

Above the Treetops, at MacRitchie Reservoir Park

By Anne Pinto-Rodrigues



One of the many walking trails leading into the forest at MacRitchie Reservoir Park



The TreeTop Walk provides a stunning view of the MacRitchie forest canopy

The 12-hectare forest surrounding Singapore's oldest reservoir, MacRitchie, is a rich and diverse ecosystem. It is home to nearly 2,000 plant species and 400 species of fauna. Some of the last remaining vestiges of primary rainforest in Singapore can be found here. Along with three other reservoirs (Upper Peirce, Lower Peirce and Upper Seletar), MacRitchie forms part of the Central Catchment Nature Reserve, a key rainfall catchment area for the island and an important source of Singapore's water supply.

Several designated hiking trails within MacRitchie Reservoir Park allow visitors to experience this remarkable forest. One of the highlights is the TreeTop Walk, a free-standing suspension bridge (about 250 metres in length), which provides hikers with stunning views of the forest canopy. At its highest point, the bridge is about 25 metres above the forest floor.

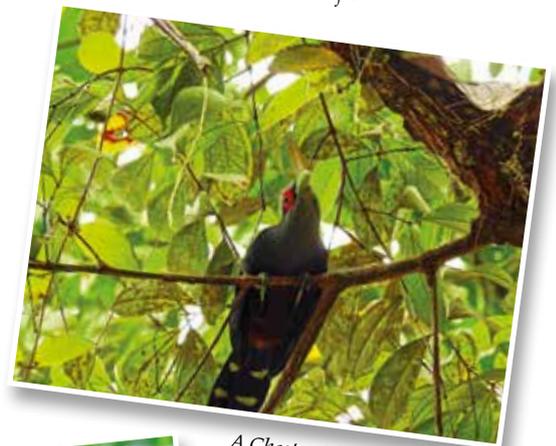
In recent years, government plans to construct a train tunnel under the MacRitchie forest for the Cross Island Line, have led conservation NGOs and nature-loving citizens to voice their concerns and actively engage with project stakeholders to find alternative solutions. As of March 2017, soil investigation work has begun and its findings will be crucial in determining how this train line will be laid out – either cutting through the forest, to its detriment, or skirting its periphery, thus minimising impact.

Anne Pinto-Rodrigues is a nature enthusiast, who writes about her various wildlife experiences on her blog *No Roads Barred* (www.noroadbarred.wordpress.com).

All photos by the author



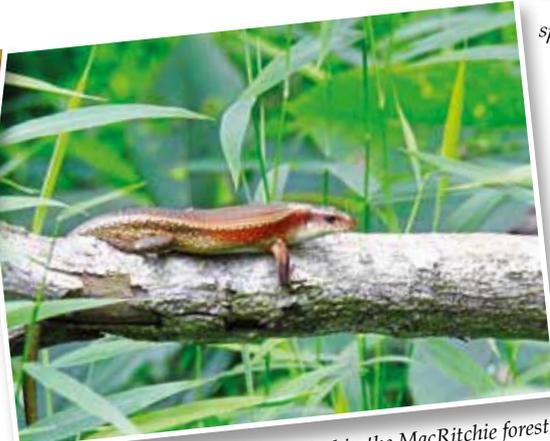
View of the Upper Peirce Reservoir from the TreeTop Walk



A Chestnut-bellied Malkoha (a species in the cuckoo family) seeks refuge in the foliage of a tree



A male Common Parasol Dragonfly spotted near a small stream in the forest



A Common Sun Skink photographed in the MacRitchie forest