

Singapore's national treasures

The Lee Kong Chian Natural History Museum is ending SG50 with a celebration of Singapore's native biodiversity. **Audrey Tan** looks at some highlights from its new book, *Temasekia: 50 Plants And Animals Native To Singapore*.

BLACK-EYED LITTER FROG

Instead of a typical frog squat, this frog looks like it is practising yoga. It was discovered in Singapore in 1963 and has a call that sounds like a rattle. This frog seems to be confined to the Bukit Timah and Central Catchment Nature Reserves.



NEPTUNE'S CUP SPONGE

This is the first animal species new to science based on specimens collected from Singapore. It was collected in 1819 by Major-General Thomas Hardwicke. The sponge can grow to a height of over 1m, and was highly sought after by collectors. It was thought to be extinct in the early 1900s. In Singapore, it was re-discovered in the Singapore Strait in 2011. There are now three known living specimens in Singapore waters.



VON MARTENS' MARINE SPIDER

This air-breathing spider was first discovered by German scientist Eduard von Martens in 1861. It is often seen during low tides scurrying around for prey, which includes small crabs. During the high tide, it conceals itself in an air chamber made using waterproof silk.

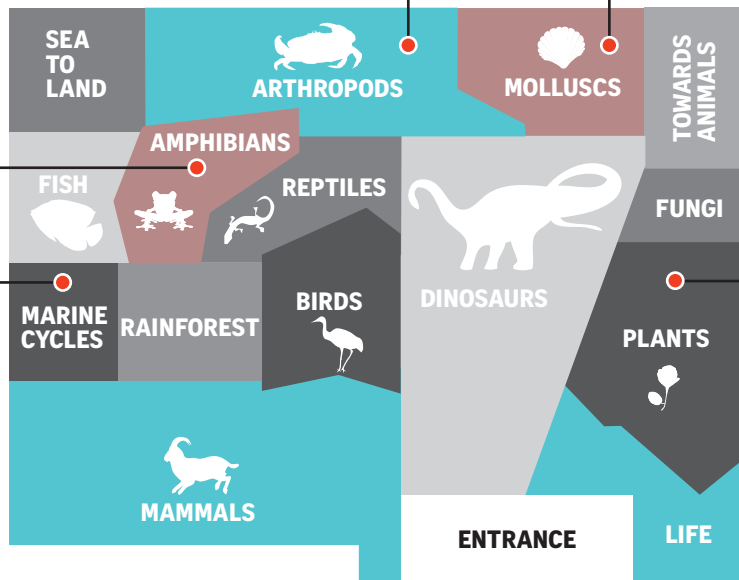


SINGAPORE SCALLOP

The scallop was first introduced to science based on a specimen collected from Singapore in 1842, and can be found along the shore and in seagrass meadows from the eastern Johor Strait to the south-eastern shores of Singapore. Its shell can grow up to 5cm long.

RAFFLES' PITCHER PLANT

The Raffles' pitcher plant is one of two species of plants that were the first plant discoveries for Singapore. It was named after Sir Thomas Stamford Raffles, who discovered it in 1819. This plant grows mainly on nutrient-deficient soil, but obtains nourishment from the insect-trapping "urn".



Museum level 1: Biodiversity gallery zones