MEDIA FACTSHEET

Park Connector Network

Implemented by the National Parks Board (NParks), the Park Connector Network is an island-wide network of linear open spaces around major residential areas, linking up parks and nature sites in Singapore. It brings people closer to green spaces, enhancing recreational opportunities for all, and is an important part of our plans to transform Singapore into a ‘City in a Garden’.

NParks has completed 200km of park connectors around the island, providing users with a network of green corridors and a wider choice of landscapes and distances for recreation. The North Eastern Riverine Loop is the fourth loop of park connectors developed by NParks after the Northern Explorer Loop (2010), Eastern Coastal Loop (2007) and Western Adventure Loop (2009).

Over the next five years, the NParks plans to build another 100 km of park connectors. Three more loops of park connectors are in the pipeline.

North Eastern Riverine Loop

The 26km North Eastern Riverine Loop is situated in the Northeastern region of Singapore, which follows the natural coastline of Punggol Beach and the river banks of Sungei Punggol and Sungei Serangoon on the West and East side respectively. It encompasses Buangkok, Punggol, Hougang and Sengkang Towns.

The loop consists of Punggol Park Connector (6.1km), Punggol Promenade (4.9km), Serangoon Park Connector (2.3km), Sungei Serangoon Park Connector (2.1km), Buangkok Park Connector (1.5km) and Punggol Waterway (8.4km – both ways). These park connectors serve to link four parks: Punggol Park, Punggol Waterway Park (along Punggol Waterway), Punggol Point Park (at Punggol Promenade) and Sengkang Riverside Park.

For more information, please contact Mr Chen Hsin Yeow at 9187-1926 (Chen_Hsin_Yeow@nparks.gov.sg) or Ms Charmaine Lim at 9424-7023 (Charmaine_Lim@nparks.gov.sg)
Parks along the North Eastern Riverine Loop

The loop links four parks: Punggol Park, Punggol Waterway Park (along Punggol Waterway), Punggol Point Park (at Punggol Promenade) and Sengkang Riverside Park:

1) **Punggol Waterway Park**

The Punggol Waterway Park and My Waterway @ Punggol is a joint agency project between HDB and NParks. The project is part of HDB’s ‘Remaking Our Heartland’ initiatives to turn Punggol Town into a ‘Waterfront Town’ of the 21st century.

The project serves to increase park and waterfrontage for housing developments and provide a green respite for residents. It also provides residents opportunities for leisure activities such as jogging and cycling along the promenade at both sides of the waterway.

2) **Punggol Point Park**

See 2a) below.
3) Sengkang Riverside Park

Sengkang Riverside Park is located at Anchorvale Street and is situated alongside Sungei Punggol. Consisting of three open-space land parcels, the park is designed to provide a tranquil experience to visitors.

The park is home to a unique water feature, a constructed wetland that collects and filters rainwater naturally through its aquatic plants. The wetland also doubles as a wildlife habitat. The constructed wetland attracts many mangrove birds into the park such as purple heron, collared kingfisher and little tern.

Other than that, dragonflies & damselflies, like the Red Scarlet and Common Bluetail damselfly, can also be found resting on the aquatic plants.

As an excellent example of how the protection of our water resources can be creatively integrated with urban planning in a sustainable manner, Sengkang Riverside Park was awarded the ABC Waters Certification. You can also find Singapore's largest man-made wetland, the Sengkang Floating Wetland nearby as well.

Another interesting feature of Sengkang Riverside Park is its focus on edible fruit trees. In the aptly named Mango Hilltop, Citrus Grove, and Pineapple Valley, you can find common fruits like star fruit, chiku, pineapple and dragon fruits.

4) Punggol Park

Developed with the theme "Family Leisure", this park has many facilities to cater to the young and old. The play and fitness equipment for active recreation, open lawn areas for picnics or kite flying, a wooded area for leisurely strolls, a plaza area for taiqi and a community corner for relaxing can be enjoyed by all members of the family.

The park has two distinctive zones, which are the Southern Active Zone where the features for major activities are provided, and the densely forested area in the north of the pond, which forms the "Passive Zone" where one can engage in passive form of recreation.

Visitors can also enjoy the following facilities at the park: Barbecue pits, BYOP, Children’s play equipment, Food & beverage area/ restaurant/ cafe, Fitness corner/ stations & fitness equipment/ exercise station, jogging path/ running track, pond shelters.

Park Connectors along the North Eastern Riverine Loop

The loop consists of the following park connectors:

1) Punggol Park Connector

The 6.1km water-themed park connector runs along Sungei Punggol and connects Punggol Promenade to Gerald Drive. Completed and opened to public in 2010, the park connector boosts high biodiversity with the retention of wild lalang and grass. It also connects to Punggol Waterway, passes by Sengkang Floating Wetland and ends at Gerald Drive.
Biodiversity – Majestic Grey Heron, migratory Little Egret and our resident Collared Kingfisher.

2) **Punggol Promenade**

Conceptualised and developed by the Urban Redevelopment Authority (URA), the Punggol Promenade project provides access to the rustic north-eastern coastline for public enjoyment and establishes it as a waterfront recreational destination for residents in Punggol and the north-east region. This 4.9km Promenade links up Punggol Point and Punggol East, opening up previously inaccessible stretches along the coast. It also connects further south with the park connectors along the Serangoon and Punggol Reservoirs.

The design of the Punggol Promenade aims to retain, reinforce and enhance the existing character and natural beauty of the coastline. Each of the three thematic zones – Punggol Point Walk, Nature Walk and Riverside Walk – is distinctive and offers visitors a variety of recreational experiences. Nature Walk is the last segment of the Punggol Promenade to be opened to the public. Riverside Walk and the Punggol Point Walk were opened to the public in 2011.

The development of the promenade also received strong community support with the contribution of 1,000 trees (SGD$200,000 donation) from Singapore Technologies Engineering Ltd. More than 1,200 participants took part in the tree planting efforts at Punggol Promenade under Garden City Fund’s Plant-A-Tree Programme.

a) **Punggol Point Walk (1.2km)**

Punggol Point is identified as one of the coastal areas with rustic charm in the URA’s Parks & Waterbodies and Identity Plans drawn up in 2002.

A 0.6ha park serves as the gateway to the rest of the waterfront. Visitors will be greeted by a beautiful lily pond as they proceed towards the promenade. Visitors can also enjoy the sea views overlooking the Straits of Johor on the elevated viewing deck on the jetty, take a walk along the promenade, or stroll along the beautiful sandy beach.

b) **Nature Walk (2.4km)**

The Nature Walk consists of a nature trail meandering through a rustic and well-vegetated area and is a place for the adventurous and those seeking respite from the busy heartlands. Existing trees and vegetation will be kept, and other more coastal-loving and commonly found plant species of the area will be added to create a nature haven. Visitors can enjoy the flora and fauna of the area. There are also fishing points and rest shelters.

c) **Riverside Walk (1.3km)**

Visitors can enjoy the unhindered views of Sungei Serangoon. The promenade has many lookout points which allow visitors to get closer to the water edge. Visitors can take a stroll or jog along the footpath and cycle or skate along the dedicated cycling path.
track. There is also a fitness corner with a range of stations for the enjoyment of visitors of all ages.

3) Buangkok Park Connector

This 2.4km park connector is popular with a variety of users, from commuters to jogging enthusiasts. It runs along residential estates and connects to Punggol Park via Serangoon Park Connector (Punggol Park – Buangkok Green).

4) Serangoon Park Connector

The 2.3km park connector links Punggol Park to Buangkok Park Connector and also to Sg Serangoon Park Connector. In 1998, the first part of Serangoon Park Connector (1.2km) was completed. It passes through housing estates along Buangkok Drive, serving as a recreational corridor for residents. Facilities which can be found here include park benches and fitness stations.

Another stretch of Serangoon Park Connector (2km), which is an off-shoot of the North Eastern Riverine Loop, links Punggol Park to Tampines Road. Along this park connector is the Chrysalis Butterfly Garden which was set up in collaboration with Serangoon Secondary School.

Chrysalis Butterfly garden – As part of their community involvement project with the theme ‘Caring for Our Environment’, over 200 Secondary One students were introduced to the importance of butterflies and plants in the ecosystem, the various types of host and nectar plants found in a tropical butterfly garden, as well as basic maintenance skills. The butterfly garden was launched in 2010.

Biodiversity – Nature lovers can delight in the high biodiversity found along this off-shoot, including the Grey Heron, Little Egret, and conspicuous Collared and White-throated Kingfisher.

5) Sungei Serangoon Park Connector

The park connector is a crucial link from Punggol Park to Punggol Promenade via Serangoon Park Connector (Sungei Pinang). Its seamless connectivity to both parks with an aesthetically pleasing bioswale* is a favourite destination for residents living in the North-East.

This park connector is unique as it houses an aesthetically-pleasing bioswale which is a shallow vegetated trough or depression with bio-retention systems installed at the base. These swales are designed to treat storm water effectively with its gently sloped sides, hence, preventing erosion occurrences. Together with temporary short term retention of water, the bioswale enables efficient infiltration of surface water and acts as an excellent flood control measure. Benefits of bioswales include slowing down surface runoff, promoting biodiversity and habitat growth, enhancing the beauty of surrounding landscape and cleansing water naturally in a chemical-free way. List of species planted at the bioswale are:

- Cymbopogon citratus

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- Ophiopogon jaburan
- Pogonatherum paniceum
- Russelia equisetiformis
- Tibouchina urvilleana
- Pennisetum setaceum
- Arundina graminifolia
- Arundo donax
- Pandanus amaryllifolius
- Crinum asiaticum

*What is a Bioswale?*

Also known as a bio retention swale, bioswales are shallow vegetated troughs or depressions with bio-retention systems installed at the base. These swales are designed to treat storm water effectively with its gently sloped sides, hence preventing erosion occurrences. Together with short term retention of water, the bioswale enables efficient infiltration of surface water and acts as an excellent flood control measure.

Several layers of varied soil types such as coarse sand and fine gravel form the base of the bio-retention system. These layers enable rain water to be filtered through at a steady rate by which fine particles are removed and soluble nutrients are taken up by the roots the plants and soil microbes. As a result of this filtration, silt and other water pollutants are arrested in the bioswale, allowing only treated run off to flow into Serangoon Reservoir.

**Biodiversity along the North Eastern Riverine Loop**

**Waterbirds**

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<tr>
<th>Species/Description</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Photo</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Scaly-breasted Munia (Lonchura punctulata)</strong></td>
<td>Punggol Point Walk</td>
<td><img src="photo1.png" alt="Scaly-breasted Munia" /></td>
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<tr>
<td>The next time you see a small group of ‘sparrows’ feeding on grass seeds amongst tall grasses, look again! They might be Scaly-breasted Munias, a small brown bird belonging to the same family as sparrows. Adults have ‘scales’ on their white breasts, hence the name.</td>
<td><img src="photo1.png" alt="Scaly-breasted Munia" /></td>
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| **Pacific Swallow (Hirundo tahitica)** | Punggol Point Walk | ![Pacific Swallow](photo2.png) |
| Aerial acrobatics galore! Watch swallows wheel and swoop in an open airspace near you as they feed on tiny insects. Look closely when it perches | ![Pacific Swallow](photo2.png) |
and you will notice its chestnut-red throat and deep blue-black back.

**Yellow-vented Bulbul** (*Pycnonotus goiavier*)

These common birds are attracted to urban and park areas by sweet and juicy fruits on trees and shrubs. Identify them by their black ‘mohawk’ and the yellow under their tail and listen out for their burbling call.

**Black-naped Oriole** (*Oriolus chinensis*)

This striking black and yellow bird is common around urban areas, serenading us with its melodious song. Although brightly coloured, they are shy birds that tend to hide in the branches, so look out for flashes of yellow as they fly from tree to tree in search of food.

**Little Tern** (*Sterna albifrons*)

One would normally associate terns with the sea but Little Terns commonly travel upstream to feed. Look out for them hovering over the water to locate fish and then diving spectacularly into the water after they hover. They tend to be present here around March to May.

**Grey Heron** (*Ardea cinerea*)

Standing at 1m tall, the Grey Heron is one of the largest birds in Singapore. This elegant native waterbird is often seen standing motionless along the river banks watching the fish go by, then quickly snapping one out of the water for a tasty meal.
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<tr>
<th><strong>Little Egret</strong> (<em>Egretta garzetta</em>)</th>
<th>Can be found along most of the park connectors</th>
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<tr>
<td>Commonly seen along waterways, Little Egrets are hard to miss with their white plumage, black bill and yellow feet. This lively hunter employs a wide variety of fishing techniques: They may patiently stalk prey in shallow waters or even stand on one leg and wave (or tap) the other bright yellow foot over the water surface to lure aquatic prey into range.</td>
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<tr>
<th><strong>Great Egret</strong> (<em>Casmerodius albus</em>)</th>
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<td>This winter visitor sometimes hangs out with Little Egrets and can be differentiated by its longer legs, yellow bill and black feet. Its neck is longer than the body and is held in a distinctive kink.</td>
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<tr>
<th><strong>Common Sandpiper</strong> (<em>Actitis hypoleucos</em>)</th>
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<td>A migratory bird that hails from North Asia, the Common Sandpiper travels to warmer climates every winter. It has a distinctive habit of bobbing its tail while foraging for food, making it difficult to miss even as it camouflages itself with the surrounding background.</td>
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<tr>
<th><strong>Striated Heron</strong> (<em>Butorides striatus</em>)</th>
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<td>Also known as Little Heron due to their small stature, this bird is often seen hunched into a compact egg-shape and intently looking out for prey. It is also the most common and widespread resident heron. If you are lucky, you can see some sitting in nests on trees towering above the park connectors</td>
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<tr>
<th><strong>Collared Kingfisher</strong> (<em>Todiramphus chloris</em>)</th>
<th>Can be found along most of the park connectors</th>
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<td>Another commonly seen and heard bird</td>
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along waterways, the distinctive laughing call of the Collared Kingfisher is a familiar sound with many.

**White-throated Kingfisher** (*Halcyon smyrnensis*)

Although not as common as the Collared Kingfisher, this species makes its presence known by its loud calls and striking plumage. See if you can spot one perching on a tree or railing, or look out for the flash of brilliant blue wings as it flies off.

**White-breasted Waterhen** (*Amaurornis phoenicurus*)

These comical birds are great fun to observe as they wander around foraging for food on the ground, pecking at titbits in chicken-like movements. Often heard before they are seen, their loud quarrelsome calls sound like their Malay name, Ruak Ruak.

### Plants

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<th>Species/Description</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Lilyturf, Snakebeard</strong></td>
<td>Sungei Serangoon Park Connector (Bioswale)</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Lilyturf" /></td>
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<td>The beautiful <em>Ophiopogon jaburan</em> is attractive even when not in bloom, its purple-blue flower spikes beautify the bioswale and provide long-term enhancement of the landscape due to its durability. Its ability to grow in loamy soils means that it can withstand wet and dry conditions in this bioswale.</td>
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| **Pandan** (*Pandanus amaryllifolius*) | Sungei Serangoon Park Connector (Bioswale) | ![Pandan](image) |
| Flowering rather rarely, the *Pandanus amaryllifolius* is instead well-known for |

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| **Coral Plant, Firecracker Plant**  
(Russelia equisetiformis) | **Giant Reed, Spanish Reed**  
(Arundo donax) |
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<td>Native to Tropical America and Mexico, this mult-branched shrub has slim and brush-like stems which are ridged, and tiny leaves that pale in comparison to its explosive display of scarlet flowers blooming in clusters all-year round. These firecracker-like flowers are tubular and attract butterflies and bees to it with its distinct colour. Other than aesthetically enhancing is surroundings, this fast-growing plant plays a functional role in the bioswale by taking up nutrients that are filtered from the surface runoff.</td>
<td>Although commonly mistaken as corn, bamboo or sugar cane, this plant stakes out its identity with its large thick stem, which can grow up to 6 metres tall. The white strips on its leaves make it stand out amongst the other plants in this bioswale. Residing in damp soils reduces erosion and is most ideal for plant growth, thus explaining its native growth in eastern and southern Asia where rainfall is adequate. The Giant reed is the largest and tallest ornamental grass other than bamboo and can be used to make wood wind instruments.</td>
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### African Fountain Grass, Purple Fountain Grass (*Pennisetum setaceum*)

Having one of its common names as the African fountain grass, this plant resides natively in open spaces and shrubby regions in tropical Africa, the Middle East and Southwest Asia. This plant not only displays its feathery plumes in the breeze at a height of 0.9 to 1.2 metres, but also acts as an excellent erosion prevention control in this bioswale.

### Lemon grass

This tropical plant grows densely in clumps to about 1.8 metres. Its leaves give off a crisp citrus fragrance when brushed along the walkway. Commonly known as lemon grass, its stem is extensively used in Thai cooking such as the well-known Tom Yam soup. Lemon grass leaves can also be crushed to make tea used for relieving gastrointestinal discomfort or distilled to extract lemon grass oil as a perfume concentrate.

### DIY Trail-Guides on North Eastern Riverine Loop

Users can download the new Do-It-Yourself (DIY) Trail-guides on the North Eastern Riverine Loop. This guide provides information on the interesting highlights of the loop, as users embark on their recreational activity. To download the guide, visit [www.nparks.gov.sg/eguides](http://www.nparks.gov.sg/eguides).