



PENCINTA ALAM

NEWSLETTER OF THE MALAYSIAN NATURE SOCIETY

70
YEARS
CONSERVING NATURE.
CELEBRATING LIFE.
(1940 - 2010)

www.mns.my

December 2014



Flying High Island Style celebrated the best of naturally Langkawi at the recent 5th Asian Bird Fair on the 29th and 30th November 2014. The Asian Bird Fair was hosted by Malaysia for the very first time and showcased our beautiful avian residents of Langkawi, but that was not all that was waiting for our visitors and participants.

The 5th Asian Bird Fair was proudly organized by the Malaysian Nature Society (MNS) and hosted by Lembaga Pembangunan Langkawi (LADA) with the wonderful support of Tourism Malaysia and was held at the Oriental Village on the lush tropical island of Langkawi.

The Asian Bird Fair (ABF) is an annual event founded by six organizations from Taiwan, the Philippines, Thailand and Malaysia with the aim to highlight and showcase the different bird fairs across Asia, to promote the protection of birds and their habitats, encourage birdwatching and other ecotourism activities. The six founding organizations took turns in hosting the ABF starting with the Wild Bird Club of the Philippines (Davao, 2010), Chinese Wild Bird Federation (Tainan, 2011), Bird Conservation Society of Thailand (Bangpoo, 2012) and The Wild Bird Society of Taipei (Taipei, 2013). Dubbed the Hornbill Island of the World, Langkawi was the perfect location for the fair. The island is home to 221 different species of birds, has coastal areas consisting of limestone ridges, with an extensive surface area of forest covered mountains, hills and natural vegetation.

MNS believed that events like these will create better awareness of our precious natural heritage and the rich biodiversity that Malaysia is blessed with. It is evident that Langkawi offered

Tours, talks and fun-filled nature inspired activities were organised to elevate the senses and visual captivity of our nature lovers.

her stakeholders a fantastic opportunity to achieve a sustainable and potentially lucrative livelihood while living in harmony with nature. As such, it makes perfect sense that the protection of her natural ecosystems and habitats can bring greater returns in the form of ecotourism activities. The fair was aimed to showcase this potential by drawing in regional and international visitors.

MNS was also heartened by the warm welcome and cooperation provided by the event host Lembaga Pembangunan Langkawi (LADA) as well as the invaluable support of Tourism Malaysia. In this joint effort, all three parties came together to host, organize and support this one-of-a-kind fair.

Exciting activities such as guided walks, nature talks, an international forum on eco-tourism, photo, poster, colouring and storytelling competitions were organized to entertain nature lovers, both young and old.

For more information and pictures on the fair, please refer to www.asianbirdfair.net or find us on facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/asianbirdfair>.

MY GARDEN BIRDWATCH 2014



Special Report

The fifth edition of MY Garden Birdwatch has come and gone. The 2014 results can be viewed at <http://www.mygardenbirdwatch.com/index.php?cur=bird/result&date=2014>. It comes as no surprise that for the fifth year running, the Eurasian Tree Sparrow is still the most numerous and the most likely seen bird in a garden in Malaysia. This is due to its gregarious nature and affinity to living close to man.

In terms of valid surveys, there were 223 in 2014 compared to 315 in 2013, a drop of 29%. We hope to get this figure much higher in coming years. And we realise that to do this, the importance of this survey needs to be known. Through the years, questions have been asked. Why are we doing this survey? Why is it so important? Are we really making a contribution? When will we see the results? In any study, several years of data collection is needed to prepare what is called baseline data. For example, the average number of Eurasian Tree Sparrows sighted in 2013 was 5.6 per site. This can be compared to 4.1 per site for 2014. Does comparing the 2014 average to the 2013 average yield any meaningful conclusions? Or would it be better to compare the 2014 average with averages for the past ten years? Or twenty years?

If the average for the past ten years has been relatively stable, is that a good thing? Is it telling us anything about how the population of the Eurasian Tree Sparrow is doing? If in ten years' time, the Eurasian Tree Sparrow falls from its No. 1 perch, is there reason to worry? Do we have

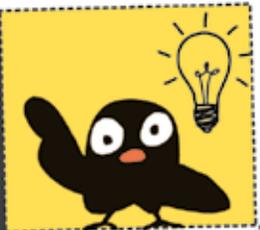
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8:20



$$10 + 6 = 10$$



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the data to back the assumption that something has caused the decline in its population? Can we then try and find out the cause of the decline? Or perhaps, its population could increase. Why?

If we do not collect the data now, we will not have the figures to show us the trend in the population of our garden birds. Relying on anecdotal evidence is not sufficient or scientific. Someone can say, "Ten years ago, there used to be more Eurasian Tree Sparrows in my garden. I could easily see 30 of them in my garden. Now, I don't see them anymore. Their population must be in decline." Is it good science to rely on one sample and one man's perception? Perhaps, his neighbour may have been putting out bird seeds in his own garden for the last ten years and all the sparrows have gone over there!

The more samples (or valid sites) the survey has, the more solid the data generated. Every year, a portion of the overall submissions are rejected due to participants not keeping within the parameters of the survey. As with all surveys, a set of do's and don'ts ensures that the methodology is consistent. MYGB's is kept very simple:

1. Count for 30 minutes only. If you want to do more, you can count at another site for 30 minutes. That is more useful than counting at the same site, even on a different day.
2. Count only perched birds, not flying ones.
3. If you hear a bird calling, try and look for it. Count only birds that are seen, not those that are only heard.
4. Stay in one spot, do not walk around.

5. Count only the highest number for each species that you see at any one time during the 30-minute period. For example, you start your count at 8.00 a.m. At 8.10, you see 10 Javan Mynas. At 8.20, you see 6 Javan Mynas. And you do not see any more for the duration of your count. The number of Javan Mynas that you should record is 10, and not 16. This is to avoid double-counting as the 6 birds seen at 8.20 could have been part of the group of 10 that you saw at 8.10.

While no major changes in our garden bird populations have been recorded, one species to keep an eye on is the Asian Koel, which made it to the Top 15 for the first time this year. The Asian Koel is both a resident and migrant for Malaysia. In addition, it is also a parasitic cuckoo, which lays its eggs in the nest of other bird species, leaving the 'host' to raise its young. One of the known 'host' is the House Crow. The population trends of these two species may give us an insight into how this very fascinating relationship between them is panning out. Is the Asian Koel's strategy successful? Or will the House Crow recognise that the Koel's eggs or offspring are not theirs?

For those who counted this year, we thank you for spending 30 minutes of your time with our garden birds. Next year's survey will be coming up in no time....20 & 21 June 2015. Keep those dates marked in your calendar!! We hope you, your friends and family will join us in keeping tabs on our feathered friends.

Note: MY Garden Birdwatch is an annual survey of garden birds carried out by the Bird Conservation Council of the Malaysian Nature Society.

*Article by Khoo Swee Seng
Special illustration by Chin Pik Wun*



Bird Biomimetics

A talk by Dr. Ille C. Gebeshuber

Vienna University of Technology, Vienna, Austria, Europe & Institute of Microengineering and Nanoelectronics, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia

On November 6, 2014, Prof. Ille C. Gebeshuber gave a talk on Bird Biomimetics to the MNS Selangor Bird Group. Biomimetics means learning from living nature for applications in science, engineers, art and design, for a better engineering that is good for all life.

Birds are wonderful inspiring organisms. As examples, she gave feather colours and feather interlocking devices, bird eyes (including the amazing capability of birds to see the ultraviolet part of the electromagnetic spectrum), beaks and bones and the navigational abilities of migratory birds.

Colours can be either pigment-based or structure based. An example for pigment-based coloration is the plant-based indigo pigment that is used to colour jeans. An example for structural coloration is the colour of soap bubbles, CDs and DVDs and the rainbow. Some birds combine structural and pigment colouration. In budgies, for example, the green coloration comes from mixing structural blue (that is generated by scattering on minuscule particles in the feather) with pigment yellow. Selective breeding can remove the structural component from the originally green wild birds – the birds are then yellow. Removing the pigment yellow results in blue birds. Remov-

ing both the yellow and the green part results in grey birds, where the ‘colour’ comes from melanin. Also the amazingly beautiful colouration of the peacock comes from minuscule, regularly arranged parts in the feather.

We can learn from the birds how to build colours from structures alone, without the use of potentially toxic chemical pigments. Such structures can also be functionalized; they then would change with

certain environmental conditions (such as swelling with humidity, or swelling due to the attachment of certain disease molecules). When the size of the structures changes, also the colour changes, and thereby the structures can be used as sensors – such as in cheap paper-based hepatitis tests, or colours that only appear in certain conditions, e.g. emergency instructions that appear on the wall when there is a fire.

Feather interlocking devices are tiny mechanical hooks on the feather that ensure that the little feather parts are ‘zipped together’. We can ‘unzip’ a feather, and ‘rezip’ it, similarly to the birds when they prune their feathers.

Birds can see parts of the electromagnetic spectrum that people cannot see. Some birds, such as the myna, appear just black to us, but very colourful to other birds. Since birds can see UV, there is an easy way to prevent birds crashing into win-



dows: coatings that send signals to birds in the UV range, invisible to us people, but saving millions of bird lives.

Beaks and bones are lightweight, and yet tough and strong, and have beauty on all length scales. Novel benign building materials and structures can result from learning from the birds for better materials in building constructions, for example. Winglets on the wings of large gliding birds have inspired winglets on airplanes, and lead to enormous fuel consumption reductions. And the magnetic sense that helps certain migratory birds to navigate on their thousands of miles long journeys can inspire novel navigational devices that are independent of GPS satellite systems. There are many innovations that can come from learning from our feathered friends.

Article by Dr. Ille C. Gebeshuber

Photo Essay

MNS Herping & Birding Trip

Photos: Teo Eng Wah. Location: Trail beside the Awana Genting Longhouse. Date: 3-4 October 2014.

The Malesian frog, Malaysian river frog, Malaysian peat frog, or peat swamp frog (*Limnonectes malesianus*) is found in the Malay Peninsula (including extreme southern peninsular Thailand and Singapore), Sumatra, Java, Borneo (Indonesia, Malaysia), and a range of islands on the Sunda Shelf (Pulau Kundur, Palau Gallang, Great Natuna Island, Sinkeo Island). Its natural habitats are shallow, gentle streams and nearby swampy areas including peat swamps, very flat alluvial forests, and overgrown plantations. It is becoming rare due to habitat loss (deforestation), and to a lesser extent, exploitation.



Common Mock Viper (*Psammodyastes pulverulentus*)



Fritillerynnis clathraria (Warren, 1895)
- Crambidae



Caecilian (*Caudacaecilia larutensis*).
If you observed carefully, there are tiny holes along the eyes, mouth and body of the caecilian



Southern Titiwangsa Bent Toed-Gecko (*Cyrtodactylus australotitiwangsaensis*)





CARDBOARD ROLL CHRISTMAS TREE CRAFT



Whatever your faith, it is always fun to make seasonal and festive crafts to celebrate the holidays of all cultures and faiths. Christmas trees are particularly fun to make and decorate because everybody loves trees, especially trees with ornaments that look like colourful fruits! However, live Christmas trees that are chopped down and transported to your home are not particularly environmentally-friendly. Decorating a live potted plant without hurting it would be a better alternative.

If you have an artificial Christmas tree in your home or school, be sure to take good care of it so that it will not get damaged and can be reused every year without having to be replaced. Don't hang too many ornaments, or ornaments that are too heavy, or the branches might break.. Don't collide into the tree or put it in a place, for example, near a

door, where there is a risk of it falling over or being knocked down all the time. Keep the branches and parts clean by washing them gently and letting them drip dry before you pack everything back into boxes after the festive season is over.

If you do not have a Christmas tree, live or artificial, it's fun to try to make one of your own using discarded materials such as fabric, CDs, boxes, cardboard, plastic bottles and ladders.

Here are the instructions for a simple Christmas Tree craft made using cardboard rolls (from toilet paper or kitchen rolls) that you can display ornaments in. Try to use materials you already have at hand, such as ribbons and crepe paper saved from packages, rather than buy new materials. This is will save resources and prevent waste.

YOU NEED:

1. Cardboard rolls from toilet paper or kitchen rolls. (You can easily collect large quantities from offices if you ask the cleaning ladies to save them for you. Offices and shops use a lot more toilet paper than households do.)
2. Sticky tape, or hot glue sticks to be used with a hot glue gun.
3. Green paint, or green coloured paper / construction paper / crepe paper. If you do not want to buy coloured paper for this project, go through all your old magazines, junk mail and scrap paper for recycling and cut out all the green-coloured sections. You can paste these pieces of green paper onto your cardboard rolls, and your tree will look a bit like a pinata with all its different-toned pieces of paper. Alternatively, you can use lengths of green or gold ribbon to tie around your Christmas tree.
4. Ornaments that you already have at hand. Alternatively, small toys, coloured balls, coloured yarn pom-poms or those egg or ball-shaped toy capsules that you get from vending machines.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. If you are using paint, paint the cardboard roll

tubes first. Make sure the paint is not too runny or wet, or the cardboard rolls may turn soggy or go out of shape. Let the tubes dry completely before you start gluing them together. If you are using paper or ribbons, you can choose to wrap all the individual cardboard rolls, or wrap them after you have built your tree.

2. Arrange the cardboard rolls, with the round openings of the rolls pointing outwards in a single direction, into the shape of a pyramid. Start with the base. Make the base big and stable, and tape or hot-glu the rolls together. Build your cardboard rolls into the shape of a triangular ever-green tree. You can choose to add a tree trunk and paint it brown, or simply let your tree rest on its broad base.
3. Once you are done building and sticking your tree together, you can use green paper or coloured ribbons to decorate the outside of the tree.
4. Insert your ornaments into the round openings of the cardboard rolls. Put your cardboard roll tree on a bookcase or table so that your visitors can admire your tree and ornaments.

You can customise this Christmas Tree and turn it into an Advent Calendar tree or Party Favour tree by inserting toy capsules filled with treats, instead of the usual ornaments, into the openings. Once the festive season is over, you can either find a place to store the entire tree, or if you think you would like to make a new tree the following year, you can just take the cardboard rolls apart and turn them in for recycling. Just make sure you peel the tape or dried glue off the cardboard first. And of course, salvage your ornaments for use the following year!

The Green Living and Eco Kids team would like to wish all of you Happy Holidays!

By Wong Ee Lynn
wongelynn@yahoo.com
gl.mnselangor@yahoo.com

Image Credit: www.outnumbered.be

TURTLE MOONS

A bright half moon
Looks down upon
The droppings of tiny moons,
Full of life,
Into the dark, secret hole
As the turtle
Seeks to remove her burden
Into the damp sand.
We watch in wonder
As her carapace heaves
And tears drop
From her soulful eyes
To join moons below her.
Behind her back,
The eggs are gently taken –
Their safety is our only aim
And their journey, from pail
To hatchery
Is done with loving care.
Now her strivings end
And with weary flippers
(Already tagged)
She covers her offspring.
This done, she moves
Towards the sea.
This is our chance
To inspect and measure,
Cleaning her shell and flesh
Of barnacles and
Other irritants.
This done, we step aside
To watch her journey
Through the brushwood
Onto the beach
Where the white waves thunder.
Her eagerness for home
Is strangely touching
And she bids farewell
While we stand and gaze
With sadness mixed
With satisfaction
That she has completed
Successfully
Her Circle of Life.

Patricia Zahara



MOUNTAIN GOAL ADVENTURE CONSULTANT (742912-V)

Website: <http://www.mymountaingoal.com>. E-mail: goalus@mymountaingoal.com

Everest Base Camp via Gokyo lake trek from 14/04/2015 to 29/04/2015 (16D15N) (Confirm trip)



Experience the culture of the Sherpas en route to Khumbu village.

Enjoy a climb to the scintillating Kalapattar 5,545m/18190ft, one of the most spectacular vantage points in the Everest region.

Explore enchanting views of Everest, Pumori, Ama Dablam, Nuptse, Lhotse, Makalu and many other towering peaks.

Two free training trips will provided for the Everest Base Camp trip.

Contact : Thong at goalus@mymountaingoal.com H/P : 016-6375622, Off : 03-40248896

Further info please sign in: www.mymountaingoal.com/everestkalapattar.htm

Annapurna Circuit trek from 30/04/15 to 15/05/15



Duration: 16 days Maximum Elevation: 5416m
Grade: Medium / Hard Season: Mid September to
November and March to mid May

Summary: Walk completely around the Annapurna massif. Trek through low land Brahmin and Chhettri villages to the remote Manang village, and down the Kalkigandaki Gorge (officially deepest George in the World). Cross a 5416m pass-probably the highest you will ever get without climbing a mountain.

Two free training trip will provided for the trip.
Contact : +60166375622 WhatsApp, WeChat and Line.
Further information please sign in:- <http://www.mymountaingoal.com/AnnapurnaRegion.htm>



MAKING POSSESSIONS LAST LONGER (PART 1)

Volunteers and staff who work for organisations that collect reusable items for charity often complain that people tend to donate old, stained and ruined items in very poor condition. Not only is this habit rude, inconsiderate and insensitive, it is also wasteful. Many people mistakenly believe that they are 'doing a good deed' by 'donating' unwanted items to 'charity'. In reality, however, volunteers and staff waste many hours sifting through items that will most likely end up in landfills. Most of the time, only 5 - 10% of items are fit to be redirected to beneficiaries such as welfare homes and homeless individuals. Another 10 - 20% could be recovered for recycling. The rest of the 'donations' end up being thrown out as rubbish.

What then, most people ask, can they do with 'all that stuff' that you can't use or do not want anymore? Green Living recommends reducing the amount of consumer goods you purchase, acquire and dispose of in the first place. Say no to unnecessary purchases. Reduce the amount of stuff you give out as door gifts, in goodie bags, as prizes and as gifts. Simplify your life by not accumulating clutter in the first place.

One of the reasons why so many households and individuals end up disposing of, or trying to 'donate', items that were at one point valuable and valued is because they do not know the proper way to care for things, or keep things clean and serviceable. The longer you are able to make a possession last, the less money you have to spend on replacements, and the lower your impact on the environment. Here are some basic methods of caring for common items in order to make them last longer.

1. Clothes

- Wash dark and light-coloured items separately to prevent staining, fading and colour runs. Turn clothes inside out prior to washing to protect the outer surfaces. Pull zippers up fully to prevent the rough edges of open zippers from damaging clothes in the washing machine. Put delicate clothes in mesh laundry bags to prevent stretching and damage. Wash in cold water whenever possible (rub soap or detergent on stains first), as clothes last longer when subjected to less heat. This will save energy, too!
- Don't hang up clothes that can stretch out of shape, such as sweaters. Fold them instead. Don't pull on t-shirt or sweater collars when putting them on hangers, otherwise they will stretch out of shape. Similarly, don't fold clothes that need ironing or they will become even more creased. Using higher heat on clothes (for ironing) will make the fibres break down faster and waste energy.
- Avoid soaking clothes for more than a few minutes, or using bleach, as both can break down fibres in clothing.
- Patch or mend tears in fabric (esp jeans) as early as possible to prevent the holes from becoming larger.
- Frequent laundering and washing will wear clothes out. To reduce laundry loads, keep categories of clothes separate -- office, housework, exercise and bedtime. Don't wear your nicest or newest clothes for housework or exercise. Wear older clothing as exercise, housework or gardening clothes, rather than buy different sets of clothes. Hang up clothes that you can wear again for the same purpose without washing. Hang up pyjamas every morning to let them air out, rather than wear them while doing housework and having to change into another set of pyjamas every night.
- Wear clothes for as long as possible. Stained, torn or faded clothing should be used as cleaning rags, floor mats or pet bedding, instead of donated to

charity. Only donate clothing that are in good condition. For example, if you have too many t-shirts, put aside the free t-shirts you get from events and product purchases immediately and donate them to the needy while they are still new.

2. Shoes

- Clean and polish work/leather shoes frequently to prevent dirt from entering into the cracks and making the cracks permanent. Polishing also prevents leather from becoming dry and cracked.
- Don't wear dress/office shoes for driving. The back heel of shoes can become damaged and discoloured from rubbing against the car floor mats. Have a pair of spare shoes in the car for driving instead.
- Washing sneakers/trainers will make them look newer, and prevent dried-up dirt from wearing down the soles.
- Rotate your shoes to give the insides time to air out. Stuff sheets of rolled up newspaper into damp shoes to help them dry out faster.
- Wear socks or stockings to prevent shoes from becoming damp or smelly. Sprinkle baking soda in shoes to deodorise them.
- Have your shoes repaired by a cobbler. Get soles stitched back on or have the shoes resoled.
- Store shoes neatly to keep them clean and help them retain their shape. Don't stack shoes on top of one another unless they are in boxes.
- Rubber clogs (e.g Crocs) are easy to repair. Straps can be reattached using cable tie, shoelace bits or ribbon, and worn-out and smooth soles can be given traction again if you use a penknife to carefully retrace the lines on the soles. Don't cut too deep or you might punch a hole in them.

3. Backpacks, handbags and bags

- Try to keep backpacks and bags dry and out of the rain. Use leather protector spray (from the shoe

Continue on next page...

shop) to protect handbags, briefcases and leather bags.

- Clean your hands before rummaging in your bags. The fewer cleaning products you use on your bags, the longer they will last.
- Don't put your bags on the floor. Keep them clean and away from hot, wet, dirty or rough surfaces.
- Don't hang your handbag from the back of chairs or from hooks, as this can damage the strap over time and cause the handbag to go out of shape. Use a handbag caddy (or make your own) to keep the insides of your handbag tidy, clean and protected from sharp objects such as keys and pens.
- Don't leave bags in hot cars, as fabrics and fibres break down more rapidly when exposed to heat. This is especially so for the plastic and non-woven cloth shopping carrier bags. Keep reusable shopping bags in the trunk, glove compartment or under the car seat instead, or better still, at home by the door, ready for your next grocery shopping trip.
- Don't hang up heavy backpacks or the straps and fabric will start to tear. Designate a chair or other sturdy surface to put them on instead. Don't overload backpacks and travel bags. Carry some items in your hand (e.g. with a book strap) on in a separate bag. Not only will this help backpacks last, it will also protect your back from injury. If you overstuff backpacks, you will often find that the zipper will break. Don't do the sitcom act of sitting on suitcases either. Pack wisely and ensure suitcases can close easily.
- Have backpack zippers repaired by tailors or at jeans and leather repair shops. Mend tears and rips with adhesive patches (available at camping stores), as sewing and stitching can often introduce holes in fabric where there was none before.

4. Mattresses and pillows

- The main reason mattresses and pillows are 'donated' is because they are stained, wet or damaged. This is impolite and insensitive. If you are not willing to sleep on such a mattress anymore, chances are, homeless folks and residents of welfare homes are not, either. Donate only items that are still usable but not suitable for your purposes anymore, for example, it is the wrong size for your new bed-frame. Stained, wet and damaged mattresses belong in a landfill. As such, try to keep your mattresses out of landfills by taking better care of them.
- Do not jump or stand on mattresses as this will put unnecessary strain on them. Do not put heavy items, e.g. packed suitcases, on mattresses either. Avoid sitting on the edges of spring mattresses.
- Each time you change the bedsheets, flip the mattress over and/or rotate it 180 degrees so that you sleep on all sides. This will help it retain its shape longer.
- To stop mattresses from getting dirty or worn out, use a mattress protector or topper. Even slipping an old fitted sheet over the mattress before putting the outer sheet or duvet on will help. If you have a young child or pet that inadvertently wets the bed, cover the mattress with a rubber or plastic sheet, or with puppy housebreaking pads available from vets or pet stores. Clean up stains immediately with disinfectant and/or deodorisers (e.g. baking soda) and air the mattress out if possible.
- To keep pillows clean, slip on an old pillowcase under the existing pillowcase. Try not to cry into pillows, but wash and dry them out if you do. Do not eat or exercise in bed, or use pillows and cushions for pillow fights. Get pillows and bolsters of the right size for your needs so you would not keep folding or bending them in two. Fluff them up and air them out to help them retain their shapes. Wash and dry your pillows as needed, if they are made of washable materials. Put your pillows, mattress

and duvets under the sun to deodorise and air out. Restuff old pillows and cushions with cotton and other stuffing, and repair tears and rips with cloth before the stuffing falls out.

By Wong Ee Lynn
wongee Lynn@yahoo.com
gl.mnselangor@yahoo.com

(Next month's tips: Making Possessions Last Longer (Part 2):
Electronic devices and appliances, books, toys and furniture)



Calendar of Activities

DECEMBER 2014

AN INTRODUCTION TO COASTAL WATERBIRDS AND WETLANDS TRAINING WORKSHOP

NOW OPEN FOR REGISTRATION!

Date: 5-7 December 2014 (Friday to Sunday)

Venue: Kuala Selangor Nature Park

The Bird Conservation Council (BCC) of the MNS's Conservation Division wishes to invite interested birdwatchers (who must be fully paid-up MNS members) to attend a training workshop on coastal water-birds and wetlands. The objective is to promote interest as well as increase the number of experienced coastal water-birds watchers in the country as part of the MNS program for capacity-building. Annual counts of water-birds are essential tools for advocating the conservation of important coastal habitats. In addition, they contribute valuable data toward the EAAFP network and BirdLife International projects for global coastal water-bird conservation.

The training workshops will be conducted during weekends by MNS members who have considerable expertise in coastal water-birds. Each training workshop will have a theory session on Saturday, followed by a practical session on Sunday. This workshop is brought to you by GEF SGP and Tan Kean Cheong Bird Conservation Memorial Fund.

Principal Trainers:

Mr. Ang Teck Hin and Mr. Khoo Swee Seng. (MNS Bird Group members)

Topics:

1. How to distinguish water-bird (waders) from the other bird families;
2. Identification of waders based on their plumage, bill, legs and tail, feeding characteristics, etc.;

3. The significance of Peninsula and East Malaysia along the bird migration route known as the East Asia Australasian Flyway (EAAF).
4. The importance of conservation of coastal wetlands

Eligibility:

Must be a fully paid up MNS members, with birdwatching experience or have a KEEN INTEREST in birdwatching. To be a proficient water-bird watcher, constant practice and revision is the key. Therefore, I would like to encourage participants to attend as many workshops as possible.

Cost:

The training workshop is free. Board and lodging is provided at the Kuala Selangor Nature Park (KSNP) from Friday to Sunday. Packed lunch will be provided for the Sunday field work. However, transportation cost is on your own and car-pooling is encouraged. Please bring along your binoculars or telescope. PLEASE BRING YOUR DRINKING UTENSIL FOR HOT AND COLD WATER. More details will be included in the registration pack which you will receive in advance.

Workshop dates and registration:

Third workshop: 5-7 December 2014 (Friday to Sunday).

Closing date 26 Nov

Fourth workshop: 3-4 January 2015 (Saturday to Sunday).

Fifth workshop: 30 January-1 February* 2015 Closing date 20 Jan

* in conjunction with World Wetlands Day celebration

Keep a look-out for them in email, Facebook, MNS website and Pencinta Alam. To facilitate catering of meals and accommodation, members who wish to attend the workshops are requested fill up the registration form, digitally sign and email it to Mr. Lim Aun Tiah limbird42@gmail.com

Registration of participants for all workshops will be closed 10 days before the actual dates.

I wish you an enjoyable and exciting weekend at the Kuala Selangor Nature Park.

Lim Aun Tiah

(Ag chairman MNS-BCC)

DOWNLOAD FORM & REGISTER NOW:

<http://mnswetland.weebly.com/coastal-waterbirds--wetlands-workshop.html>

'ALIENS' in FRIM (rerun)

Date: 6 Dec 2014 (Sat)

Time: 8.30 am

Back by popular demand, we will walk again to catch a glimpse of the ALIENS in the campus of FRIM. So you think you could easily point out an alien from afar? Think again. Aliens of the plant world do not have differently coloured hair, iris, dressing or manner to distinguish them from the true natives. In fact they are so well rooted in our gardens that we sometimes mistakenly used them to symbolise our culture... Where are these aliens from? Who brought them here in the first place? & why? How have they benefited us? Or how much damage have they incurred on our native ecosystem quietly?

Come join Chew Ming Yee and Lim Chung Lu, two humorous botanists and nature guides, for a 1 to 2-hour easy morning guided walk around the main campus of FRIM while listening to stories how the aliens landed in Malaysia. Further details will be given upon signing up.

Besides standard entrance charges to FRIM (refer to <http://www.frim.gov.my/faq/>), a fee of RM10 is chargeable to cover insurance and SIG fund. Children below 18 years pay only RM3.

To register: email Ms Wan Yeng (wanyeng@rocketmail.com) <preferable mode> or sms only (hp 016-618 2148, strictly no calls). Limited places available and deadline to register is 30 November 2014, whichever comes first. For directions: Refer to http://www.frim.gov.my/?page_id=543

Wear suitable loose clothing and good walking shoes. Insect repellent is advisable for those with sensitive skin. For the rest, long-sleeves should suffice. Bring a bottle of water and some healthy snacks.

Reruns: For those who had missed out Part 1: Getting to know the local stars of FRIM and Part 3: The beginning and the end of a stream, do look out for the reruns. (dates to be fixed later)



Calendar of Activities

Introduction to bird watching at Taman Tasik Perdana (Lake Gardens), KL

Date: 7 December 2014 (Sun)

Meeting time: 7.30 am

Meeting point: Car park between Jalan

Cenderawasih & Jalan Tanglin.

What is bird watching? What is so fascinating about birds? Why bird watching & how to do it? Ever have these questions in your mind?

Then come join SBBG annual 'Introduction to bird watching' event and find out for yourself.

This event is open to MNS member & the general public, so it is a great opportunity to bring along family and friends to introduce them to this fun, intriguing & challenging activity suitable for nature lovers of all ages. We will have spotting scopes really to ensure close encounters with these beautiful feathered friends.

Bring along binoculars, drinking water, light snacks, mosquito repellent & umbrella. Wear dull coloured clothes, hat & comfortable shoes. The event shall end around noon.

This event is open to all MNS members & general public. Pre-registration is not compulsory but advance notice of your attendance is appreciated. For more info, call (aft.8pm) or SMS (anytime) Mr Liung @ 012-3127998 or Ms Su Ping @ 016-4903284.

NATURE EDUCATION AT UNIVERSITI MALAYA FIELD STUDIES CENTRE

Date: 13-14 December 2014

Meeting time: 10am, 13 December 2014

Meeting place: Universiti Malaya Field Studies Centre, Ulu Gombak, Selangor

Nature Guides SIG in collaboration with Institute of Biological Sciences, Faculty of Science, Universiti Malaya is organizing a special access to Universiti Malaya Field Studies

Centre (FSC). A weekend of mingling with Ecology & Biodiversity scientists and researchers whom will conduct nature education and awareness programmes. Existing and budding nature lovers are welcomed to experience first-hand bat and small mammals research, birdwatching, frogging at night and species identification.

RM200 (adult) RM150 (child below 12). Price includes 1N dormitory accommodation (male and female separate), all meals (halal) and activities in FSC and access to FSC laboratory. Transport is by carpooling. Limited places available. Interested contact Hafeez theillinoisriver@gmail.com or SMS/Whatsapp only 0172180172.



NEC WILD CAMP

KIDS & PARENTS

DETAILS

Date 13 – 14 Dec 2014
Sat – Sun (2D 1N)

PLACE Nature Education Centre (NEC) Kepong

Age 7 – 15 years old

Price 1Adult + 1Kid > RM 200
1Adult + 2Kids > RM 300

CERTIFICATE IS PROVIDED!

Canopy Walk

Insect Study

Stream **NIGHT WALK** Sampling

GAMES AND CRAFT

REGISTER NOW!
REGISTER NOW!

MASTURA/ZALIKHA
PROGRAM OFFICER

TEL: 0362771703

✉

f

nec@mns.org.my

f

Nec jungle camp



Movie Screening **EcoKnights**

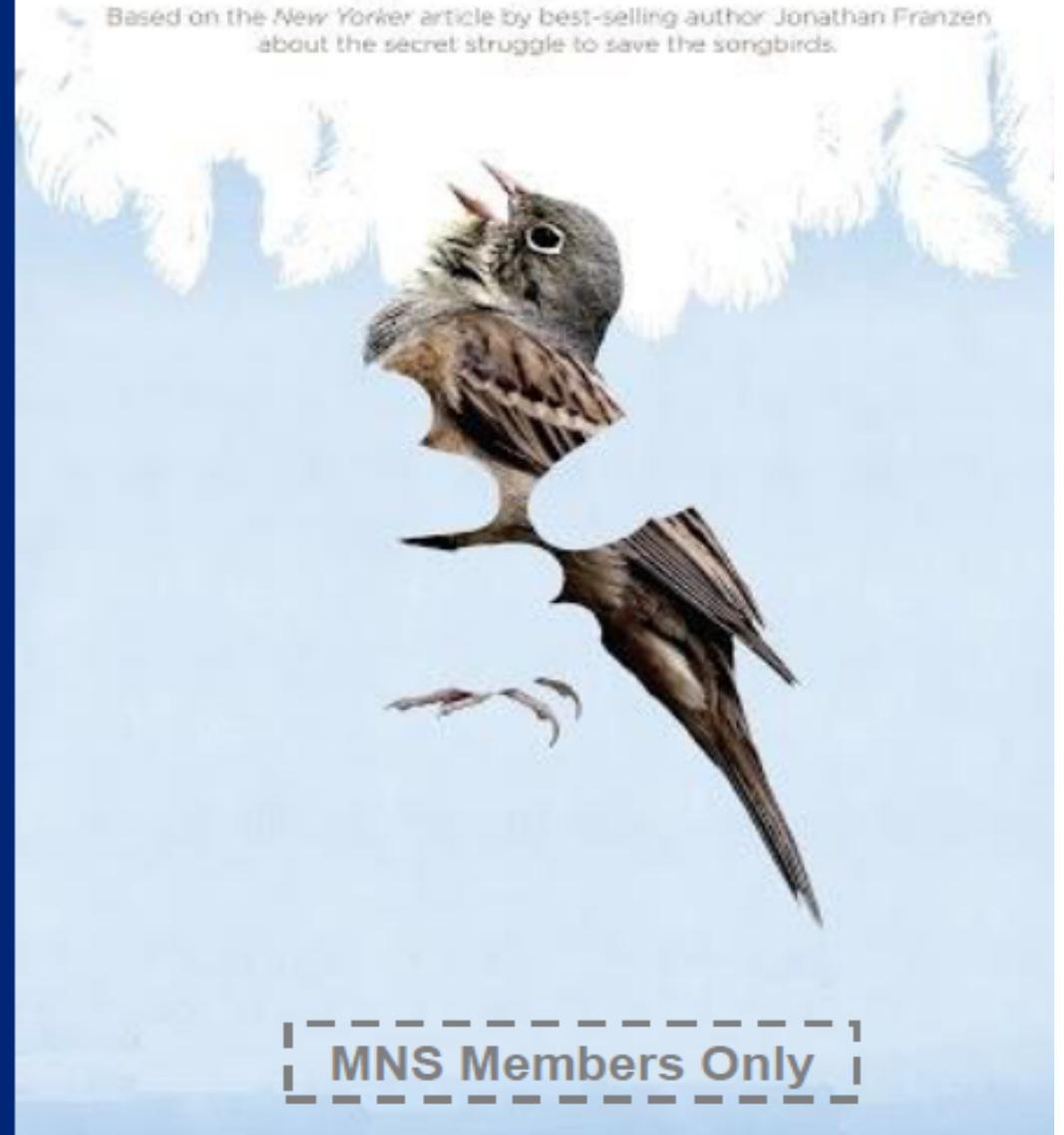


Date: 20 December (Sat)
Time: 2pm
Venue: MNS Auditorium
Title: Emptying the Skies
Runtime: 78 minutes

Based on a magazine essay written by noted best-selling novelist Jonathan Franzen for 'The New Yorker' and widely republished around the world, 'Emptying the Skies' chronicles the rampant poaching of migratory songbirds in southern Europe. Songbird populations have been drastically declining for several decades, and a number of species face extinction imminently. The film explores the wonder of these tiny globe-flying marvels, millions of which are unlawfully slaughtered each year for large sums on the black market, and follows an intrepid squad of pan-European bird-lovers who risk their lives waging a secret war against poachers, disrupting illegal trapping and freeing as many birds as possible. Jonathan Franzen is executive producer of and featured in the film.

Emptying the Skies

Based on the *New Yorker* article by best-selling author Jonathan Franzen about the secret struggle to save the songbirds.



MNS Members Only

Calendar of Activities

MNS Photography 2014 Final Quarter Contest: 'Birds' Theme



Closing Date: 31 Dec 2014

FINAL CALL FOR SUBMISSION

Three (3) best photos will be selected per contest. First, second and third winners will be awarded prizes.

As we are encouraging amateur and beginner photographers to enhance their photography skills, all photographs captured with digital camera will be accepted into the contest.

Rules & Conditions:

For Birds category, images can be captured on the wild and those in Bird Park and in Zoos. Images

captured are judge on astatic and creativity. We do not condone images captured by contrive method; ie: physically moving the individual bird to another location to create that shot, such images will be disqualify.

Photographs can be captured with any types of digital camera. Select 3 of your best shots for the theme. You may use a post-processing software to tweak your photos such as cropping, brightness, contrast, colour, saturation, HDR, panoramic stitching and etc. but not introduce superimposition i.e. putting other things there; or you may leave them as they are without modification. Photos must be in their natural state i.e. without studio set up.

Do NOT place visible watermarks on the image files. This is to avoid bias in photo judging. Any photos found with watermark will be rejected.

Use ONLY the JPEG format. Any other format will automatically be rejected and will not be entered into contest.

Please resize your image files to a maximum of 1,024 pixels on the long side.

Photos will be evaluated based on: (1) Relevance to theme, if any, (2) Composition, (3) Colour, (4) Lighting and Shadow and (5) Creativity.

Do NOT submit more than 3 image files; above that number will also be ignored. Photos that had previously won prizes in other contests are not eligible for entry into this contest.

EMAIL the 3 image files to mnsphoto-group@gmail.com and/or photo_submit@mnsphotogroup.org

For this quarter, please SUBMIT latest by 31st December 2014. Image files submitted after that will be ignored.

Nature Photography Competition

'MNS Natural History Photographer of the Year 2014'

For all the submissions received in the year during our MNS Photography 2014 Quarterly Contest, we will select the best 20 highest points garnet in all the 3 contests entered for them to enter for another round on the same 3 theme and Best Image and will name Him/Her 'The MNS Natural History Photographer of the Year'. There will be a Grand Prize courtesy of Schmidt Marketing (Malaysia) Sdn Bhd.

This Photo Competition is open to all paid-up MNS members only.

1st Prize: Minox Suntime



2nd Prize: Lenspen & SensorKlear & Loupe Set



3rd Prize: Lenspen NLP1 & Lenspen MiniProll





Pink Headed Reed Snake (*Calamaria schlegeli*)

Maximum Size : 40 cm

This is a small, attractive, non-venomous snake with a bright pink-red head, and no colouration on the tail. The dark dorsal colour exhibits a blue-green iridescence under strong light. The ventral surface is grey-white. Care should be taken not to confuse this species with the venomous Blue Malaysian Coral Snake (*Maticora bivirgata*).

As with other Reed Snakes this species is a burrowing forest dweller, which feeds on small invertebrates such as worms, sometimes emerging at night to take insects.

It ranges from southern Thailand, Peninsular Malaysia and Singapore to the islands of Borneo, Sumatra, Bangka and Belitung.

Photo by : Teo Eng Wah. Activity: MNS Herping and Birding Trip.

Location: Trail beside the Awana Genting Longhouse.

Date: 3-4 October 2014.

Love the outdoors?

Enjoy peace of mind... for you and your family by writing your Will today! Do you know that all our Assets including banks' accounts will be frozen upon Death? With OR Without a WILL!! How do you 'unlock' them? A Grant of Probate or Letter of Administration from the High Court. This process applies to Muslims and non-Muslims.

If you pass on without having a VALID WILL this is what happens:

1. Your Family

- Your spouse and children will face cash flow problem because all your bank accounts including joint accounts maybe frozen.
- Your children's welfare may not be taken care of by the people of your choice

2. The Legal Process

- Delay in distribution due to the legal administrative process (2-6 years)
- 2 guarantors / sureties required (amount equal or more than deceased's estate)
- Much more costly resulting in financial burdens to your family

3. Your Asset Distribution (as per Distribution Act 1958 amended in 1997 or distribution under Faraid)

- The law will decide on the distribution of your estate such as house(s), businesses, bank accounts, shares, etc.

LOVE YOUR FAMILY, WRITE YOUR WILL TODAY AND ENJOY PEACE OF MIND wherever you may be. Why leave to chance? For more information, please call..

MARY OOI

Making Your Wishes Come True

Rockwills Estate Planner (Rockwills Corporation Sdn. Bhd.)

Islamic Estate Planner (as-Salihin Trustee Sdn. Bhd.)

H/P: 012-337 9906 or email: mary_3_ooi@hotmail.com

(Servicing area: Klang Valley only)



Rockwills®

MNS HQ

JKR 541, Jalan Kelantan,
Bukit Persekutuan, 50480 Kuala Lumpur
(just before the Seri Perdana turn off to
Jalan Mahameru)
Open: Monday –Friday ; 9:00 a.m.–5:30 p.m.
T: 03-22879422 F: 03-22878773
mns@mns.org.my www.mns.my
Membership: Leong Wee Chin



BRANCH EXCO MEMBERS 2014-2015

Johor Branch

c/o Vincent Chow
32, Jln Molek 3/11, Tmn Molek, 81100 JB, Johor
www.mnsj.org.my
Blog: www.mnsj.org.my
Chairman: Vincent Chow, vkkchow@yahoo.com
Vice-Chair: Wee Soon Chit, soonchit@hotmail.com
Secretary: Belinda Wong Mei Lang, belinda@bellogistics.com

Kuching Branch (Sarawak)

Email: mnskuching@gmail.com
Chairman: Anthony C. Sebastian, aonyxenvironmental@gmail.com
Vice-Chair: Rose Au Nyat Jun, njau44@yahoo.com
Secretary: Asha Devi Kaushal, princezhope@gmail.com

Miri Branch (Sarawak)

Email: mnsmiri@yahoo.com; Blog: mnsmiri.blogspot.com
Chairman: Musa Musbah, sammua@yahoo.com
Vice-Chair: Yeo Hong Yan, John, drjyeo@gmail.com
Secretary: Mairead Boland, maireadgboland@gmail.com

Selangor Branch

c/o MNS HQ address
www.mns.my/selangor
Email: mns.selangor@gmail.com
E-group: malaysiannaturesociety@yahoogroups.com
Chairman: K. S. Goh, Henry, henrygks10@gmail.com
Vice-Chair: Pasupathy Jayaraj, pasupathy_jayaraj@yahoo.com
Secretary: Wong Pui May, wongpuimay@hotmail.com

Kedah Branch

Address: 291 Jalan Shahab 1, Shahab Perdana, 05350 ALOR SETAR, Kedah
Chairman: Left Kol Husamuddin bin Yaacob
Vice-Chair: Wan Muhaimin B Wan Jamil, wanatc@yahoo.com
Secretary: Phang Fatt Khaw, fkphang05@yahoo.com

Kelantan Branch

204, Jln Sultan Yahya Petra, 15150 Kota Bharu, Kelantan.
Email: meklawa@gmail.com
Chairman: Aweng A/L Eh Rak, aweng@umk.edu.my
Vice-Chair: Amir Hamzah bin Abdul Shukor, amrieta@yahoo.com
Secretary: Nazahatul Anis Amaludin, anisamaludin@gmail.com

Langkawi Branch

mnslangkawi@yahoogroups.com
Chairman: Eric R. Sinnaya, morahols@gmail.com
Vice-Chair: Kamal Ibrahim, ezkamal@gmail.com
Secretary: Preti Babu Sashikant, summerfurnishing@yahoo.com

Negeri Sembilan/Melaka Branch

Chairman: Dr Zorina Khalid, drzorina@moh.gov.my
Vice-Chair: Peter Loke, peterpkloke@yahoo.com
Secretary: June Teng, MNS.N9Melaka@gmail.com

Pahang Branch

No. 30 1st Floor Jalan Gambut, 25000 Kuantan, Pahang;
mnsphg@yahoo.com.sg
Chairman: Zela Azni Binti Nahizan, palia_potter@yahoo.co.uk
Vice-Chair: Nurul Azne Ibrahim
Secretary: Noor Hassikin Binti Hamsah, noor_hassikin@yahoo.com

Penang Branch

Nature Information Centre (NIC),
673-B Jln Kebun Bunga,
10350 Penang. Tel: 04-2273673
Open Mon-Sat, 7.30am – 11.30am
(Please phone before visiting)
www.geocities.com/mnspenang/
Blog: mnspenang@yahoogroups.com; email: mnspenang@yahoo.com
Chairman: Tan Choo Eng, chooengtan@yahoo.com
Vice-Chair: James Ooi Teik Kok, jamesooiteikkok@yahoo.com
Secretary: Tan Pek Tao, Peggy, tpeggypeach@yahoo.com

Perak Branch

Email: mnsperak@gmail.com
8, Jln Virgo, Star Park, 31400 Ipoh
Blog: mnsperak@yahoogroups.com
Chairman: Ooi Beng Yean, bengyeen@gmail.com
Vice-Chair: Leow Kon Fah, leow_kingfisher@yahoo.com
Secretary: Georgia Tham Yim Fong, georgi8tham@yahoo.com

Sabah Branch

No. 5, Taman Bukit Saujana, Lorong Saujana 2, Jalan Fung Yie Teng, 88460 Kolombong, Kota Kinabalu, Sabah
Chairman: Anna Wong, annawg888@gmail.com
Vice-Chair: Jimmy Omar, jemyomar@gmail.com
Secretary: Dewina Saidin, dewinuwa@gmail.com

Sabah (Sandakan) Branch

Lot 322, Lorong Pertama 17, Taman Pertama, 90000 Sandakan, Sabah
Chairman: Chong Ket Vui Dusun, dusun_chong@yahoo.com
Vice-Chair: Gengadharan G Pillai, genga_pillai@yahoo.com
Secretary: Quah Joo Lee, jocquah104@gmail.com

Terengganu Branch

1926, Bkt Kubang Jambu, 20050 Kuala Terengganu.
Email: mnsterengganu@gmail.com
Chairman: Wong Chee Ho, cheeho@umt.edu.my
Vice-Chair: Wee Seng Whatt, swwee88@gmail.com
Secretary: Anuar Abdullah McAfee, anuar@ms.kusza.edu.my

PENCINTA ALAM is a monthly newsletter made possible by dedicated volunteers and contributors from the Malaysian Nature Society. Accuracy is the contributor's responsibility. The Editor reserves the right to edit for length and content.



Submissions: Articles including the author and photographers' names (max. 800 words), advertisements, digital images (100 dpi & no larger than 640 x 480 pixels & separately from the article), etc. must reach the Editor by the 13th of each month (unless noted otherwise) via the following e-mail address: tapir2005@gmail.com.



Advertising rates:

Classifieds: RM5 per column inch
Quarter page ad: RM30
Half page ad: RM60

- All payments must be made to 'Malaysian Nature Society Selangor Branch'.
- Please bank in cash or cheque to Maybank Account no 014150307352.
- After banking in, please scan the slip and e-mail it with your advertisement to: tapir2005@gmail.com and berniechin118@yahoo.com.

Discount rate for ads paid in advance:

3 adverts paid in advance – 5% off published rate;
6 adverts paid in advance – 10% off published rate;
9 adverts paid in advance – 15% off published rate;
12 adverts paid in advance – 20% off published rate.

ATTENTION!

Please bring your membership card to all activities as proof of membership.



This issue's editor:
Khor Hui Min
Next issue's editor:
Khor Hui Min

Have you been to an MNS activity lately? Why not share your experience with other members by writing an account of your activity and submitting it (preferably with photographs) for publication in *Pencinta Alam*? Email your article to: tapir2005@gmail.com

Renew Your Membership via Online Credit Card Payment

Settling your MNS membership fee is now made easier with on-line credit card payment via the MNS website. To renew, please visit <https://www.mns.my/subscription/>. For inquiries, contact Wee Chin at membership@mns.org.my

Don't Leave Home Without It
All members must show their membership cards to participate in any Branch's activities. New members who haven't received their cards must show their membership payment receipts. Lost your card? Contact Wee Chin at HQ.

Computer Recycling Collection Centre

The MNS Penang, Nature Information Centre (NIC) is a designated recycling collection centre for old computers and computer parts by the Penang City Council. Please send your unwanted computers and parts to the NIC to be sent for recycling by DOE approved recycling establishment. Contact Kanda at 013-4537992 for more information or check out Penang Branch web pages

