

Buaya Zine Introduction

Buaya: The Making of a Non-Myth, the prep-room project, first emerged when conservator, Kate Pocklington received a crocodile specimen that was originally exhibited at the Raffles Museum in 1887. A receipt for a taxidermied leopard found amongst the crocodile stuffing sparked Pocklington's research frenzy. This curios was also shared by artist Lucy Davis which then became the inspiration her 2014 artwork *Nanyang Meadows*. This work was displayed under the exhibition *Unearthed* at the Singapore Art Museum. This crocodile has garnered much interest from both Pocklington and Davis and had sustained iterations of creative expressions. Based on Pocklington's and Davis's continuous research of the crocodile, the NUS Museum prep-room project *Buaya: The Making of a Non-Myth* is not merely a revival of past interests but a furtherance in the generative discursive possibilities of one crocodile.

Inspired by the prep-room project *Buaya: The Making of a Non-Myth*, NUS Museum interns David and Natalie designed and compiled this zine as an extended exploration of the possibilities the project possessed. Acting as an incubatory space, the prep-room in NUS Museum serves as "A site of exploration, experimentation and encounters"¹, where curators and artists converge to present burgeoning ideas and concepts, while simultaneously allowing for public engagement and interaction with the exhibition-making process, a collaboration that may, or may not, eventually culminate in a formal exhibition. According to the head of the museum, Mr Ahmad Mashadi, "In the prep-room, internships, mentorships and encounters bridge knowledge, disciplines, experiences and even sensibilities in the hope of producing something surprising."² In essence, prep-room projects exist to be educative, incubatory, experimental, and generative.

Following suit, any traditional exhibition publication following standard editorial directions or conventional design principles would only seem strange as an accompaniment to the prototypical prep-room project. Thus, follows the choice of the zine as a medium for exploration and elaboration. The zine, being a non-commercial, often self-made, experimental, and devoted to unconventional subject matters, seems to be a natural fit for this prep-room project. Its unorthodox design allows one to take on multiple lenses at once, allowing for the exploration of a milieu of themes, from local myths to cultural and natural histories, to social identity and industrial and urban development, or even the colonial enterprise and the environment. The zine's medium of gathering and disseminating knowledge offers countless possibilities to investigate Singapore's ambivalent relationship with the crocodile, without confining readers to a singular narrative.

Rather than studying the subject matter through the prism of a particular discipline, this zine adopts Pocklington's and Davis's method in positioning the crocodile at the centre of discursive considerations, acting as a fountainhead from which other discursive streams may effuse. To be able to present all the connective threads issuing from an investigative research concerning the crocodile in Singapore in any concise and meaningful way in its entirety would ultimately take the form of an exhaustive academic publication. The interns have instead opted to leverage on the playfulness and quirkiness of the zine to highlight key discursive threads emerging from the prep-room project. Materials were mainly sourced from the internet, online newspaper archives, and brochures, and selected to best characterise a certain discourse surrounding the crocodile. The zine, however, is not meant to be a mere compendium of sources about the crocodile, but works to show how the different threads connect with and juxtapose against each other, encouraging the reader to reconsider the cacophony of information being presented. More often than not, readers will find that

¹ "NUS Museum's 'Prep-Room' Lauded," *NUS News*, July 13, 2016, <http://news.nus.edu.sg/highlights/nus-museums-prep-room-lauded> (accessed June 12, 2017).

² Quoted in *Ibid*.

images, collages, and key texts were placed together to hint at immutable connections and also to challenge their comportment towards the crocodile and Singapore.

This zine, being an extension of Pocklington's and Davis's *Buaya: The Making of a Non-Myth* prep-room project, shares the same starting point of the crocodile that had been conserved and displayed at the old Raffles Museum in 1887. Displaying that crocodile's tongue on the front cover, shows the zine's commitment to this project. However, departing from Davis's curiosity with it's interiority, the zine focus more on the crocodile's external interactions with Singapore. Thus the use of different parts of that original crocodile's anatomy from the tongue to it's tail to signify and review their various extrinsic experiential touchstones within our shared consciousness. Therefore progressing from it's **tongue** as an visual anchor for the origins of the project, the **wound** indicates to the hurt done to them, as taken both literally G P Owen's shooting and metaphorically colonials and locals hunting of crocodiles. Consequently, the **skin** is a symbol of the ensuing trade and consumption of them in the meat and fashion industry. Then also the **eye** referring to the different visual renderings of the crocodile seen in local and western cinema. Differentially, the **mouth** alludes to the indigenous oral traditions and folkloric myths of the Keramats and the white crocodile. Subsequently, the **limb** symbolizes the movement of the crocodiles as caught between the tension of urban development and environmental activism. Finally, the **tail** gestures at how things come full circle as also evidently seen through the historicising of artists' interest in the crocodile.

The zine, as a collaborative effort, consists of pages made both individually, as well as a pair. The independently made pages reveal David and Natalie's personal interests in certain topics brought up in Pocklington's and Davis's research. David was curious in topics such as the hunts for the crocodile, local brand Crocodile International, colonial and local cinema, the white crocodile, urban development, and artists' interest in crocodiles, while Natalie was into the fashion and meat industry, local cartoons and animations of the crocodile, Keramats, and the relocation of crocodiles in Singapore. These pages were then brought together and heavily discussed in terms of aesthetic value and organisational method, to create a coherent and cohesive end product . Although both worked on their pages individually, they also collaborated on important pages opening up new sections of topics to ensure the readability and flow of connective treads in the zine.

As the front and back covers suggest, the zine begins with 'One Croc's View' progressing from the 1887 crocodile from Raffles Museum to plethora of surprising topics and ending with a reminder that after all, these connections are but 'One Citizen's View'. In the same spirit, NUS Museum interns David and Natalie hope that readers would become complicit collaborators by making their own interpretative connections and conclusions about the seemingly disparate subject matter surrounding the crocodile in Singapore.

Natalie Lie Kim Ai
David Low Kok Kiat

BUAYA



CROC'S

ONE

CITIZEN'S VIEW

within
weird phrase
Spend enough time with a crocodile and it will take you to places one seldom tread on. This ~~simultaneously~~ happened when conservator Kate Pocklington of the Lee Kong Chian Natural History Museum was conserving a century old specimen and when artist Lucy Davis sought to frame this particular crocodile in her bigger "Migrant Ecologies Project". A cacophony of folklore, colonial enterprise, encounters, industry and violence emerges as they peered into Singapore's ambivalent ~~relations~~ with the crocodile.

relationship
the crocodile
The obsession with this crocodile began when Pocklington found a receipt for a taxidermized leopard inside it and a page of *Woodwards Manual of The Mollusca* ~~was~~ stuck ^{on} at the underside of the tongue. It is known that this crocodile was actually shot by a cricket sportsman, G P Owen at the Serangoon River and presented at the opening of the Raffles Museum in 1887. After some research, its original taxidermist, Malayan born L A Fernandis was brought to light. Still further research shows that this crocodile was believed to be the re-incarnation of Panglima (warrior) Ah Chong of the Larut Wars in 1862. Contrasting Owen's popularity with Fernandis' hiddenness in relation to this mythic crocodile opens up issues of colonial violence and fear, local legends, environment, and industry that ~~vibrates~~ throughout Singapore's history.

awkward phrase
not a word
not vibrate, resonates, reverberates



Image credit: Exhibition view of Buaya: The Making of a Non-Myth. Gallery impression by David Low for National University of Singapore Museum.

Croc looking scary...



This curiosity with the crocodile ~~about~~ ^{similarity} ~~stumbled upon~~ ^{had} was also shared by Lucy Davis who has an interest in the interior and materiality of the taxidermized specimens in the Raffles Museum of Biodiversity Research collection. In recent years, ~~the~~ ^{has} interest in this crocodile was not only manifested artistically but gained relevance with contemporary culture through Davis. In 2014, Davis displayed her artwork *Nanyang Meadows* made out of the bundles of wheat used to stuff the 4.5 metre long crocodile, at Singapore Art Museum's exhibition *Unearthed*. Her work arranges the wheat to suggest the contours of a landscape. Highlighting the verity of local animals ~~stuffed~~ ^{seen} with an alien interior Davis playfully draws parallels with contemporary pastoralisation of the tropics, ~~seen~~ ^{as} commonly in Singapore road names such as 'Nanyang Meadows' at the Nanyang Technological University. ~~seen~~

ITS OR PESTS?

skin
bone
muscle
cartilage
joint
bone
bone
bone

Museum, presented by G. P. Owen (Shihun)

del. remodelled,
matched,

TRANS TIMES 20 JANUARY 1908

"In passing curiously at this side is a large crocodile, the victim of a bullet sent by Mr. G. P. Owen, who in September 1887 went for a day's shooting on the Serangoon river. The tide was on the ebb, a crocodile lay motionless on the muddy bank.

A POINTED PELLET PICKED IT UP AND THE SHOT. AND SO THE crocodile, lying on the river, chose IT PLUNGED BENEATH the boat of the popular sport and THREATENED DISASTER.

Another shot made it flounder - the river and some hours later it was safely raised, and ultimately found its way to THE DISSECTION ROOM OF THE RAFFLES MUSEUM.

Reconstruct
"see like purpose
the skeleton, MCH. SEM.

Thermostat
Metal brace for
structural support
immediate. Out of hand
and to define an
Passive delineating
structures
Injected a loose piece
Most organic, visible
layers

Can this be a
hand? like bone.
Rafael Gaudin

Image credit: Kate Pocklington's Wall notes and photographs. Gallery impression by David Low for National University of Singapore Museum.



Image credit: Straw stuffing from the crocodile, installation view of Buaya: The Making of a Non-Myth. Gallery impression by David Low for National University of Singapore Museum.

On the 2nd of February 2017, the NUS Museum prep-room project: *Buaya: The Making Of A Non Myth* presented the collaboration of research and practices between Pocklington and Davis. The materials displayed not only teased at our view and study of animals and the natural world but also the multiplicity of readings that one could arrive at when looking at the single subject.

In the same spirit, this zine explores what places would crocodiles take NUS interns David and Natalie to, when it is made the centre. Occupying such a position in our discursive considerations, what would the *Buaya* (crocodile) reveal about Singapore? As the obsession with the *Buaya* matures, one aspires that it could be a basis for a local production of knowledge, a true making of a non-myth.

**Have you ever
wondered then, what
animal life existed here
besides those fearsome fe- lines?**

Separate page



Image credit: Photograph of Crocodile Wound from Wall Notes and Photographs, Buaya: The Making of a Non-Myth. Gallery impression by Natalie Lie for National University of Singapore Museum.

There is a famous story of Singapore's first resident, Colonel **Farquhar's** encounter with a **crocodile** very soon after the city was founded.

The rivers and waterways surrounding and penetrating the Straits Settlements were known to be infested with crocodiles in the early days.



Colonel **Farquhar** was walking along the Rochore River (now the Rochore canal) with his dog one day when a huge **crocodile** clambered on to the bank of the river and attacked the dog.

he ordered the men who were there to put up a dam blocking the river. The crocodile was hemmed in by the obstruction and speared to death. It was fifteen feet long. This was the first time that people realized there were crocodiles in Singapore.



Wild life

The Straits Times, 14 June 1953, Page 10

Article also available on Microfilm Reel NL2429

Wild life

READERS of Tuan Djek's interesting weekly "A Countryman's Journal," in which he often narrates his and other people's encounters with wild life on his dusun just across the Johore Straits, may not realise that wild life existed in Singapore up to some thirty years ago.

Besides mention, in the chronology of events in Volume II of One Hundred Years of Singapore, of a panther killed in Carrington House, a Chinese killed by a tiger in Thomson Rd., an alligator shot in the Singapore River mouth, a tiger caught in Pulo Ubin, a tigress shot at Mt. Pleasant, one tiger shot at Changi and two tigers shot on Bukit Timah Rd., Raffles Museum has exhibits of some local wild life, as follows:—

A marine crocodile about 15 ft. long shot in the Serangoon river in Sept., 1887 by Mr. G. P. Owen;

Skeleton of a python 21 ft. 7 ins. long, caught in 1898;

A clouded leopard (Harimau Dahan) said to have been killed near Changi in Jan., 1899;

A "musang" (paradoxus hermaphrodita) caught at Cairnhill and presented by a Mrs. Frisell, Nov. 1902;

A black monitor lizard (varanus salvator) measuring about 6 ft. from tip of nose to tip of tail, caught in Paya Lebar, 1909; and

A magnificent head of a wild pig shot by Mr. G. P. Owen and presented by his executors, 1928.

Now wild life, both land and water, including the tiger, "rusa" (stag), "kijang" (barking deer) and "pelandok" (mouse deer), is practically nil, except for a few wild pigs, monkeys, squirrels and flying-foxes to be found in the western and northern parts of the island.

At the rate Singapore is progressing, these will also disappear soon. Snakes — mainly pythons — however, still make appearances in the City and suburbs.

S. RAMACHANDRA,

Singapore.

THE CROCODILE OF THE STRAITS.

Ajer Buai Bernang (teach a crocodile to swim) is a favourite Malay retort, but only those who have seen the wily saurian whirl off a mud bank into deep water, splashing his tail, and leaving a wake like a twenty-knot steamer can appreciate the sarcasm to its full extent. Yet, strangely enough, very few men will go out of their way to shoot a crocodile, and as the Malays themselves seldom trouble to get rid of the brutes, they flourish exceedingly all along the west coast of the peninsula, from Kedah in the north to Johore and Singapore in the south.

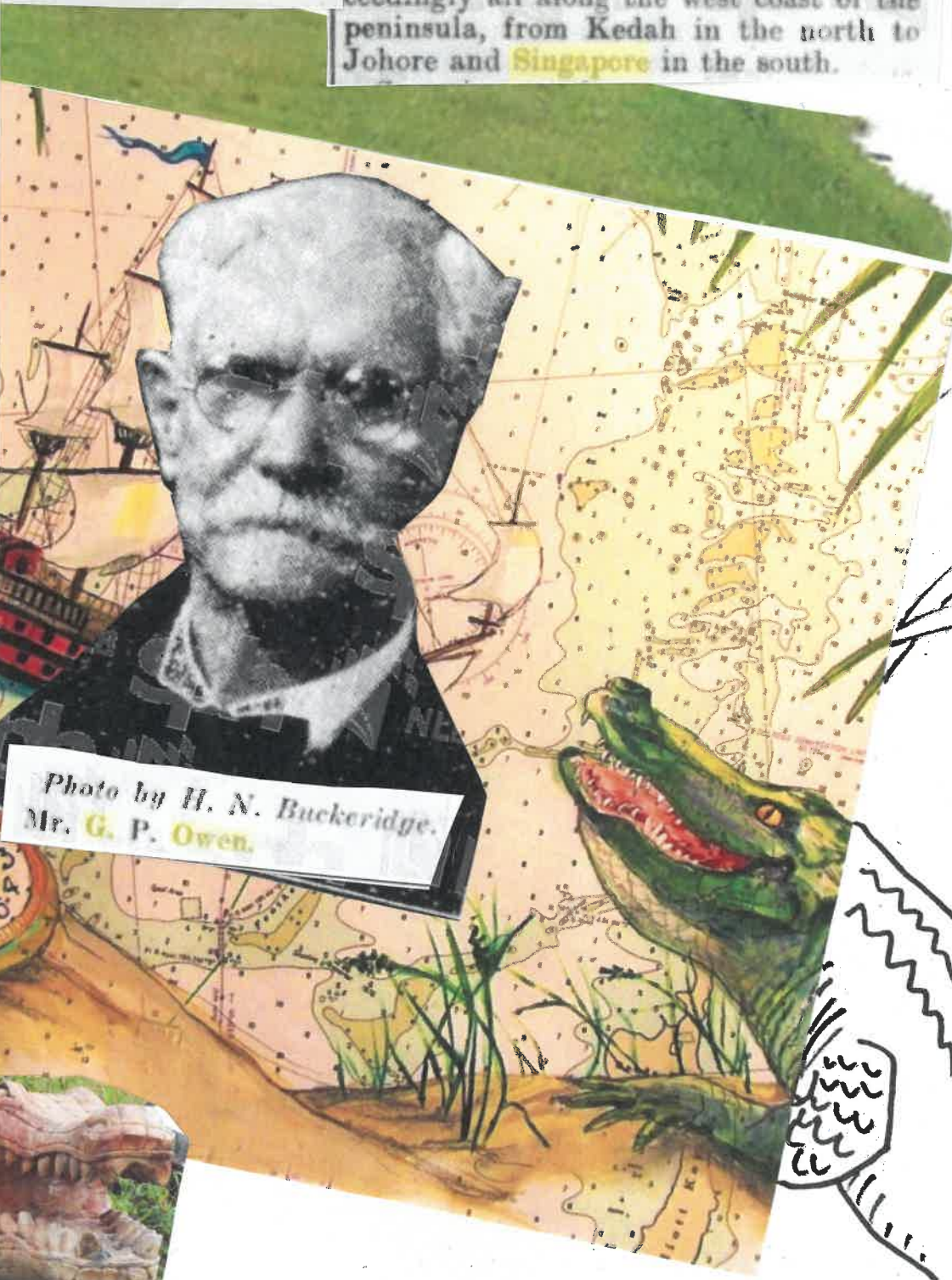


Photo by H. N. Buckeridge.
Mr. G. P. Owen.

has other interesting features and is itself a tempting object of research. It is looked upon with vague reverence by some people though it has no shrine or cult. And it is understood that if the Municipal Commissioners ever abandon the practice of anointing it with lard at intervals, it will run away into the sea.

Another Chinese tradition, which probably has no connection with that above mentioned, is that the Butterworth cannon belonged to "Panglima" (Warrior) Ah Chong, a bravo of the inter-Chinese wars which took place in the Larut tin-fields in 1862 and lasted sporadically for ten years. (This warrior turned into a crocodile on his death and this crocodile is now the biggest stuffed crocodile in Raffles museum, Singapore, though the Director is unaware of the fact). But this tradition is very vague indeed and is silent as to how Ah Chong's cannon came to be in the sea. In fact, the Cannon was probably in its present place before Ah Chong flourished.

Much more precise, except as to dates, is the Malay tradition, according to which the Butterworth cannon belonged long ago to a Malay trader, called To Johan, who traded up and down the west coast as far as Siam in his own schooner. Such a trader would, of course, carry cannon on account of pirates. When he was about to retire, he dumped this cannon overboard into the shallow water off Butterworth beach.

And owing to the accretion which has long been taking place along this beach, the cannon gradually found itself further and further from the water, whilst itself not moving. And as it thus came from water to dry land, it acquired the name of the Floating Cannon.

As to the fact of accretion on this beach, this is true and it is still noticeable. Butterworth stands on a sand-bank, which is almost certainly the result of accretion over a very long period of time.

The cannon is now some sixty yards from high-water mark.

As regards the tradition that the Floating Cannon was the "mate" of the Penang cannon, Malays say that it is true that the Penang cannon is one of a pair and that its mate was somehow at some vague date lost in the sea. But they say that this lost cannon is not the Butterworth Floating Cannon.

This Malay tradition certainly sounds probable, though it may be remarked that the simpler and older Malays illogically (and contrary to the teaching of Islam) show considerable reverence for the Floating Cannon and some attend the annual ceremony held

1947] *Royal Asiatic Society*.

A STIRRING account of how a monster crocodile was captured in the Kranji river by some local sportsmen, the other day, has been sent us. The writer remarks that on Sunday a party went out pig-hunting but they had little luck. The chase led them to the Kranji river, far from the main road. It was decided to board a boat, which was then available, to land them at the 12th milestone on Buki Timah Road. On continuing their journey along the river, a huge crocodile was noticed on the left bank enjoying its midday siesta. At the moment a strong current was running and it was with difficulty that the boat's head was turned upstream. The boatman on seeing the crocodile dropped the oars and became nervous. His place was gallantly taken by one of the "braves," who in his elementary lesson on boating nearly brought the whole party to grief. At a distance of 200 yards, two shots were fired from a Winchester Rifle No. 110 and a sporting .303. The saurian took the bullets like a Scotsman taking porridge. About ten minutes elapsed and the brute raised its head wondering when the next few lumps of sugar were coming along. With its formidable jaws wide open (says our correspondent waxing enthusiastic) and bellowing like some monster of the deep engaged in deadly struggle, the crocodile began lashing its tail with such fury as to send the mangrove trees flying in all directions. With raised head it made for the water but another tiny, though powerful .303 bullet sped on its fatal errand and checked immediately its progress. On the bullet striking the monster below its jaw, its head was seen to drop as if a sledge hammer had battered it down. This bullet was afterwards found to have penetrated the skull. The first two bullets hitting the brute on the neck would have put a powerful animal *hors de combat* but even the third shot did not despatch it. Again bellowed with raised head and jaw open. About two hours afterwards, when all sign of life was extinct, it was hauled into the boat with the help of 12 men. On resuming the journey, and while in mid-stream, the tail was lashed furiously and the jaws moved again. This caused a great commotion in the boat which nearly swamped it. The relief on standing again on solid ground after a short voyage of great excitement was never better experienced. Great difficulty was experienced in getting the huge monster ashore. It measured 20 feet and only 4 teeth were noticed. The boatman explained, when all danger was over, that he expected the croc's mate to attack the boat as they have often been known to do. This accounts for his—this is, the boatman's—peculiar behaviour.

The peach blossoms are in riot,

and the willow fluff flies;

A placid stream with gentle ripples

flashes turquoise around me.

In a single-oared boat

with a rope five feet long,

My boy returns home,

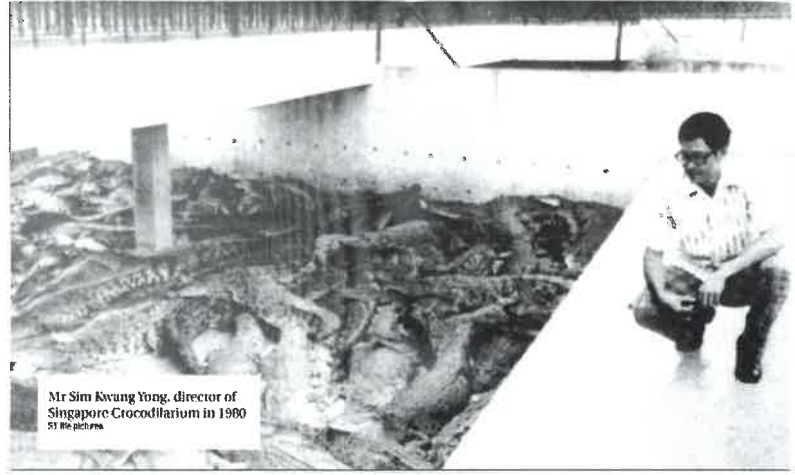
proudly dragging a crocodile behind him!

J D Schmidt.

"Within the human realm: The poetry of Huang Zunxian, 1848-1905" UK: Cambridge University Press, 1994. p 281.



Image credit: Kate Pocklington's Crocodile
Skin Rendering from Wall Notes and
Photographs, Buaya: The Making of a Non-
Myth. Gallery impression by Natalie Lie for
National University of Singapore Museum.



Mr. Ho Peng Khoen, instructor at the Singapore Trade School, shot a crocodile in the Jurong area of the island yesterday afternoon. His three small sons were with him at the time. One shot killed the crocodile, which was 13 ft. 4 in. in length with a breadth of 2 ft. 3 in.



crocodiles that roam freely in the wild, and swilling with man. These are just some of the many exciting sights and adventures you'll experience when you step into the unique world of crocodiles, at Crocodile Paradise.

Having Crocodile Paradise is a special 'back to nature' theme park that combines entertainment with the conservation of crocodiles and nature. With more than 2,500 crocodiles of various species located in Singapore's largest crocodile park.

So come for a really thrilling, adventurous and entertaining experience that you'll never forget for quite a while!

ST. John's Island Road (near the old bus stop)
Kallang Road (near the old bus stop)
Opening Hours: 10.00am - 6.00pm
Admission: S\$4.00 (Adults)
S\$2.00 (Children)
S\$1.00 (Seniors)

Enter into an exciting world of thrills and adventure!



没有买卖，



The price of a grilled **crocodile** chop is \$2.50. Sweet-and-sour **crocodile** is \$4.



就没有杀害！



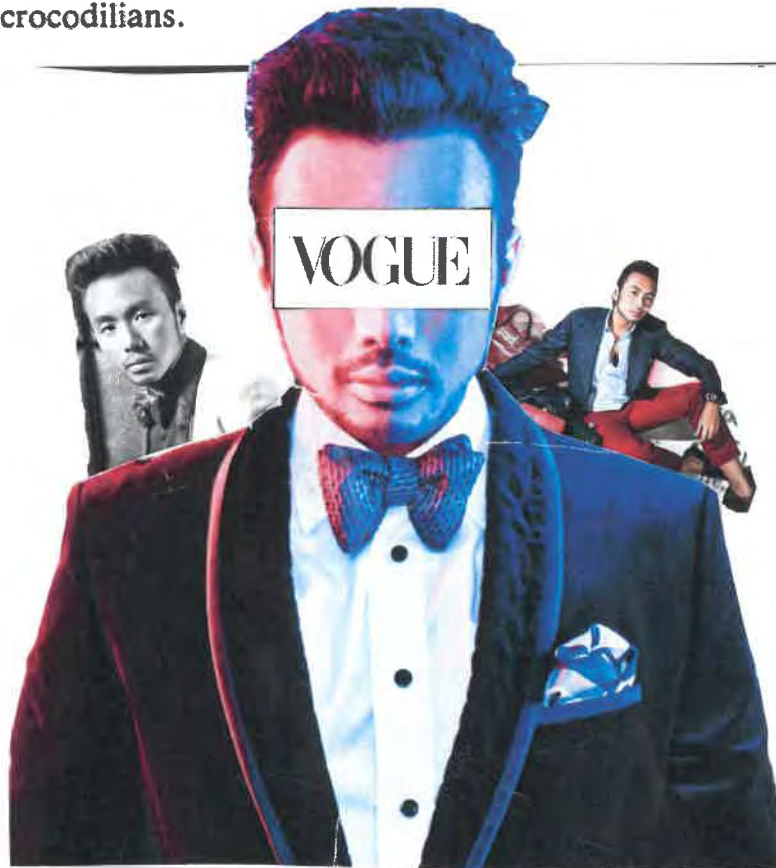
Cook Charlie Tag cuts up a **crocodile** for that special item on the menu (inset).

PASSION AND POWER

Singapore

Singapore has a famous crocodile farm that figures prominently in tourism. It breeds some of its stock, but also obtains wild stock from all over Southeast Asia. Singapore has a thriving crocodile hide trade. Many buyers and several tanneries are located there.

Singapore is not a member of CITES and openly trades in any and all species of crocodilians.



Crocodiles

The demand for crocodile skins for the manufacture of ladies' handbags, belts, shoes, wallets, and other small articles has led to the culture of crocodiles in Singapore. For ladies' handbags, which command an extremely high price, it is essential that the skins have no scars. There are now at least two crocodile farms in Singapore where these animals are reared to about one metre in length, which is the optimum size for the manufacture of ladies' handbags. The young crocodiles are imported from neighbouring countries. They are fed with waste fish caught in local waters. After the animal has been killed and skinned, the residual meat is cut into slabs, dried in the sun and sold to those who believe that crocodile meat is efficacious in the treatment of asthma. One of the problems facing the crocodile culturists is how to prevent fighting among the young crocodiles, because damaged skins lose their value. Very little is known on this subject and it should form an interesting topic for research. It has also been found that the young crocodiles sometimes take fright on the sight of human beings and then get off their feed for a few days (Pl. 10B).

Two species are used; the common crocodile, *Crocodylus porosus*, and the Malayan gaviel, *Tomistoma schlegeli*, which is referred to by the farmers as the 'alligator'.

Crocodile started off selling singlets

2:33 PM Tuesday Feb 21, 2017

Lacoste loses Supreme Court trademark fight



Crocodile International started out selling singlets almost 60 years ago and has since grown into an international fashion brand.

The label is named after a "tough animal with a long lifespan", said its founder, Mr Tan Hian Tsin, who is now almost 90 years old.

A version of this article appeared in the print edition of The Straits Times on August 08, 2015, with the headline 'S'pore's endearing brands Crocodile started off selling singlets'. [Print Edition](#) |

The buaya hitam besi (Black, or Iron **crocodile**) is reputed to attain a larger size than any other variety, and is very often moss grown (buaya berlumut).

Raffles **Museum**, Singapore, has another giant 15½ feet long, shot on

the Serangoon river by the late Mr. **G.P. Owen**,



Image credit: Eye of Estuarine Crocodile,
Crocodylus porosus Schneider, 1801. *Crocodylia*,
Crocodylidae Singapore, 1888. Lee Kong Chian
Natural History Museum, Zoological Reference
Collection. Gallery impression by Natalie Lie for
National University of Singapore Museum.



TINY TALES OF SINGAPORE.

In Singapore English,

buaya refers to "a lecherous male" and has additional syntactic possibilities (and the attending morphological possibilities).²

Singapore English, a variety of English spoken in

Singapore, includes words borrowed from Malay, Tamil,

and Chinese

languages such as Hokkien and Teochew.

One Malay borrowing, *buaya*

"crocodile," functions only as a noun in Malay.

In addition to functioning as a noun (*the buaya, two buayas*, and *of the buaya* are all gram-

matical in Singapore English), *buaya* can also function as a verb (*he likes to buaya, he buayas every day*)

and an adjective (*he is very buaya, the most buaya guy*) The ability of *buaya* to belong to different

grammatical categories is typical of other nouns in English such as *table* and *square*.

Buaya accepts much of the expected English morphology given its syntactic functions.

However, Singapore English also has borrowings that, like *buaya*, are syntactically regular but, unlike *buaya*, resist English morphology, such as the verb *tahan* "tolerate"



and the adjective *shiook* "enjoyable."

6.

Hollow-Legged Henry: or, The Crocodile's Tears.

Every author who visits the Far East is bound to write a jungle story, which is the easiest of all stories to tell because hardly anybody has been in the jungle, and those who have tell so many stories about it themselves that they daren't risk contradiction. Why, only

Made in **Singapore.**

Mr. Elliott then went on to talk of "Bring 'em Back Alive!" the picture made by Frank Buck. Ninety per cent. of that film, he said, was made on the island of **Singapore.** It would be without a doubt the biggest money-maker in the States in 1932, and would rank with the three or four pictures producing the biggest "gross."

Already the film had taken over \$1,000,000. It had no cast except Frank Buck, and it was going over merely because it had five or six really thrilling animal fights in it, the most exciting of which was a fight between a pythen and a tiger.

Another fight in "Bring 'em Back Alive!" was between a tiger and a **crocodile,** and that was real to a certain extent. The **crocodile,** left in the compound and forgotten, was lying in the shade of a tree. The tiger was let loose in the compound, and it was then seen to approach the **crocodile's** tail. Camera's were got ready. The tiger bit the **crocodile's** tail, and the **crocodile** turned round and bit the tiger's

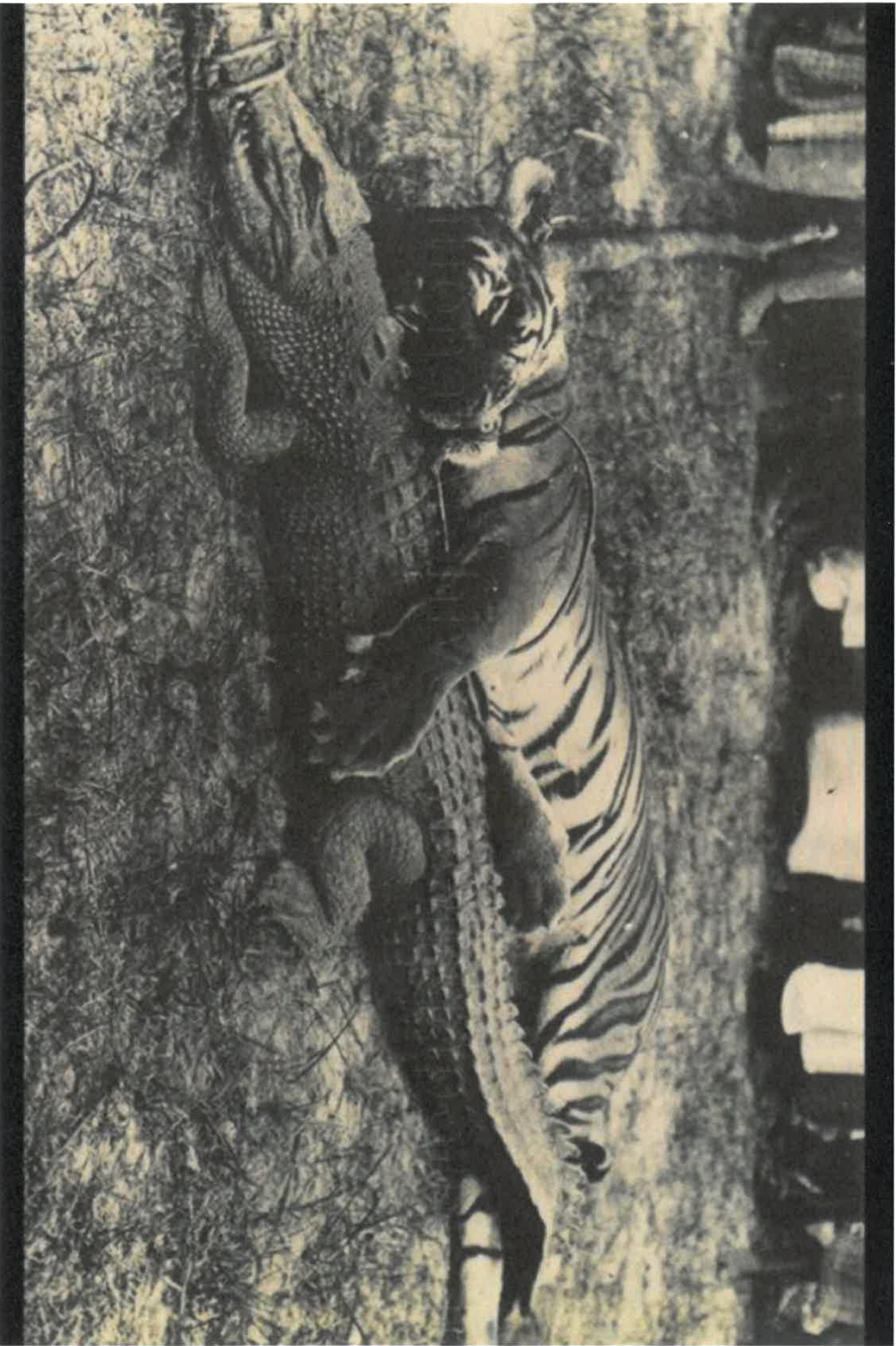


Image credit: Lim, Kheng Chye. A Tiger and Crocodile That Were Hunted Down. c. 1900s.



FRANK BUCK'S
ORIGINAL
"BRING 'EM
BACK
ALIVE"

Directed by CLYDE E. FLUOTT



Re-Release
Found on CineMaterial.com

FILM PRODUCER'S NARROW ESCAPE.

Mr. Ward Wing Hurt By Crocodile.

The dangers of "shooting" animal films were illustrated in **Singapore** yesterday when Mr. Ward Wing, who is now working on a new Malayan film called "Rimau! Rimau," narrowly escaped injury from the jaws of a **crocodile**.

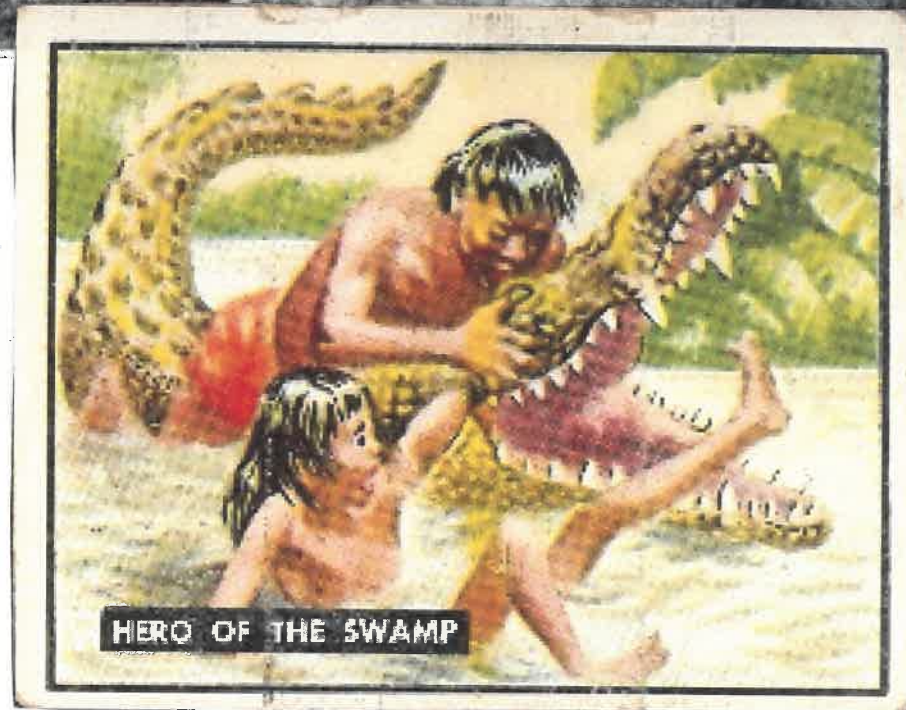
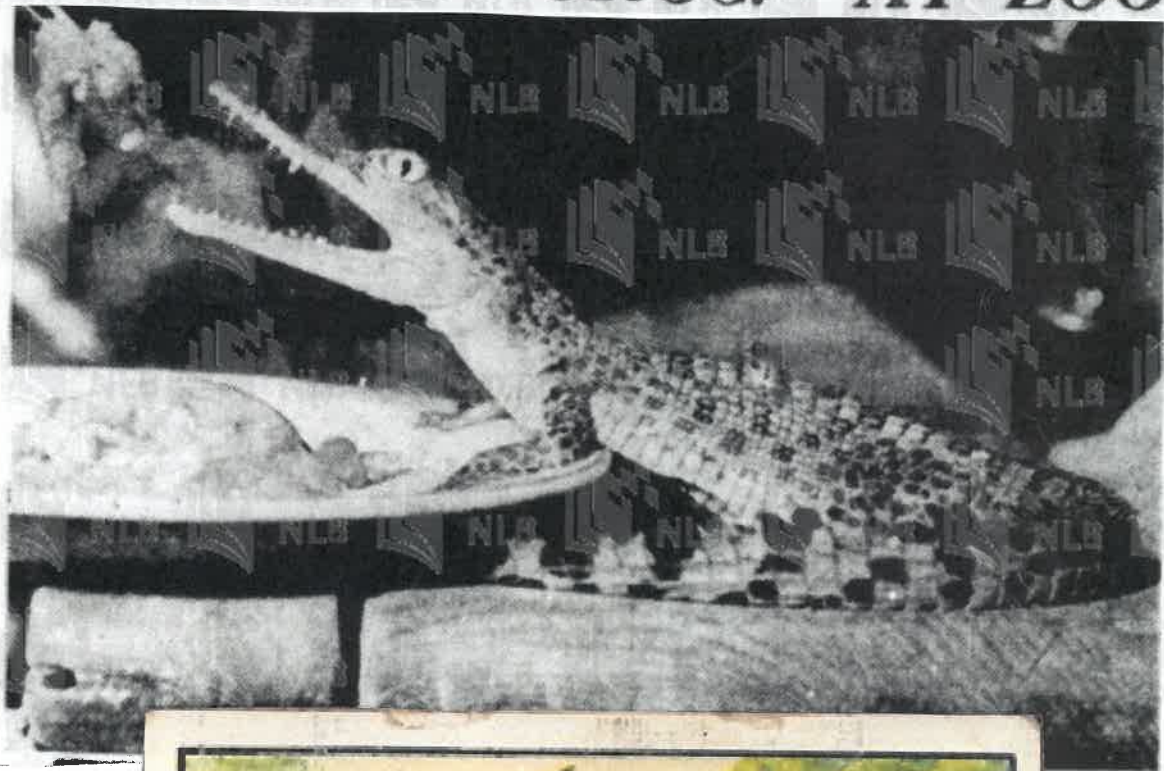
Mr. Wing's right leg now shows a large bruise where the snout of the **crocodile**, one of the denizens of the Ponggol Zoo, caught him as it broke loose from ropes and whirled round.

The incident was described to the *Straits Times* by Mr. Wing.

"We were about to shoot a few scenes on a river in a Chinese village near Ponggol," he said. "The **crocodile** was the principal figure in these 'shots.'

"According to the story, the little Malay heroine is washing clothes at the edge of the river when she sees a **crocodile** coming towards her. She screams, and her cries bring the Malay hero who jumps into the river and eventually kills the **crocodile**."

SINGAPORE "CROC." AT ZOO



HERO OF THE SWAMP





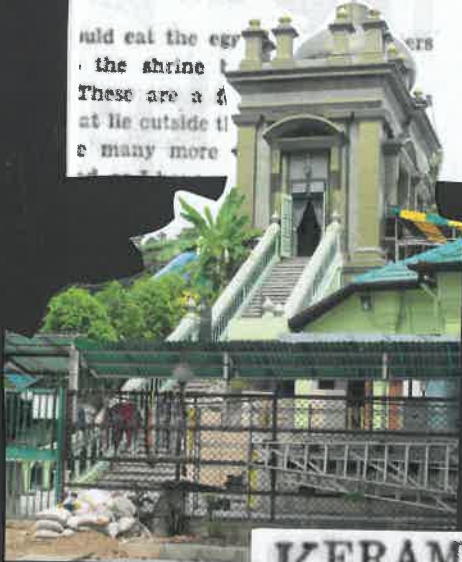
Image credit: Mouth of Estuarine Crocodile, *Crocodylus porosus* Schneider, 1801. Crocodylia, Crocodilidae Singapore, 1888. Lee Kong Chian Natural History Museum, Zoological Reference Collection. Gallery impression by Natalie Lie for National University of Singapore Museum.

Singapore's Keramats

Wonder-Working Shrines

Sacred To Many Nationalities

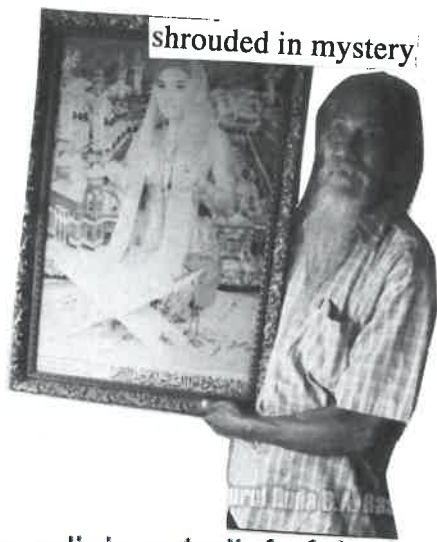
ould eat the egg
the shrine
These are a d
at lie outside ti
e many more



KERAMAT, we are told in the dictionary, means miracle-working, or invested with supernatural power, whether of a place, an object or a living person. The saint who is buried in a wonder-working shrine is called wali **keramat** or datoh **keramat**; if it is a place or an object it may be better described as a genius loci.



Image credit: Rashid, Nurul Huda B.A.
Keramat Kallang. 2017. Digital Image.



The religious belief of the **Datuk Keramat** worship can be found in **Malaysia**, **Singapore** and along the **Strait of Malacca**. It is a fusion of pre-Islamic spirit belief, **Sufi** saint worship and Chinese **folk religion**.

Image credit: Rashid, Nurul Huda B.A. Keramat Kallang. 2017, Digital image.

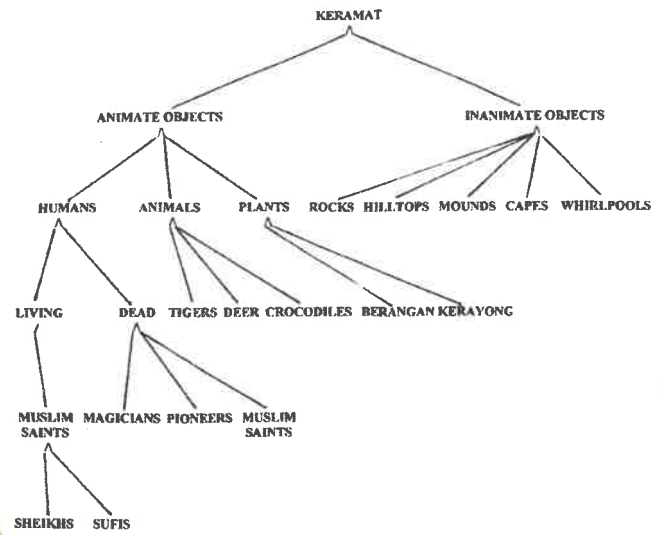
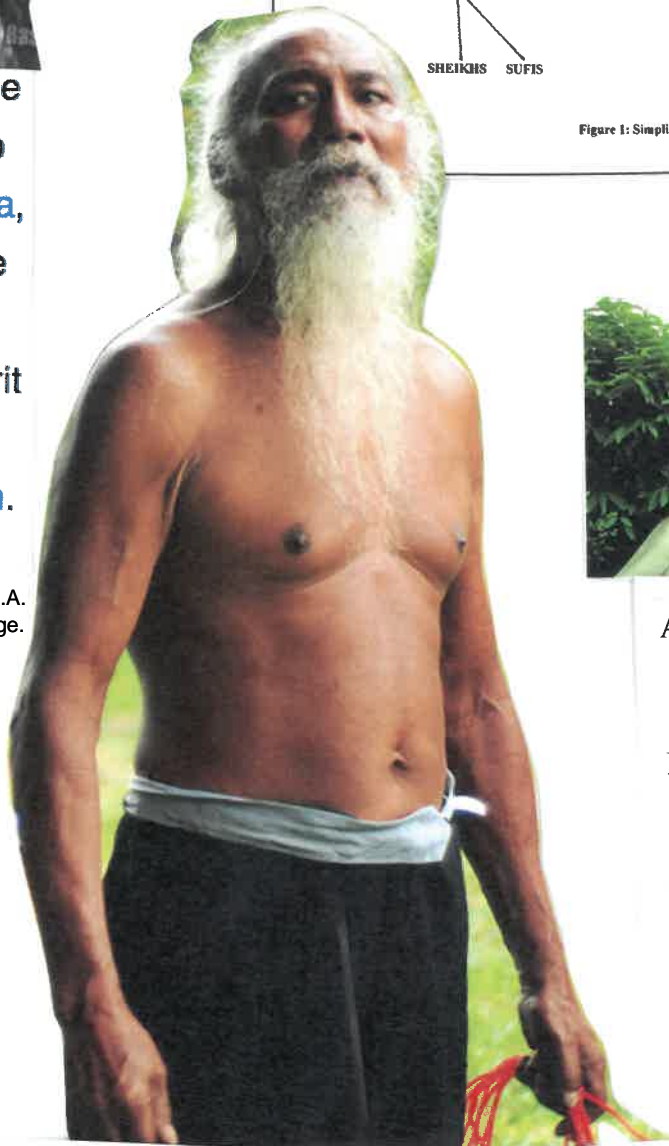


Figure 1: Simplified Classification of Keramats in Malay Folk Belief

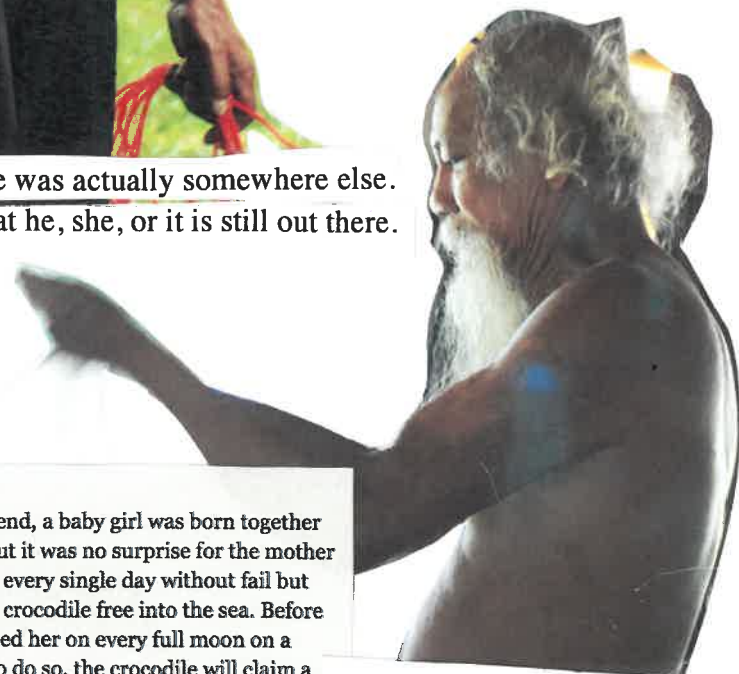


Ali was born with a twin,
and his twin was a snake.
It was said that his mother
gave birth to a snake
before giving birth to him.

However, Ali said that others had spotted him in places when he was actually somewhere else.
This, he believes, was his twin whom they saw, and that he, she, or it is still out there.

, continues to fascinate.

Buaya Puteh (white crocodile spirit)
Buaya puteh is believe to the the siamese twin of a human being. According to the legend, a baby girl was born together with a baby of a white crocodile in 1954 in a village. The whole village was shocked! But it was no surprise for the mother cause she herself practice bomoh magic. She care and love the baby girl and crocodile every single day without fail but when the government wanted to repossed the land they are living on, she had to let the crocodile free into the sea. Before doing that, the crocodile came as a human in her twin sister dream and warn her to feed her on every full moon on a thursday nite. She wanted live white chicken to be slaughter on the beach. If she fail to do so, the crocodile will claim a victim from the nearby beaches(sembawang park).



Wak Ali Janggut, or bearded Ali.

CROCODILE IS WHITE

The Straits Times, 6 July 1947, Page 7

Article also available on Microfilm Reel NLS418

CROCODILE IS WHITE

The crocodile, because of its rare colour, is regarded by the Malays as a "Datoh."

Superstitious Chinese also consider it a lucky omen and for many have been waiting by the river bank in the hope of changing their fortune through a glimpse of this reptile. Apart

he will lay off

if it is a rare white crocodile

This is because some people believe that a white crocodile is symbolic of luck and fortune.

Furthermore, white crocodiles are said to be tame and will not hurt anybody.



Legend has it that Hang Tuah, the 15th century Malay warrior, was escorting a sultan when he encountered a storm and fought a crocodile

in the Johore Straits. When his jewel-studded kris pierced its belly, the crocodile turned white and swam away. Since then, the crocodile's spirit lurked around the area and can only be seen by those with "a pure

Princess

About four hundred years ago there lived a princess in Kelantan named Puteri Saadong whose beauty was so renowned that it reached the court of the King of Siam.

The Siamese ruler sent a holy man to escort her to his palace. The princess agreed to see the King.

As the holy man put out from Kota Bharu in his boat, a local sailor got in the way and caused an accident in which the holy man and his aides were drowned.

The white crocodile was the reincarnation of the holy man who put a curse on the spot to punish the people responsible for making him fail to carry out his commission.

'It was the curse of the white Crocodile...'

The Straits Times, 28 June 1970, Page 4

Scouts hunt for white crocodile

Thirty-two Venture Sea Scouts set out today to paddle round Singapore and other outlying islands in the hope of catching the white crocodile some of them sighted five years ago.

The scouts, from the 1420 Sea Scouts (Open) Group, left at 10 a.m. in 11 canoes and a nine-metre whaler which will act as their escort boat during their three-day expedition.

Although the trip will be part of an adventure, sea training and test of canoeing skills and endurance, the group will keep a sharp look-out for the reptile, which is said to be lurking not far away from their departure point — Sarimbun Scout Camp, Jalan Bahera, off Lim Chu Kang Road.

The expedition leader, Mr. Cheong Ah Sang, 33, said: "Twelve of us caught a glimpse of the white crocodile in 1972."



Expedition leader, Mr. Cheong Ah Sang, with megaphone in hand, (left) supervising preparations at Sarimbun Scout Camp last night.

The new one was white in colour but of the same size as the other, about 25 feet long and weighing about 600 lb., he said.

Since the appearance of the first one, fishermen there have kept well clear of the area where it lurks. Now they fear there may be many more around.

Chew said he had written to the Paya Lebar Police Station asking for protection for the people.

In the letter to the officer-in-charge, he said the presence of the crocodile was certainly a danger to fishermen and picnickers.

The 'magic' crocodile catcher scores an early success

The Straits Times, 18 August 1959, Page 16

Article also available on Microfilm Reel NL4025

The 'magic' crocodile catcher scores an early success

The crocodile measuring 10 feet, was caught two days after a secret magic ritual during which he scattered fragments of gold in the river as a preliminary to the big hunt.

In a night journey up-river, he said he came across a "sacred" crocodile, an old white monster.

But he refused to divulge the whereabouts of its lair, saying it could never be destroyed — "not even by magic." Bullets had no chance.



Shy croc in a flower pond

Said a girl living near the pond who saw the reptile, "It is about four feet long from snout to tip of tail and submerges the moment it's aware someone is looking at it."

'No surprise'

Another resident, Mr. Ng Lian Kim, and his brother, are keeping vigil to kill it before it grows too big to handle.



*In the sacred pond of Singapore,
There is an old crocodile
Of a very morose nature,
And chews on the stem of lotus.*

*it is very old and completely blind,
And when it is cold during the night
It cries like a small child,
But when the day is beautiful, it laughs.*

Hermann von Lingg,
"Das Krokodil zu Singapore"
in Selected Poems (Stuttgart and Berlin 1905)



A day after Barney was found dead

farewell messages

popped up on popular angling website Fishing Kaki.

"Goodbye, Barney from Kranji," said one commenter,

"FishingKaki.com salutes you

and we know your offspring will carry a torch for you.



Croc scares fishermen

Fishing
village
astir
about a
croc

SINGAPORE, Tues.—At sunset on Sunday as the fishing boats returned, there was more than the usual excitement around the jetty at Kankar, a fishing village at the end of Upper Serangoon Road.

For word had gone round that fisherman Heng Loon's boat, besides the usual catch, had also a monster crocodile in tow.

The crocodile, just before being shot, so the story went, had "swallowed" two men.

Next morning a local tannery boss, Mr. Koh Long Chuan, paid \$275, and carted off the reptile.

'Different'

A Straits Times reporter who called at Kankar was told that the size of the crocodile ranged from 20-25 ft. Many other details were added to make Heng Loon's crocodile "completely different" from others.

Heng Loon was out at the sea.

Tannery

"The

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15

SHOTGUN HUNTERS FIRE
IN VAIN: 'THEY
ARE ONLY TICKLING IT'
SAY THE VILLAGERS

SINGAPORE, Thursday.
A CROCODILE scare has gripped the people of Ponggol, a small fishing village on the swampy northern shore of Singapore.



Crocodile attacks S'pore zookeeper

Posted on 22 April 2005 - 02:24am

SINGAPORE: A crocodile attacked a zookeeper at Singapore's zoo, puncturing the 37-year-old's leg in seven places and leaving a tooth stuck in his calf -- the third incident of animals gone amok at the zoo in the last two weeks.

The zookeeper was cleaning the crocodile's den when a 1.7 metre crocodile suddenly charged and bit him, the zoo said on Thursday in a brief statement on the April 10 incident.

"When the crocodile bit me, all I could think of was to get my left leg out of the crocodile's mouth," zookeeper Jamaludin Abdul Wahid told The New Paper, an English daily.



Image credit: Limb of Estuarine Crocodile,
Crocodylus porosus Schneider, 1801. *Crocodylia*,
Crocodylidae Singapore, 1888. Lee Kong Chian
Natural History Museum, Zoological Reference
Collection. Gallery impression by Natalie Lie for
National University of Singapore Museum.





Image credit: Kate Pocklington's Historic distribution of saltwater crocodile population in Singapore, 1819-2016.



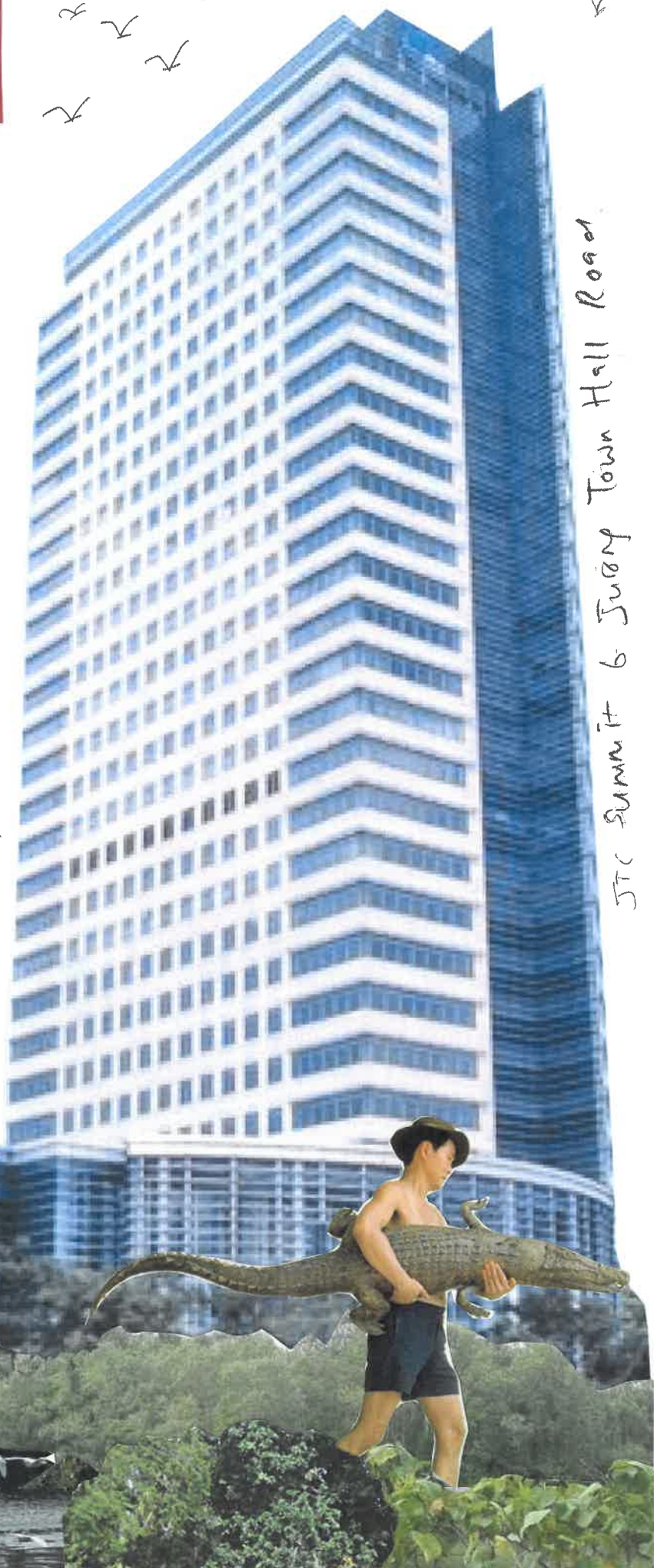
Lorong Chuan

Daryl Qilin Yam

Just down the road there used to be
a crocodile farm. "For real?" asked
the mother. "Can't imagine," said
the brother. All that road over
all that water.

Poets in Singapore have nothing
to believe in, except perhaps
the smallness of things, or the breaks
in our language, the unreliability
of bak chor mee. No point standing tall
unless one was tall
to begin with. Be damn sure of what to say
or don't bother saying at all.
The best curses come
in three syllables,
the worst from the lips
of our fathers.

Always the scaffolding
on new buildings,
the building of long bridges
over longer roads. Old water runs
in newer canals.



JTC Summit 6 Jooeong Town Hall Road

New Nation, 25 August 1972, Page 2

Article also available on Microfilm Reel NL7129

Beware! There's a crocodile lurking in Jurong

New Nation, 16 April 1975, Page 2

Article also available on Microfilm Reel NL8298

JTC will deal with the crocs in Jurong

The Jurong Town Corporation is prepared to deal with the potential danger posed by crocodiles in the Chinese and Japanese gardens.

There had been numerous sightings of the reptiles even as far back as 1970.

As a result, the JTC has arranged it so that visitors to the gardens will not have to worry about crocodiles.

A spokesman for the JTC said: "We are now in contact with three reputable parties who can deal with the crocodiles. We will call them in if the crocodiles start to become a menace."

Another source expressed concern about anglers who dot the water's edge at the Japanese Garden, or those who like to cool their feet in the water. A recent development is an increase in lovers who come at night and lie along the banks of the Jurong Lake in the gardens, oblivious to the fact that they are a tempting sight to hungry crocodiles.

The Straits Times, 13 March 1986, Page 13

Article also available on Microfilm Reel NL18898

Crocodile park plan for Jurong Hill

VISITORS to Jurong Hill may soon get to see how crocodiles live and breed.

The Jurong Town Corporation (JTC) plans to set up a crocodile park on a 15,200 sq m site beyond the existing car park outside the Jurong Bird Park.

JTC is now asking for tenders for the project which arose after "an interested party" approached the corporation with the idea.

There is a crocodiliarium along the East Coast Parkway and a crocodile farm in Upper Serangoon Road. They attract community and youth groups, schoolchildren, as well as tourists.

The tender specified a display area for about 2,000 to 3,000 crocodiles in their natural habitat. There must also be a crocodile breeding lake, showing the incubating processes.

The park will also display products made from crocodile skin. The developer will have to build a shop and restaurant in the park.

What's up, croc?

By

TYE KIM KHIAT

ONE CITIZEN'S VIEW

IN A dark, dank and murky hideout by the banks of the Kallang River, a tear-jerking scene unfolds...

The congregation, comprising young and old, long and short, garrulous and taciturn were listening intently to the speaker, a wizened wiseacre jawing away.

Among the gathering were handsome figures with sharp tapering noses, firm jawbones and gleaming white teeth - what wonderful specimens!

Tears were streaming down the cheeks of the speaker as he said:

"Fellow brethren, we are in the jaws of death...sob, sob...and we can't hightail it...sob...Singapore, especially Kallang River, is our home, our roots are here."

On hearing this, an emphatic wave of murmur swept through the rapt audience and a flush of palpable pride could be seen on their faces.

Suddenly, a chorus of voices broke out: "Four legs are better than two."

The old speaker continued: "You, the younger guys out there, you have not known any hard times when our watery domain had to make way for the country's urban and industrial development but it was for a good cause.

"So, we gritted our teeth and bore it, making do with morsels and a blackwater environment in the name of progress. We submerged our identity and swam with the tide...

"Now that we've emerged in good times, there is a hullabaloo and two of our brothers have been captured by a fisherman from Punggol. The rest of us escaped by the skin of our teeth."

At this juncture, the chorus broke in again with "Lord, have mercy on us, hallelujah!"

The old speaker said that

"They planted fruit trees to bring back the birds, they cleansed the rivers so that even foul-smelling Singapore River is teeming with prawns.

"So, what's wrong with us rearing our ugly heads in Kallang River? After all, nobody bathes there.

"Indeed, we might just become the biggest tourist draw in Singapore, splashing in the Kallang River right in the midst of the city and visitors can't say that Singapore is all concrete."

He raged on: "Moreover, children need not be deprived of a natural environment...ungrateful creatures, aren't they? Don't they know that we make very good and docile pets?"

Thoughts then turned to the fate suffered by the monkeys at the Botanical Gardens, their slimy cousins, the pythons, who were

following the capture, bands of Singaporeans took to the Kallang River, scouring the banks for them.

"Brothers, I fear for our safety. Everyone of us is on the hit list. Does anybody have anything to say?"

The chorus chimed in again: "We have been sold down the River."

A pall of dead silence descended. Then, suddenly, an upstart of a guy, leapt to his feet, his ominously powerful jaws snapping away, threatening to chew up anybody crossing swords with him.

He boomed: "This is the unkindest cut of all...we're ugly but it's only skin deep.

"On the contrary, we are a money spinner for the tourist industry...our commercial cousins are skinned alive.

"Isn't this killing enough? How much more blood must be shed?"

"When is this cold-blooded carnage going to end?"

He was gnashing his teeth and breathing fire like a dragon.

Everyone was stunned by this outburst. The silence was deafening.

Then, somebody raised his tail, signalling that he wanted to weigh in.

He lashed out: "First, they levelled the hills, filled the swamps and built their 'concrete jungles.' Then they greened the city and tried to bring the people closer to nature.

driven up lamp-posts, bus-stops and their distant relatives who ended up as turtle soup.

Indeed, their happy hunting ground has turned out to be a hell.

The wizened speaker, a little impatient by now, ended the silence and asked:

"Does anybody have a solution to keep our heads above water?"

"Ahem", a bespectacled, scholarly fellow, reared his head and began to speak slowly but surely.

"There's hope yet.

"We can write to the World Wildlife United Nations Secretariat, asking it to intervene on our behalf on humanitarian grounds.

"We can appeal to one Bernard Harrison of the Singapore Zoo asking for a place in the sun in the Reptile Garden.

"Or we can appeal to the president of the Jurong Country Club to grant us asylum in the Jurong River that wends its way through the Club's golf course.

"I hear the Club has two crocodiles as part of its emblem and even a restaurant called the Buaya Grill."

"I'm sure they would love to have us. (There was a murmur of approval from the crowd).

"We can retrieve those golf balls that fly into the inlets and streams of the Jurong River. No need for caddies to wade into the water."

Just then, there was a commotion.

Somebody shouted that the police were gatecrashing into their meeting.

The speaker quickly rallied the congregation to sing together - "There's a new world somewhere they call the Promised Land..."

"The game's up, you're all under arrest", said the police.

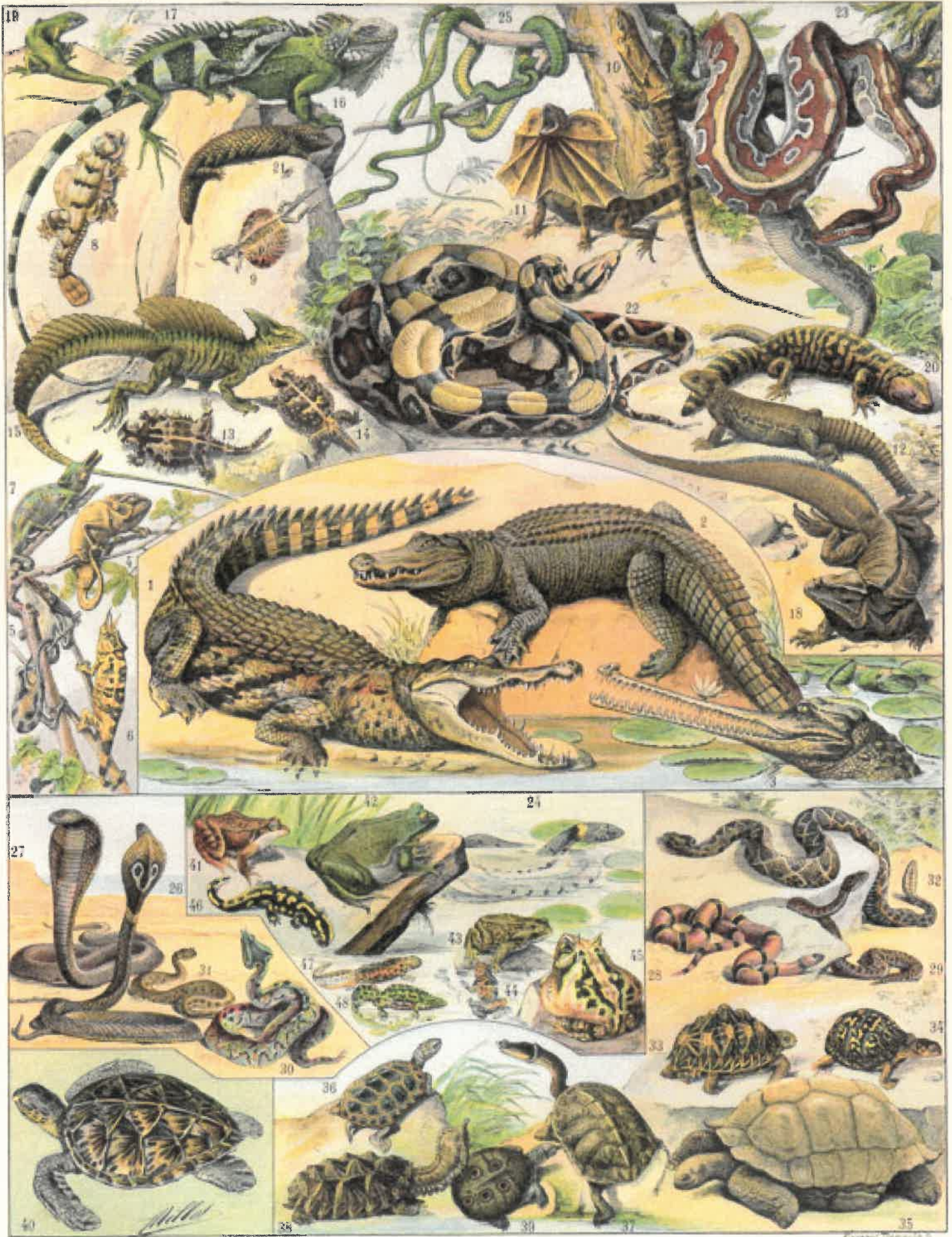
All at once, the congregation burst into crocodile tears.

You, the younger guys out there, you have not known any hard times when our watery domain had to make way for the country's urban and industrial development, but it was for a good cause.

So, we gritted our teeth and bore it, making do with morsels and a blackwater environment in the name of progress. We submerged our identity and swam with the tide...

REPTILES

Source: Larousse Illustré



1. Crocodile; 2. Alligator; 3. Gavial; 4. Crocodile à nez pointu; 5. Crocodile à nez pointu; 6. Crocodile à nez pointu; 7. Crocodile à nez pointu; 8. Crocodile à nez pointu; 9. Crocodile à nez pointu; 10. Crocodile à nez pointu; 11. Crocodile à nez pointu; 12. Crocodile à nez pointu; 13. Crocodile à nez pointu; 14. Crocodile à nez pointu; 15. Crocodile à nez pointu; 16. Crocodile à nez pointu; 17. Crocodile à nez pointu; 18. Crocodile à nez pointu; 19. Crocodile à nez pointu; 20. Crocodile à nez pointu; 21. Crocodile à nez pointu; 22. Crocodile à nez pointu; 23. Crocodile à nez pointu; 24. Crocodile à nez pointu; 25. Crocodile à nez pointu; 26. Crocodile à nez pointu; 27. Crocodile à nez pointu; 28. Crocodile à nez pointu; 29. Crocodile à nez pointu; 30. Crocodile à nez pointu; 31. Crocodile à nez pointu; 32. Crocodile à nez pointu; 33. Crocodile à nez pointu; 34. Crocodile à nez pointu; 35. Crocodile à nez pointu; 36. Crocodile à nez pointu; 37. Crocodile à nez pointu; 38. Crocodile à nez pointu; 39. Crocodile à nez pointu; 40. Crocodile à nez pointu; 41. Crocodile à nez pointu; 42. Crocodile à nez pointu; 43. Crocodile à nez pointu; 44. Crocodile à nez pointu; 45. Crocodile à nez pointu; 46. Crocodile à nez pointu.



Taxonomy

Kingdom	Phylum	Class	Order	Family
Animalia	Chordata	Reptilia	Crocodylia	Crocodylidae

Taxon Name: *Crocodylus porosus* Schneider, 1801

Common Name(s):

- English: Salt-water Crocodile, Estuarine Crocodile
- French: Crocodile d'estuaire, Crocodile marin
- Spanish: Cocodrilo Poroso

Assessment Information

Red List Category & Criteria: Lower Risk/least concern [ver 2.3](#)

Year Published: 1996

Date Assessed: August 1, 1996

Annotations: Needs Updating

Previously Published Red List Assessments

1994 – Vulnerable (V)

1990 – Vulnerable (V)

1988 – Endangered (E)

1986 – Endangered (E)

1982 – Endangered (E)

Geographic Range

Country Occurrence:

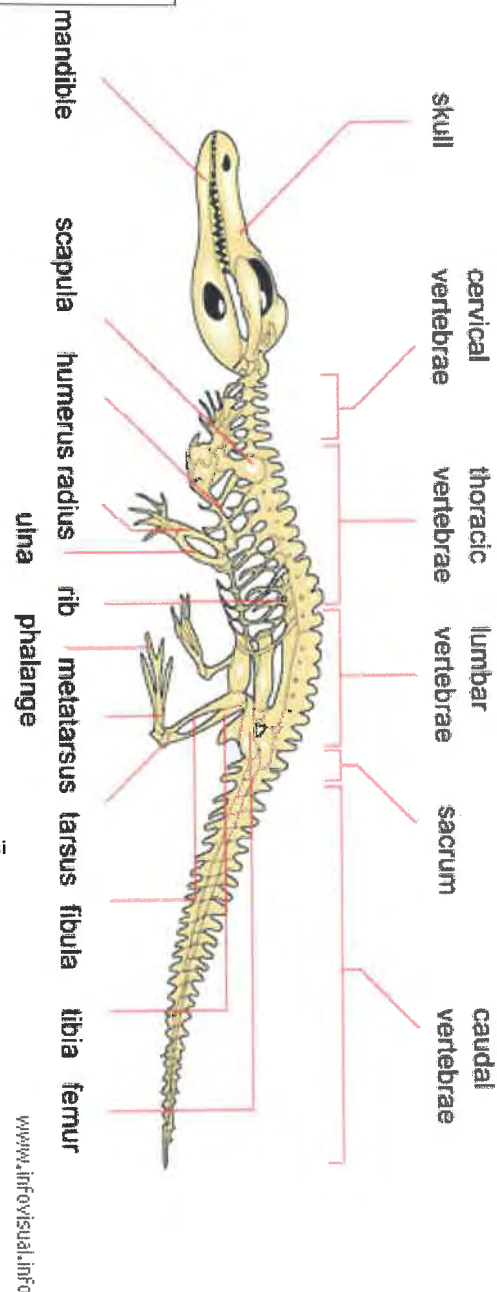
Native: Australia; Bangladesh; Brunei Darussalam; Cambodia; India; Indonesia; Malaysia; Palau; Papua New Guinea; Philippines; Solomon Islands; Sri Lanka; Vanuatu; Viet Nam

Possibly extinct: Thailand

Regionally extinct: Singapore

EXTINCT?

© The IUCN Red List of Threatened Species: *Crocodylus porosus* – published in 1996.
<http://dx.doi.org/10.2305/IUCN.UK.1996.RLTS.T5668A11503588.en>



SKELETON OF A CROCODILE



Three crocs seized in last two years [ARTICLE + ILLUSTRATION] Page 42

The Straits Times 9 August 2008 AVA

"They have lungs, are a third little

6.
Oct. 11, 2002, 6.

"The New Paper, May 26, 1997, 31.
The Straits Times 26 May 1997

"Crocodile alert," The Straits Times 26 May 1997
[ARTICLE + ILLUSTRATION] Page 31 The Straits Times 26 May 1997

"DON'T MESS AROUND WITH IT" [ARTICLE] The New Paper 2 May 1997 Microfilm Reel NL20783

The estimate Crocodile, found in this region, 'thrives in both fresh and salt water. But now, a third little

air-breathers and cold-blooded reptiles. The second was a worry. But now, a third little

page 18

is sum out there? [ARTICLE] The Straits Times 26 May 1997

The New Paper 14 August 2003 Microfilm Reel NL25604

Is sum out there? By Lee Sze Yong THE first croc was a shock. The second was a worry. But now, a third little

snapper has been found wandering wild around Singapore. Is it time to panic? Croc No 3 was caught less than a

week after 1 and 2

is sum out there? [ARTICLE + ILLUSTRATION] Page 5

The Straits Times 17 September 2003 Microfilm Reel NL25244

2m-long crocodile caught in park [ARTICLE + ILLUSTRATION] Page 16 The New Paper 7 August 2003

The Straits Times 17 September 2003 Microfilm Reel NL25244

2m-long crocodile caught in park ARMED with just a broken fishing net and two wooden sticks, the reptile played dead, then gave police the

three men caught a 2m-long Crocodile in Woodlands Town Garden. The reptile played dead, then gave police the

spotted sunning itself in the swampy ground near a lake in the park at 9.30 am last Saturday

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"Crocodile alert," The Straits Times 26 May 1997, 31.

Crocodile alert [ARTICLE + ILLUSTRATION] Page 31 The Straits Times 26 May 1997

Crocodile alert Reptile spotted off Pasir Ris Park TWO groups of people spotted a

Crocodile early yesterday at a beach off Pasir Ris

Crocs at nature reserve don't pose major threat Page 21

The Straits Times 17 December 2013 Microfilm Reel NL32908



One smart buaya' [ARTICLE + ILLUSTRATION] Page 16 The New Paper 7 August 2003

'One smart buaya' No Crocodile tears here. The reptile played dead, then gave police the

slip Singapore

"4 crocodiles in six weeks stumps experts," The Straits Times,

Sep. 18, 2003, H2

<http://eresources.nlb.gov.sg/newspapers/Digitised/Issue/straitstimes20030918-1> THERE'S REALLY NO

REASON WHY THEY'RE APPEARING NOW AND NO EXACT WAY OF TELLING WHERE THEY COME FROM,

ALTHOUGH THE ONES CAUGHT HERE ARE ABLE TO FLOAT ACROSS THE OCEAN

Chua Chin Hon, "Crocodile spotted in Tuas shipyard," The Straits Times, Oct. 14, 1996, 65.

MOE camp stops water activities after croc sighting Page 4

The Straits Times 22 April 2012 Microfilm Reel NL31997

Edmund Tee, "just when you thought it was safe to go back," The Straits Times, Oct. 14, 1996, 65.

27.

Neil Humphreys

by I

neil@newstoday.com.sg

CALL me a geek, but I visited the excellent Raffles Museum of Biodiversity Research.

I went because I like the Stamford Raffles was a naturalist. Rather than go to the National Museum of Singapore, I went to the Raffles Museum of Biodiversity Research, which has a collection of oil paintings of Raffles, including one of him baring both cheeks for a crocodile.

But, alas, Raffles merely enjoyed cataloguing animals in his spare time.

Apparently, he was into zoology and founded the Raffles Zoological Garden in Regents Park.

I'm sure all this is interesting, so allow me to tell you a story – THERE ARE CROCODILES IN SINGAPORE.

I bet that's got you wondering because it certainly isn't.

Noticing that estuaries are indigenous to Singapore, I remarked to a curator that I was mauling a durian yesterday last week.

"Oh, we still find crocodiles in Singapore," he replied.

"Oh, we still find crocodiles in Singapore," he replied.

"Singapore," he replied. "An estuarine crocodile usually gets spotted once every few months."

With the beastly mangrove-lined estuary of Sungei Buloh Natural Wetland Reserve, a swampy environment is a popular holiday destination.

"Yes, we sometimes find crocodiles in Sungei Buloh," the curator told me casually. In fact, one was photographed there in May.

"It was only two metres long. It probably wasn't wild, it probably escaped from a *buaya* (crocodile) farm."

"Oh, we still find crocodiles in

Singapore," he replied. "An estuarine crocodile usually gets spotted once every few months."

Absolute nonsense.

Should you encounter Dorothy, run like hell and change your underwear at the first opportunity.

But seriously, the Singapore

should be singing my discovery.

In Singapore, we have

for tourists in fact, it's good here.

of Steve Irwin?

ating lunatic is an act now and a symptom of tourism, just like the *Dundee*.

do the same.

Dundee, or

a safari

of cro-

the metropolis.

form the

the

Singapore

and butt-naked.

it any wilder than

do the same.

ore *Dundee*, or

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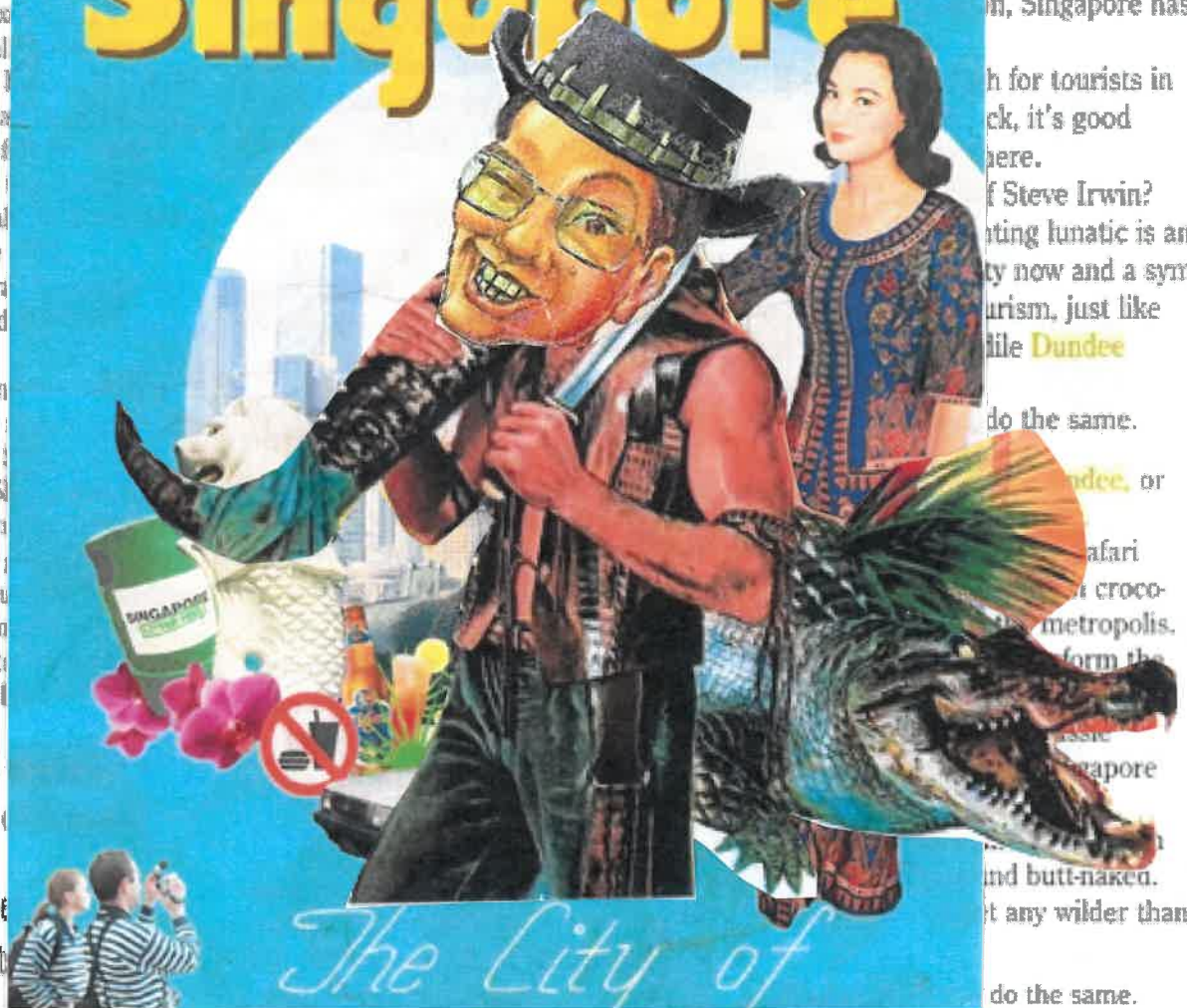
tourism trade into a billion-dollar industry. Don't go to the Aussie outback because modern Singapore remains a wild island.

After all, it was founded by a man who liked to run around butt-naked.

And life doesn't get any wilder than that.

Neil Humphreys is a sub-editor at *TODAY* and the author of the best-selling book on Singapore, *Notes From An Even Smaller Island*. Read his columns in *WEEKEND TODAY*.

Singapore



BUAYA DUNDEE

Tourism Board should be singing my praises for this wild discovery.

Forget the Merlion, Singapore has crocodiles again.

If it's good enough for tourists in Singapore, Singaporeans can do the same.

Let's create a Singapore *Dundee*, or should I say, a *Buaya Dundee*. Politicians could dress up in safari suits and wear hats lined with crocodile teeth to promote the metropolis.

NEWS ITEM

Parts of Sungei Buloh Wetland Reserve rising and sinking

PARTS of the Sungei Buloh Wetland Reserve, could be sinking or rising, according to the preliminary findings of a study started in 2011. Eight monitoring stations had been set up on the

In 1990s explained that land elevation changes are due to a complex array of factors, including tides and depositing and eroding sediment. "We don't know enough yet to be able to

A VERY STUPID CROCODILE

The Straits Times, 6 February 1951, Page 10

Article also available on Microfilm Reel NL2808

Oh yes, I can really feel the ground bobbing up and down.



Image credit: Ghee Chew's Parts of Sungei Buloh Wetlands Reserve rising and sinking. 2014, Cartoon.

A VERY STUPID CROCODILE

me? My liver is on mango tree but if you take me back, I will give it to you.

THERE was once a monkey who lived on a mango tree near the sea-shore. He had a crocodile friend who used often to visit him.

One day, the crocodile's wife said: "I would like to eat a monkey's liver. Bring your friend here tomorrow so that we can have his liver for supper."

The crocodile did not want to do this, but because he was so fond of his wife he at last agreed.

The next day he swam to the shore as usual to visit the monkey. "Hallo my friend," he said. "My wife has invited you for supper tonight. Will you come?"

"Of course," replied the monkey. "But how am I going to cross the river? I cannot swim."

"Don't worry about that," said the crocodile. "I will carry you on my back."

So they set off, and when they were half way there, the croc. said: "I am sorry to trick you my friend, but my wife wants to have your liver for supper."

The monkey laughed, and said: "Why didn't you tell

me? My liver is on the mango tree, but if you like to take me back, I will give it to you."

The stupid crocodile believed him, and returned to the shore. When they reached it, the monkey leapt up the tree, and called: "Thanks for bringing me back. Good-bye!"

Then the crocodile saw that the monkey had been too clever for him, and he was so ashamed that he went away, and never came back again.

D. S. Devin. (16). 17 East Coast Road, Singapore.

The Crocodile.

IVak, wak, wak ! there bellows the Crocodile !

The * bay ' Crocodile to her mate of the reaches,

The Crocodile whose head is knobbed and lumpy,

The Crocodile whose tail is like a sword-blade.

The Crocodile whose teeth are clenched together.

In ever}' river-pool there dwells the Crocodile,

The Crocodile that's fierce, the Crocodile that's savage,

That climbs up to bask on the bank of the river.

And enters the waters to search for sustenance.

The Crocodile that ' gazes ' ^ at our reflections.

If our head is gone, he will get him sustenance,

If our head is there, he will get no sustenance.

There sits a monkey upon the timber,

The Crocodile s\\ eeps him ofi" into the water ;

The Crocodile smothers him within the river-mud.

And when he is dead, it bears him shore-wards,

And batters him on timber, to kill him thoroughly,

And swallows him whole, when dead completely.

That's because you are standing on a crocodile!!



"Monkey and crocodile were abundant, but the latter were so cunning it was as much as one could do to get a glimpse of them, but had we gone over the side of the sampan they would doubtless have made us aware of their presence."



Image credit: Tail and Lower Torso of Estuarine Crocodile, *Crocodylus porosus* Schneider, 1801. Crocodylia, Crocodylidae Singapore, 1888. Lee Kong Chian Natural History Museum, Zoological Reference Collection. Gallery impression by Natalie Lie for National University of Singapore Museum.

YAT SEN AND CROCS

THE Czech sculptor who carved the famous Nanking marble tomb of Sun Yat Sen and is now working in Singapore thinks that Singapore could build an aquarium and zoo at small cost, which would be a world attraction.

He is Bohuslav Koci, who was commissioned in 1929 by the Sun Yat Sen Tomb and Memorial Park Commission in Nanking to carve the effigy of the "Father of the Chinese Republic" in the mausoleum.

Working almost night and day for 18 months he carved the beautiful statue from a block of Peking marble—the hardest marble in the world—weighing three tons. It has been admired by thousands in the \$10,000,000 tomb.

Sun's Death Mask

MR. Koci told me how he cast a death mask of the Chinese leader from his embalmed body.

THE small crocodile pool at Katong in which Mr. Koci is raising baby "crocs"

Mr. Koci hopes to start a crocodile farm in Malaya.

tion last year, Mr. Koci has been experimenting with the breeding of Malayan crocodiles in a small aquarium he has built at Katong

"I have designed and built private aquariums in China and am convinced that Singapore is an ideal place to start one, which might well become world famous. I do not understand why Singapore has not got an artistically laid out zoo and aquarium when there is

such a variety of animal and marine life close at hand," he told me.

Bohuslav Josef Kočí, born on 21. 7. 1890 in Mlada Boleslav, travelled through Russia as a legionary and worked in a legionary sculpture workshop in Vladivostok before settling in China in 1920. He lived in Peking and Tiensin, and then from 1922 in Shanghai. After the death of the first democratic Chinese president, Sun Yat-sen (1866–1925) he won the design competition for the decoration of his mausoleum in Nanking, which was completed in 1929. Before the Second World War Kočí moved to Alor Setar in Malaysia, and later to Johor Bahru close to Singapore. After the Japanese offensive started, he and six other Czechoslovaks tried to leave on an American boat, but it was sunk by the Japanese Navy.

GUIDE



IN

RAFFLES MUSEUM OF BIODIVERSITY RESEARCH COLLECTION, SINGAPORE



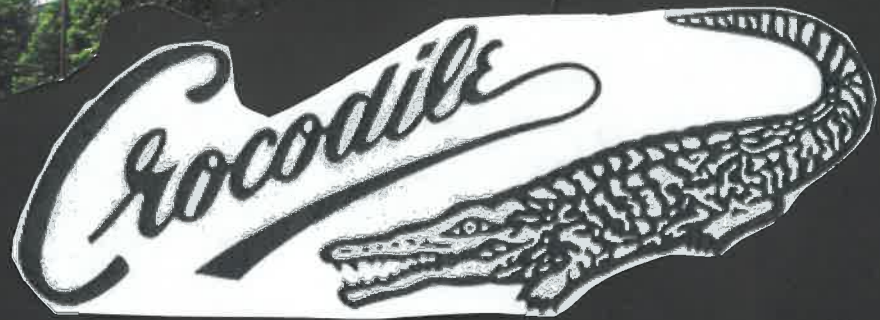
BY

LUCY DAVIS
(KAYPOH ANG MOH)



WITH 33 PLATES





Even the Western colonialists' imperialist, orientalist historical narrative contained a certain native mysticism. On 28 January 1819, the colonist and explorer Stamford Raffles sailed for the first time into the Singapore River with his naval fleet. This would later be presented by the colonial powers as his 'discovery' of Singapore, even though the island had already been developed into an important trading centre in the 14th century. No sooner had the British commandant, Major William Farquhar, landed with his troops, than his dog was eaten by a riverside crocodile, which was in turn shot dead by British guns. This was the beginning of the 'new world' that British historians would locate here. Even though this incident really happened, we cannot help receiving it as somewhat surreal, full of symbolism and exaggeration, a nonsense story. Yet the crocodile is a native of the land, and the British dog an accessory to the colonial powers, so its devouring could represent opposition to the foreign power, and the crocodile's subsequent demise the violent suppression of local resistance, followed by massacres, subjugation, invasion and finally, colonialism.

Although magic realism first attracted attention through its manifestation in South American writing, the Malayan rainforests in the colonial era, with their complicated political situation and boundaries, contained such surreal manifestations that the mystical became merely a part of everyday life. Even before encountering the external influences of magic realism, the observed world in this region was already bordering on hallucinatory: lions and lion-headed fish emerging from the wilderness, able to roam the hills and waters, representing the desires of this island's inhabitants. When it comes to the plants of Nanyang, even the pitcher plant, a humble vine, eats meat for a living, able to capture its own insects or small rodents. And in the lakes and rivers of Southeast Asia, a species of fish is able to leap from the water to catch nearby frogs or small birds. When it rains, a fair few varieties of fish are able to walk on land. In Singapore, the most frequently seen are the common walking catfish and forest walking catfish, though it is the snakehead that is most famous.

The Merlion, the crocodile, and the snakehead: three aquatic creatures with aesthetic, literary and political associations. The Merlion is a totem of the island's desire for multi-culturalism; the crocodile's short-lived attack on a literal running dog of the imperialist forces is a fable of the backlash against colonial incursions; and the snakehead—a creature of the mining pools that are the geological scars of colonialism—being able to heal human wounds, might well represent a hallucinatory dream of Malayan political culture.

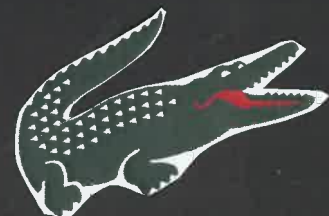




Image credit: Lim, Kheng Chye. Crocodile, Singapore. c.1900s.

Appendix

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Estuarine Crocodile (Detail: Wound)

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Photograph of Crocodile Wound from *Wall Notes and Photographs, Buaya: The Making of a Non-Myth*. Gallery impression by Natalie Lie for National University of Singapore Museum, August 8, 2017. Exhibited February 2, 2017 to May 31, 2018 at The Resource Gallery, *Buaya: The Making of a Non-Myth*. National University of Singapore Museum, Singapore.

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Estuarine Crocodile (Detail: Skin)

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