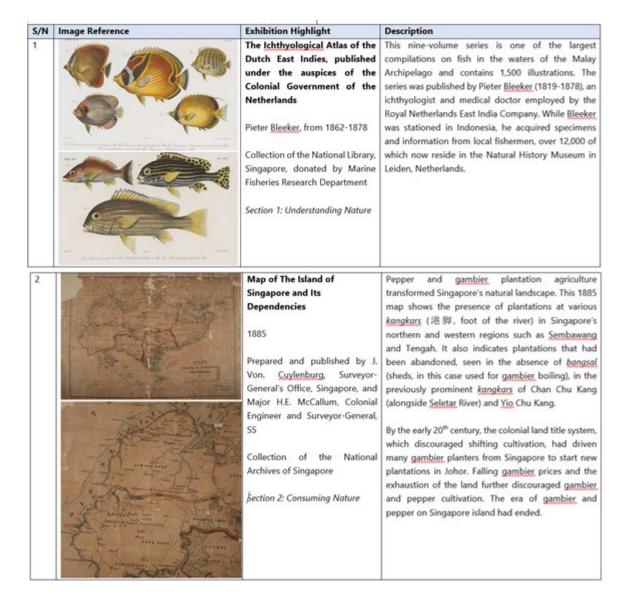
Over 150 materials on display at new exhibition: Human X Nature: Environmental histories of Singapore

Singapore, 09 April 2021

ANNEX A

SELECTED HIGHLIGHTS FROM HUMAN X NATURE: ENVIRONMENTAL HISTORIES OF SINGAPORE EXHIBITION



Village Malay No. 6-10 Singapore Section 1: Understanding Nature Annual Report of the Director 4 of Gardens

Medicine: Prescriptions collected by I.H. **Burkhill an Mohamed Haniff**

The Garden's Bulletin Straits Settlements Vol. VI (April 1930),

Collection of the National Library,

This is remarkable for being one of the rare few publications on Malay medicine that credits a Malay naturalist as an author. Botanists Isaac Henry Burkhill (1870-1965) and Mohamed Haniff (1872-1830), longtime colleagues and collaborators, toured the Malay Peninsula consulting bomohs (medical practitioners) and bidgns (mid-wives) for information on local medicines, Informants were asked to bring samples of medicinal plants, which were deposited in the Singapore Botanic Gardens Herbarium, and their characteristics and uses recorded

This book contains valuable information on botanical knowledge of the Malay communities across the peninsula and includes a glossary of Malay names alongside scientific names. The authors noted that by Malay naming convention, many plants were named for their properties and uses rather than appearance, resulting in different looking plants bearing similar names. This surprised European scientists who were used to classifying species by physical characteristics and had a poor understanding of Malay knowledge systems, often attributing perceived inaccuracies to the Malay sources.

This page details the uses of plants in the Hibiscus family. Listed here is Hibiscus rosa-sinensi (Bunga raya), drunk as a tea or infusion and used to treat a variety of illnesses ranging from fevers, headaches and high blood pressure to venereal diseases.

Richard Eric Holttum (1895-1990) Singapore: 1937

Collection of the National Library, Singapore

Section 1: Understanding Nature

While being primarily objects of the study of natural history, there were instances of animals assisting humans in botanical research. This Annual Report by then Singapore Botanic Gardens Director Eric Holttum in 1937 features a section on the unique story of Edred Henry Corner and his Botanical Monkeys. Corner employed monkeys as specimen collectors.

Corner was Assistant Director at the Botanic Gardens at the time, and one of his primary interests was the study of trees in Malaya. A significant problem he encountered while collecting specimen was the retrieval of tree top leaves, fruits and flowers beyond human reach. The report mentions that most households across the Malay Peninsula had domesticated Berok Monkeys trained to collect fruit such as coconuts. Corner bought one such monkey from a man named Awang bin Salleh for about 28 Straits dollars (approximately S\$375 today).

The monkeys were put under the care of Mohammed Ngadiman, a botanical collector and Herbarium assistant, and were deployed at Bukit Timah Hill daily, collecting hundreds of specimens. These monkeys are still credited as the collectors of some specimens in the Botanic Gardens Herbarium today.

Account of a new species of tapir in the peninsula of Malacca

William Farguhar, A. Seton, Pierre-Medard Diard

Asiatic Researches, Vol. XIII No. XI (1820/21)

Collection of the National Library, Singapore

Prior to his position as First Resident of Singapore, William Farquhar (1774-1839) served as Resident and Commandant in Melaka for 15 years. Throughout that time, he was extremely active as a naturalist. He commissioned the capture and collection of plants and animals, and compiled information for publishing.

This specimen of a Juvenile Tapir features its signature white-spotted brown coat. Tapirs change colour between four and seven months of age, a phenomenon observed by Farquhar when he kept a young tapir in his home.



Juvenile Tapir Specimen

On loan from Lee Kong Chian Natural History Museum

Section 1: Understanding Nature

According to his account, his tapir was very easily domesticated and had become something of a house pet, "as tame and familiar as any of the dogs about the house", feeding "indiscriminately on all kinds of vegetables, and was very fond of attending at the table to receive bread, cakes, or the like". Unfortunately, the animal died suddenly after six months of living in Farquhar's home.



desultory account of the Malayan Archipelago, particularly of Java.

Ong Tae Hae (汪大海)

Shanghai: 1849

The Chinaman abroad, or, a Originally published in 1791, Ong Tae Hae's account of his travels through the Malayan Archipelago is a rare 18th century Chinese travelogue of the region. While trade within China was thriving at the time, few travel writings by Chinese writers emerged beyond China's borders or tribute states. This 1849 edition includes names in the original Chinese, as well as the occasional Latin identification. It was translated into THE PLYTISO-PLYIN, OR THE AWALLOW PIGHT, BY AND IN IN WITHOUT SCAPES, but in mode wis first, about six inches long, and a tail divided in a pena, libs a swallow's tail; the fab is more than a a single, and can By out of water, but not very high. In the winds and warms are bosterous, it flies against wand, and darm along like an acrow.

ME THE ALLOATOR

In an impa limit, but large, being from ten to twenty
as impa. In head resembles a pig's smout: it has a
making mangue; its back is rugged, and its eyes are
may its all tapers to a point, and its claws are very
with clashes a shore without causing a wave, and dives
the man without lossing a wake. Whenever it deman people call a native doctor, or dukun (老 智 le-

Collection of the National Library, Singapore

Section 1: Understanding Nature

English by missionary Walter <u>Medhurst</u> from the London Missionary Society in Singapore.

Ong Tae Hae was a merchant and scholar who left China on a ten-year journey of trade and exploration between 1783-1794. His account of his travels describes the places he visits, people he encountered both foreign and indigenous, cultural objects, customs and medicines, as well as an extensive section on plants, animals, minerals and geography.

This page shows his descriptions of the various fruits he came across, including <u>Salak</u>, <u>Mangosteen</u>, Areca, and Durian, providing an interesting perspective on local produce.

11

Map of the Island of Singapore and its Dependencies: to accompany Report on the Forest Administration in the Straits Settlements

Executed by the Colonial Engineer and Surveyor General of the Straits Settlements in 1898 This 1898 map shows the forest reserves, marked in green, that existed on the island at the turn of the 20th century. The town reserves supplied timber for constructing the main town settlement; the coastal reserves provided fuel and prevented soil erosion; and the interior reserves protected streams and water supplies like the Impounding Reservoir.

In the 1880s, Nathaniel <u>Cantley</u> (1847-1888), Superintendent of the Singapore Botanic Gardens, was tasked with reinvigorating a natural landscape

Collection of the National Library, that had been overtaken by plantation agriculture. Cantley established forestry programmes to Singapore encourage the sustainable consumption of nature. including the gazetting of Singapore's earliest forest Section 2: Consuming Nature reserves. From 1885 to 1898, the Forest Department gazetted more forest reserves and expanded existing ones, with the goal of eradicating the lalang weed and producing more timber resources for the colony. The commercial cultivation of rubber in Malaya was The Story of the Rubber Industry, with an appendix by pioneered by Henry Ridley (1855-1956), the first he Story of the L. Lewton-Brain, showing the director of the Singapore Botanic Gardens. Ridley growth of the rubber industry refined the herring-bone method of tapping rubber, in Malaya from 1905 to 1912 which protected the rubber tree from damage. This ensured that rubber trees had a latex-producing Henry Nicholas Ridley lifespan of over 20 years, allowing planters to cultivate the crop on a mass scale globally for the first time. Collection of the National Library, Singapore This pamphlet was created by Ridley to encourage planters to take up rubber planting. He outlines the Section 2: Consuming Nature history of rubber cultivation, best tapping practices and preparation methods, and rubber's economic potential and output in Malaya. Shown here is a photograph of Ridley standing next to a Brazilian rubber tree with herring-bone incisions in the Singapore Botanic Gardens, where he served as director. Ridley was known to fill his jacket pockets with fresh rubber seeds and then stuff them into the pockets of uninterested planters to persuade them to plant rubber. These actions later earned him the nicknames "Mad Ridley" and "Rubber Ridley". 10 Outline Malayan This handbook describes agricultural conditions, Agriculture cultivation methods, production costs and trading prices of various crops in Malaya. Such publications Donald Honey Grist were produced to disseminate knowledge on the colonial agricultural enterprise to planters around 1936 Malaya. Collection of the National Library, Shown here are details of the gambier manufacturing process. Gambier was commonly produced and sold Singapore in two forms - a "block" (or "bale") and "cube" (or "round"). Gambier cubes were first left out on racks in Section 2: Consuming Nature the sun to dry for one to two days, before being heated near the furnace to complete its drying process. Gambier bales, in contrast, were subjected to a shorter drying period before being packed in grass matting for the market.



Japanese Printing Block and **Accompanying Print**

Metal plate attached to a wood block

Kiyohiko

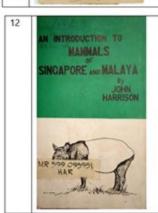
Illustration Watanahe Singapore: c. 1944

On loan from the Collection of Singapore Botanic Gardens Archives, National Parks Board

Section 1: Understanding Nature

Japanese scientists in Singapore were as invested in the many uses of local flora and fauna as the British. This printing block was used to print illustrations for a 1944 book, Useful Plants from the Southern Region. The book was written and illustrated by Kiyohiko Watanabe, a Japanese botanist, and assistant of then Singapore Botanic Gardens Director, Kwan Koriba. The research information had been yielded from the staff of the Singapore Botanic Gardens, as well as other institutions under Japanese control at the time.

The plant species illustrated by this printing block was Quassia indica (labelled Samadera indica), also known as the Niepa Bark Tree or Kacang-kacang in Malay. Its wood was commonly used in the region for Parang and other knife handles due to its hardy nature. Various parts of the tree are used in traditional Malay and Aryuvedic medicine to treat various ailments including stomach aches, fevers, and head lice. It is also commonly used as an organic insecticide.



Singapore and Malaya

John Leonard Harrison, 1966

Collection of the National Library, Singapore

Section 3: Remaking Nature

An introduction to mammals of This book by John Harrison (1917-1972), Professor of Zoology at the University of Singapore, is the first-ever publication of the Malayan Nature Society, and the first complete account of all mammals in Singapore and Malaya.

> In the introduction, Harrison encourages the reader to venture out, discover and document such animals. As he writes, "a good deal is known about Malayan mammals... [and] written about them, but a great deal remains to be discovered. It is you, the reader, who is going to make these discoveries; it is your observations, duly recorded in your notebooks, which are going to provide the material for future books."

13

Flowers of Singapore: Special Stamp Issues 10th Tree Planting Day (1980)

Collection of the National Archives of Singapore.

Section 3: Remaking Nature

This poster features a commemorative stamp collection issued to celebrate the 10th anniversary of Tree Planting Day. The stamps feature commonly seen flowers in Singapore such as the Ixora and Bougainvillea. Tree Planting Day began in 1971 as a part of the Garden City Campaign.