nature in Singapore than it is now. And that support is more important than ever.

2020 is shaping up to be an important year for the international work of the NSS. Although NSS is securely anchored in Singapore as the oldest and most consistent voice for nature in Singapore, we are also in a unique position to influence and add our support to other international biodiversity initiatives, as well as to learn from our partners in BirdLife International, IUCN and other forums, all of which will convene for important conferences next year. NSS will be there to contribute, to learn and to voice our position on crucial regional and global biological and environmental matters. Stay tuned for more exciting news about these events during the year.

I look forward to sharing more on these issues during our AGM in May. We will announce the time and place for that soon, and I encourage all members to attend.

Meanwhile, I would like to wish all NSS members a happy 2020, rich in natural experiences.

Dr. Shawn Lum
President
Nature Society (Singapore)
On behalf of NSS Executive Committee