# H U M A N

# N A T U R E

**Environmental Histories of Singapore** 

9 Apr – 26 Sep 2021 Level 10, Gallery National Library Building www.go.gov.sg/hxn



# **ABOUT THE EXHIBITION**

Singapore's natural environment, as we know and experience today, is the result of a long history of knowledge gathering, plantation agriculture and attempts at rehabilitation. This exhibition explores our relationships with the natural world from cultural understandings and scientific study to commercial and urban land use, as well as conservation and restoration.

Modelled after our changing natural landscapes, the exhibition features a dazzling array of natural history books, botanical prints, plantation photographs and maps from the collections of the National Library and National Archives, together with herbarium and natural history specimens on loan from the Lee Kong Chian Natural History Museum, Singapore Botanic Gardens and Urban Redevelopment Authority. Visitors will learn about various understandings of the natural world, and how they shaped the different ways local, colonial, and migrant communities lived within and transformed the natural landscape.



For more information on the exhibition, please visit www.go.gov.sg/hxn

Organised by:











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Bescrah, 17577.-Stomach trouble. Eat a

Zingiber officinale, Rose, var. 1460, Halya hara, Batu Gajah, 13385.—Fever. Boil the rhizorne, and use the decoction in the bath. 1460. Halya hara. Telok Anson, 16108.—Indigestion. Boi 1460. Halya hara. Telok Anson, 16108.—Indigestion. Boi the discome with these of Curvano zandborrhize and Zingber

MALAY VILLAGE MEDICINE: PRESCRIPTIONS COLLECTED BY I.H. BURKHILL AND MOHAMMED HANIFF

#### 1930

Ya Yin Kwan Collection, Gift of Mr Tan Yeok Seong Collection of the National Library, Singapore

Although Europeans had been the writers and publishers of almost all major extant publications on the region's natural history, indigenous and local knowledge remain the foundation of environmental study.

This book, co-written by Ian Burkhill (1870-1965) and Mohammed Haniff (1872-1930), is one of the few publications to clearly credit a non-European source as an author. Mohammed Haniff was a pioneer of botany in Singapore and the Malay Peninsula and is credited with collecting and identifying, the properties of thousands of plants and animals in his lifetime.



### **LIBRARY OF LIFE**

9 Apr - 26 Sep 2021 10.00 am - 9.00 pm National Library Building, Level 1, Lobby

Library of Life features four themed collections: Field Books, Fossil Stories, The Insect World, and Curious Creatures. Browse curated highlights from overseas institutions and the National Library, Singapore. Take part in a fun multimedia interactive display that showcases natural history illustrations and facts about our native biodiversity.



ATLAS ICHTHYOLOGIQUE DES INDES ORIENTALES NÉÊRLANDAISES: PUBLIÉ SOUS LES AUSPICES DU GOUVERNEMENT COLONIAL NÉÊRLANDAIS

1862-1878 Pieter Bleeker Collection of the National Library, Singapore

Most of the scientific efforts carried out in the region were funded by the Dutch and British East India Companies, as part of their commercial and colonial activities.

One of the largest compilations of information on fish in the Indo-Chinese sea, this nine-volume series contains 1,500 illustrations. It was published by icythyologist Pieter Bleeker (1819-1878) while he was under the employ of the Dutch East India Company.



ROAD NEAR SELITA

#### 1876 Skizzen aus Singapur und Djohor (Sketches: Singapore and Johore) Collection of the National Library, Singapore

This chromolithograph (reproduction print) by Austrian diplomat Eugen von Ransonnet (1838-1926) shows a view of a road cutting through a forest near Seletar. He describes that Seletar "is most attractive for the road that leads through the most wonderful tropical vegetation on both sides."

The print is one of four forest scenes in Skizzen aus Singapur und Djohor depicting the tall forest trees that were becoming increasingly scarce by the 1870s.



#### CLOSE-UP OF THE MAP OF THE ISLAND OF SINGAPORE AND ITS DEPENDENCIES

#### 1885 Courtesy of National Archives of Singapore

By the late 19th century, the agricultural colonisation of Singapore by pepper and gambier had drastically transformed its natural landscape. This 1885 map shows the presence of small villages with plantations known as kangkars (港脚) and bangsals ("shed or lean-to shelter" in Malay) concentrated in the northern and western regions where soil was conducive for cultivation of pepper and gambier.



Collection of the Smithsonian Libraries, courtesy of the Biodiversity Heritage Library

### **ANIMAL FRIENDS**

Jurong Regional Library, Level 2 | 7 Apr - 1 Jun 2021 Tampines Regional Library, Level 4 | 1 Jun - 2 Aug 2021 Woodlands Regional Library, Level 1 | 2 Aug – 30 Sep 2021

Did you know that tigers once roamed the forests of Singapore? More than a hundred years ago, tigers habitually swam across the Johor Strait to Singapore island via Pulau Ubin and Pulau Tekong. They came to find food and raise their young. Animal Friends tells the story of Rimau, a tiger that travels to Singapore in search of new friends. Follow Rimau as she meets four animals and learn about their relationships with people and the natural world.



### **HISTORIES**

Various dates between Apr to Nov 2021 6.00 pm - 7.00 pm Zoom webinar



## **PUBLIC TOURS**

2.00 pm - 3.00 pm National Library Building, Level 10, Gallery entrance (meeting point) Conducted in English | Led by docents

Sat, 24 Apr 2021 Sun, 25 Apr 2021

Sat, 8, 15, 22 & 29 May 2021 Sun, 2, 9, 16, 23 & 30 May 2021

Sat, 5, 12, 19 & 26 Jun 2021 Sun, 6, 13, 20 & 27 Jun 2021

# 周末导览

下午3时至4时 于国家图书馆大厦10楼展厅门口(集合地点) 华语讲解 | 由义务导览员带领

#### 星期六, 2021年4月24日 星期天, 2021年4月25日

星期六, 2021<u>年5月8/15/22/29日</u> 星期天, 2021年5月2/9/16/23/30日

星期六, 2021年6月5/12/19/26日 星期天, 2021年6月6/13/20/27日

for a sustainable future. Full details can be found at our registration link.

# **BEHIND-THE-SCENES: A CURATOR'S PERSPECTIVE**

Thu, 27 May 2021 6.00 pm - 7.00 pm Zoom webinar

Curators Georgina Wong and Chia Jie Lin will share what they have learned from their research as well as interesting behind-the-scenes anecdotes.

This series of talks highlights research on conservation efforts in Singapore. Participants will learn

more about the history of biodiversity in Singapore and understand its importance in our society

### **CURATOR'S TOURS**

Thu, 15 Apr, 20 May, 17 Jun, 15 Jul, 19 Aug & 16 Sep 2021 7.00 pm - 8.00 pm National Library Building, Level 10, Gallery entrance (meeting point) Conducted in English

Sat, 3, 10, 17, 24 & 31 Jul 2021 Sun, 4, 11, 18 & 25 Jul 2021

Sat, 7, 14, 21 & 28 Aug 2021 Sun, 1, 8, 15, 22 & 29 Aug 2021

Sat, 4, 11 & 18 Sep 2021 Sun, 5, 12 & 19 Sep 2021

月六, 2021年7月3/10/17/24/31日 星期天, 2021年7月4/11/18/25日

星期六, 2021年8月7/14/21/28日 星期天, 2021年8月1/8/15/22/29日

星期六, 2021年9月4/11/18日 星期天, 2021年9月5/12/19日



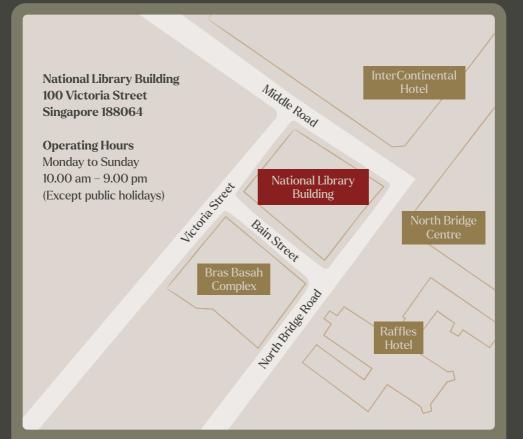
For more information on the exhibition, please visit www.go.gov.sg/hxn



Admission to programmes is free. To register or for full programmes listing, visit www.go.gov.sg/hxnprogs

For enquiries on exhibition tours, please email visitnls@nlb.gov.sg





All information is correct at the time of printing (March 2021). The National Library, Singapore reserves the right to make changes to the programmes without prior notice.

