

## For the Love of Pulau Ubin



*Visitors cycling on Pulau Ubin.*

Home to one of Singapore's last kampongs (villages), Pulau Ubin is close to many people's hearts. The National Parks Board (NParks) is working with the community to retain the island's rustic charm, enhance its cultural heritage, and conserve its biodiversity. A slew of community-led initiatives and enhancements were announced at the sixth Ubin Day on 16 July.

Ubin Day is a community event which celebrates the different facets of the island. First held in 2002, it is part of Pesta Ubin, a festival organised by the Friends of Ubin Network (FUN) and the wider community. This year, a host of activities such as kampong games, art workshops, and visits to kampong houses were organised by the community in collaboration with NParks. Community groups also set up booths to promote biodiversity conservation and cultural heritage. Minister for Education (Schools) and Second Minister for Transport Mr Ng Chee Meng was the guest-of-honour.

### Kampong House Restoration Efforts on Pulau Ubin

At this year's Ubin Day, Minister in the Prime Minister's Office and Second Minister for Home Affairs and National Development Mr Desmond Lee announced the launch of a multi-year kampong house restoration effort on Pulau Ubin. NParks will work with FUN and community groups to sensitively restore kampong houses on the island, connecting interested groups with experts in architecture, heritage and related fields as well as with volunteer networks through FUN.

The restoration efforts will start with House 63C, which was built in the 1930s. NParks will also identify other kampong houses suitable for restoration.

The community-led restoration efforts will be carried out in line with the overall look and feel of Pulau Ubin, retaining the cultural heritage and rustic character of the island. FUN will look into how the Ubin community can be revitalised by allowing interested groups and individuals to use and manage these restored kampong houses. FUN will also gather feedback and suggestions from Ubin residents and heritage groups on these proposals.

### Revamped Nature Gallery by HSBC



*(From left) Head of HSBC Retail Banking and Wealth Management Mr Anurag Mathur, Minister for Education (Schools) and Second Minister for Transport Mr Ng Chee Meng, and Minister in the Prime Minister's Office and Second Minister for Home Affairs & National Development Mr Desmond Lee place wooden "jigsaw" pieces on a map of Pulau Ubin to launch the opening of the new Nature Gallery. NParks CEO Mr Kenneth Er looks on.*

The revamped Nature Gallery by HSBC was also launched on Ubin Day. The refreshed gallery features new information panels, educational displays, and an interactive touchscreen, showcasing Ubin's biodiversity conservation, research, heritage, nature-based recreation, and sustainable practices. The displays include 3D models of animals found on Pulau Ubin such as the Asian Small-clawed Otter (*Aonyx cinereus*), the Dugong (*Dugong dugon*) and the Oriental Pied Hornbill (*Anthracoceros albirostris*).



*The refreshed Nature Gallery by HSBC.*

Through the interactive touchscreen, visitors can learn about the nature conservation masterplan for Ubin and the various bird species that call the island home. The Nature Gallery is supported by a S\$100,000 donation from HSBC through the Garden City Fund.



*Visitors learn about birds found on Pulau Ubin through the interactive touchscreen.*

## First Comprehensive Biodiversity Survey of Pulau Ubin

Minister Lee also announced that, beginning in late 2017, NParks will work with the research community on a two-year comprehensive biodiversity survey of Pulau Ubin. This will be the first survey ever conducted on the biodiversity of the entire island, which includes 720 native plant species and over 300 species of mammals, birds, reptiles, and amphibians. Some of these species can only be found on the island and not on the mainland.

The survey will involve NParks staff, volunteers, researchers from the National University of Singapore, and citizen scientists from nature groups such as the Vertebrate Study Group of the Nature Society (Singapore), the Herpetological Society of Singapore, the Entomological Network of Singapore and ButterflyCircle.

The survey results will enable NParks to update Pulau Ubin's species inventory, which will aid in planning future research, habitat enhancement, and species recovery projects. The results will also be used for the systematic long-term monitoring and management of the island.

With the concerted efforts of the community, future generations can continue to enjoy Pulau Ubin's rich history and biodiversity. Want to play a part in conserving Pulau Ubin's natural and cultural heritage? Join the [Ubin Volunteer Programme](#) to become a nature or heritage guide, participate in patrols, aid in habitat enhancement, or join wildlife surveys, among other activities.

For more information on Pulau Ubin, do visit <https://www.nparks.gov.sg/pulau-ubin>.