



H U M A N



N A T U R E

Environmental Histories of Singapore



Until 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 and Singapore Botanic Gardens. 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.

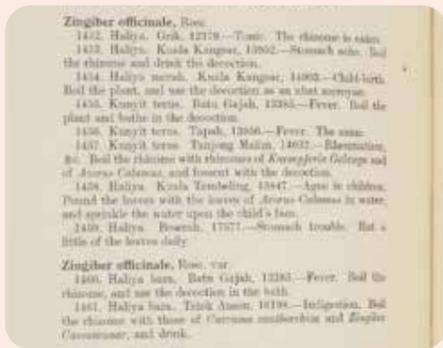


For more information on the exhibition,
please visit www.go.gov.sg/hxn

Organised by:



EXHIBITION HIGHLIGHTS

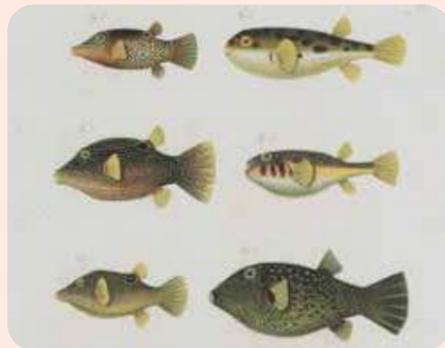


MALAY VILLAGE MEDICINE: PRESCRIPTIONS COLLECTED BY L.H. BURKHILL AND MOHAMMED HANIFF

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.



ATLAS ICHTHYOLOGIQUE DES INDES ORIENTALES NÉERLANDAISES: PUBLIÉ SOUS LES AUSPICES DU GOUVERNEMENT COLONIAL NÉERLANDAIS

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 ichthyologist 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

LIBRARY OF LIFE

Until 26 Sep 2021
10 am – 9 pm
National Library Building, Level 1

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.

ANIMAL FRIENDS

Until 1 Aug 2021 | National Library Building, Level 1
2 Aug – 30 Sep 2021 | Woodlands Regional Library, Level 1

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.

PROGRAMMES

HISTORIES: SINGAPORE'S CLIMATE IN THE PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE

Tue, 13 Jul 2021
6 pm – 7 pm
Zoom Webinar

Find out more from Raizan Rahmat about what drives Singapore's climate, how it has evolved and is projected to change in the future.

HISTORIES: BLUE SECRETS OF THE LITTLE RED DOT

Tue, 17 Aug 2021
6 pm – 7 pm
Zoom Webinar

Join Dr Zeehan Jaafar as she shares the historical and current uses of marine areas and discusses the efforts undertaken to conserve them.

HISTORIES: BEYOND THE CITY IN NATURE – STORIES FROM THE ORANG SELETAR

Sat, 11 Sep 2021
2 pm – 3 pm
Zoom Webinar

Join researchers Chan Kah Mei and Ilya Katrinnada as they share their insights and experiences from conducting oral history interviews with the indigenous Orang Seletar community.

CURATOR'S TOURS

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

PUBLIC TOURS

Various dates below | 2 pm – 3 pm
National Library Building, Level 10,
Gallery entrance (meeting point)
Conducted in English | Led by docents

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

周末导览

日期如下 | 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

Please adhere to safe management measures for your safety.



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

National Library Building
100 Victoria Street
Singapore 188064

Operating Hours
Monday to Sunday
10.00 am – 9.00 pm
(Except public holidays)



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

