

# Species of the Month 09/2016 || Tembusu tree


26 September 2016 || TO NUS Community

NUS Students Against Violation of the Earth (SAVE) and the Office of Environmental Sustainability present “Campus in a Tropical Rainforest”, an initiative that aims to create awareness of the biodiversity that surrounds us in NUS. In each issue, we will be featuring a species that can be spotted or found in NUS to help us get to know them better. So, if you happen to be travelling around NUS between classes, remember to stop and look around your surroundings, for you may be surprised to come across some of the other inhabitants of NUS.


NUS SAVE  
- presents -

## CAMPUS IN A TROPICAL RAINFOREST


Species of the Month  
Issue #9: September 2016




**Tembusu**  
*Fagraea fragrans*  
Family Gentianaceae

 **Appearance**


- The tembusu is a large evergreen tree that is irregularly shaped and can grow up to 55m in height.
- The tree can be identified by its deeply fissured dark brown bark and fragrance at dawn and dusk.
- Its oval-shaped leaves are about 5 to 11 cm in length and its creamy white trumpet shaped flowers develop into tiny round and scarlet berries.

 **Growth Habitat**

Native to Singapore and Southeast Asia, the tembusu is a hardy species that is able to grow in poorly aerated and clayey soils.

 **Pollinators & Dispersers**

- Pollinated by butterflies and nocturnal moths which are attracted by the fragrance produced by the tembusu.
- The many seeds found in the round and scarlet fruits are dispersed by fruit bats and birds, particularly starlings.

 **Fun Facts**

- Wood from the tembusu tree is hard, heavy, durable and termite-resistant which is suitable for a wide variety of uses.
- The tembusu was identified to be a suitable species for planting in parks and open spaces and was selected for planting in the early years of Singapore's greening movement in the 1960s for its fragrant flowers.
- The tembusu tree found at the Singapore Botanic Gardens is one of the 10 tembusu trees designated as heritage trees in Singapore and is featured on the back of Singaporean five-dollar notes.

Photo by: Kenneth Lee

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For more information and pictures on the Tembusu tree and to check out the “Campus in a Tropical Rainforest” series, click on this link - [www.tiny.cc/CiTR](http://www.tiny.cc/CiTR)

Also, check out other sightings of NUS biodiversity on the Campus Creatures Facebook page - <https://www.facebook.com/campuscreatures/>

You can also join the community in spotting the flora and fauna in NUS by sharing your sightings with pictures on the Campus Creatures Facebook page and Instagram the photos with #NUSCiTR and #NUSbiodiversity.