

*Proceedings of the Nature Society, Singapore's Conference on*

# Nature Conservation for a Sustainable Singapore

*16<sup>th</sup> October 2011*

*Swissotel Merchant Court, Eu Tong Sen Street*

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## PREFACE

It has been five years since the publication of the revised **The Singapore Red Data Book** (2008). **The Red Data Book** highlights the various species of plants and wildlife that are endangered in Singapore. It is about time that careful consideration be given to ways and means to rescue species that are possible to save from extinction as well as those that are currently existing in healthy numbers but are vulnerable to disturbances that are impinging on them, or that are likely to impinge on them in the future.

The government has seriously initiated a programme co-ordinated by an Inter-Ministerial Committee recently to work towards a Sustainable Singapore. This is a very urgent programme and very laudable. While the programme is mainly focused on brown issues, such as the use of appropriate green energies, energy efficiency, recycling, water management, etc., it must be said that biodiversity or nature conservation is very little emphasized or placed at a lower level of priority. There is an urgent need for non-governmental groups, conservation proponents and people concerned about green issues, such as biodiversity loss and habitat fragmentation or degradation, to step forward to present ideas and solutions to prevent or mitigate the deteriorating situation plaguing the wildlife of our country.

There is no denying that a big step has been taken by the government in this direction when the Singapore Green Plan was formulated in 1993 with a follow-up on the revised Green Plan 2012. However, the conservation plan and strategy has only designated approximately 5 % of the Singapore's total land area under some form of conservation or other. It is clear that with the recently announced plans to accommodate a growing population in Singapore from 4.8 to 6.5 million people, it becomes imperative that there should be a careful look at the nature conservation situation here if we do not want to see our remaining nature areas and their biodiversity seriously jeopardized or destroyed.

This conference on '*Nature Conservation for a Sustainable Singapore*', held on 16<sup>th</sup> October 2011, is the second major conference organized by the Nature Society, the first of which was on '*The State of the Natural Environment in Singapore*' in 1997. The goal of this conference --- to invite conservation proponents/wildlife experts from all sectors of the community to gather together and brainstorm the various problems and issues concerning this situation and to come up with appropriate and viable solutions to save the remaining natural habitats and their biodiversity that will make the future generation proud of us --- was largely achieved by the seventeen papers presented over a wide range of topics by representatives from academia, government and non-governmental organizations. In this proceedings, we have received permission and are delighted to publish eight of the papers presented.

The turnout was extremely encouraging and the discussions generated by the papers reflected the genuine and immediate concerns among a diverse array of participants (students, wildlife ecologists, environmental professionals, conservation activists and sympathizers, conscientious citizens, etc.) for the viability and future survival of Singapore's wildlife and their habitats.

The Nature Society would like to thank Dr. Geh Min, the past President of the Nature Society, for gracing the event with her stimulating guest-of-honour's speech. We would also like to thank Ms Evelyn Ng for kindly accepting the moderator's role for the whole conference. And also, the organizing committee for doing all the hard work to prepare and get the conference running so smoothly. Last but not least, the authors and presenters for agreeing to participate --- and for delivering their papers to the enthusiastic audience with such felicitous aplomb.

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