

# the horti @ NUS digest

# 2026

## OUR CAMPUS IN A FOREST

In this year's edition of The Horti Digest, we showcase how NUS is strategically integrating nature across our campus. Beyond aesthetics, our greenery is transforming campus landscapes into climate regulators, vibrant ecosystems to support biodiversity, and sanctuaries for wellbeing. Join us as we explore how the power of nature is building a more resilient and sustainable campus.



Plant-It-Forward Day 2025  
1 Nov 2025, Eusoff Hall

## GREEN AT HEART

Creating lasting impact takes hard work...but that's what defines our NUS community: people who don't just give, but take action to make change happen.

- Prof Tan Eng Chye, President of NUS



**12,920** <sup>+25% VS LAST YEAR</sup>

Trees Planted in 2025



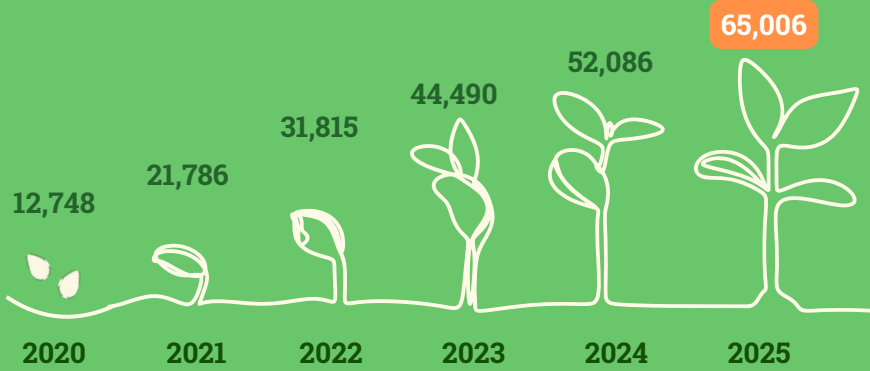
**10**

Tree Planting Events held on campus in 2025



**880**

Volunteers engaged, including students, staff, and alumni



**100,000**

Trees by 2030

**65,006**

Trees as of December 2025

## SETTING THE GOLD STANDARD

The NParks Landscape Excellence Assessment Framework (LEAF) celebrates good landscape design, construction and management. In 2025, NUS secured two new LEAF Certifications (Ridge View Annex & Kent Vale II), for a total of twelve certifications and four Gold awards, the most LEAF certifications held in the Developments category to date.



Kent Vale II

## CELEBRATING OUR LANDSCAPES

In 2025, the Ventus Naturalised Garden won Silver at the prestigious Singapore Landscape Architecture Awards (SLAA), with Assoc Prof Hwang recognised for his research project, "Rewilding Campus as a Sustainable Landscape Design and Management Guideline". Meanwhile, the student-led project, "Nasi Ulam Forest Garden: A Living Lab", also achieved the American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA) Student Honor Award.



Nasi Ulam Forest Garden

# PLANTING THE FUTURE

From planting milestones to award-winning landscapes, our campus continues to make strides in sustainability. Each achievement brings us closer to a greener, more vibrant environment for all. Read on to find out how we are growing our impact.



OMT Planting  
Opposite UHall

## REFORESTING LOWER KENT RIDGE RD

**100 TREES, 98 PEOPLE**  
19 APR 2025

We transformed the slope opposite UHall into a self-sustaining 'mini-forest' with dense planting to encourage rapid growth and biodiversity.



bITbIT's 5<sup>th</sup> Birthday  
NUS IT Building

## CELEBRATING BITBIT'S BIRTHDAY

**12 TREES, 50 PEOPLE**  
10 OCT 2025

In celebration of the 5th anniversary of bITbIT, NUS IT's official rabbit mascot, NUS IT staff came together to green our campus.



Plant-It-Forward Day 2025  
Eusoff Hall

## THE PLANT-IT-FORWARD CHALLENGE

**130 TREES, 158 PEOPLE**  
01 NOV 2025

For every \$1,000 raised for student financial aid, a new tree is planted, giving back to our community and environment at the same time.



UCI Grow Together  
AS8

## GROW TOGETHER AS A COMMUNITY

**51 TREES, 41 PEOPLE**  
27 NOV 2025

Staff and students came together to celebrate NUS' 120th anniversary and commemorate Clean and Green Singapore at AS8.



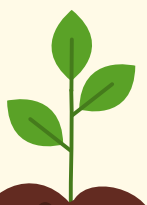
Nasi Ulam Forest Garden  
10th Planting Day  
Next to CELC

## LAC STUDENTS IN ACTION

**21 PEOPLE**  
28 NOV 2025

The Landscape Architecture Collective (LAC), a student-led group, continued their efforts by transplanting and tagging plants, and making nutrient-rich compost.

**READY TO GET YOUR HANDS DIRTY?**



Join us for our next tree-planting event. We will be back at Kent Ridge to plant 100 more trees!

**23 MAY 2026**  
**8AM - 10.30AM**

[REGISTER NOW](#)



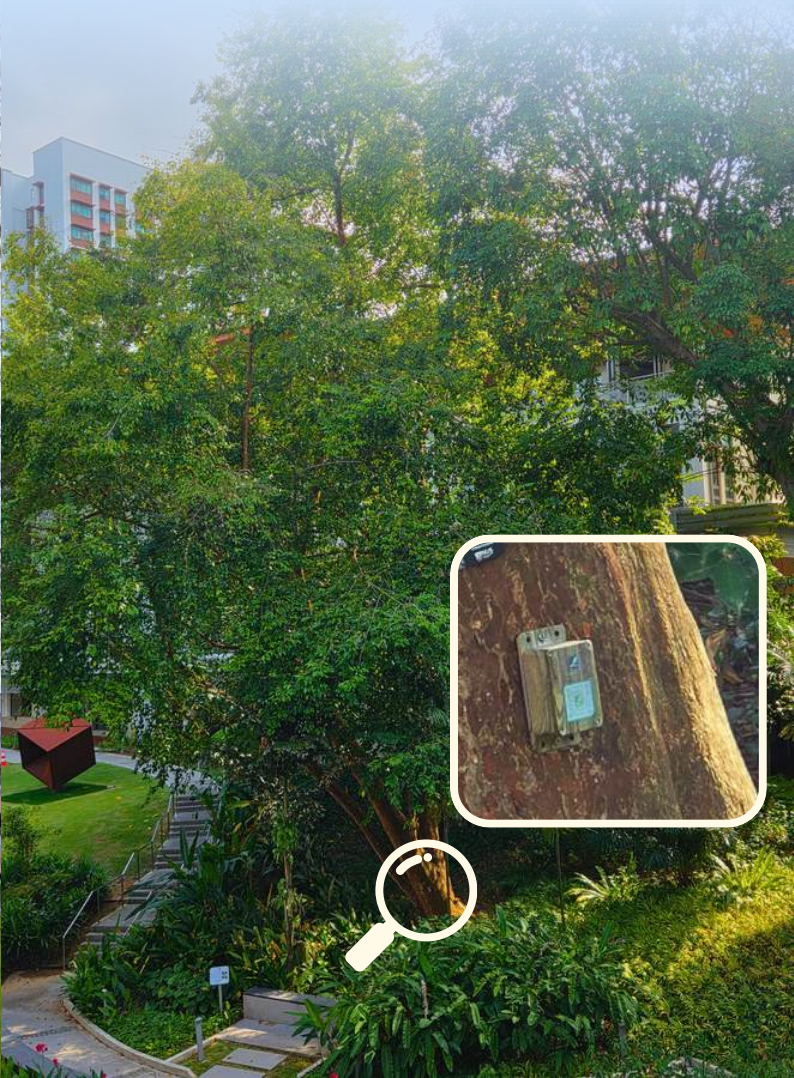
# CAMPUS GREENING HIGHLIGHTS

Discover how we're shaping a smarter, greener campus, from technology-driven tree care to innovative urban farming and landscape features.

## PROTECTING TREES WITH SMART TECHNOLOGY

We are moving beyond traditional visual inspections to smarter, adaptive tree care. By integrating tree tilt monitoring sensors into our maintenance approach, we can now track the structural integrity of key trees in real time.

In 2025, sensors were installed on the iconic Rain Tree, *Samanea saman* at AS8 and a rare *Margaritaria indica* at NUS College. These systems provide weather alerts and tilt data insights, helping us enhance campus safety while preserving our natural heritage.





Our work goes beyond maintaining greenery. We're constantly enhancing the landscape and introducing new ideas across campus.

With our ridge-top location, trees face strong winds during storms, making some species more vulnerable. Tree tilt sensors now help us detect early signs of stress, allowing us to act quickly and keep our campus safe.

It's how we're combining expertise and technology to better care for our trees and biodiversity.

- Hansel Kuntadi, Environmental Enhancement Unit



## HIDDEN GARDENS ON CAMPUS

Our campus continues to flourish with new green initiatives, from a mini orchard adding fresh life to the grounds, to a swale garden that supports biodiversity and natural water management.



Passionfruit



Key Lime

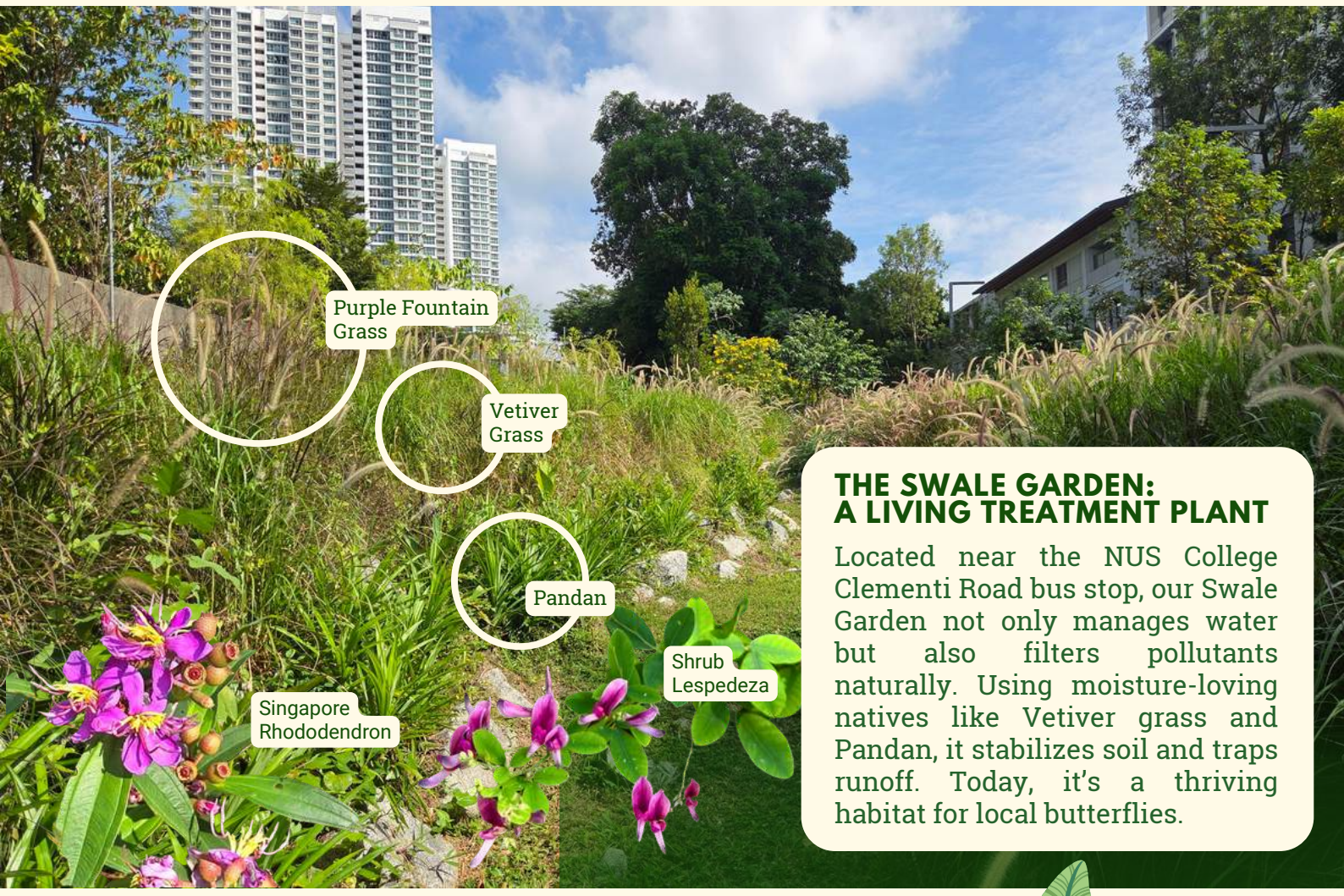


Nona



Chiku

**URBAN FARMING: THE ERC MINI ORCHARD**  
High-rise fruit cultivation is flourishing atop the University Town's Education Resource Centre (ERC). This productive rooftop garden features tropical species like Chiku, Key Lime, Nona, and Passionfruit.



**THE SWALE GARDEN: A LIVING TREATMENT PLANT**  
Located near the NUS College Clementi Road bus stop, our Swale Garden not only manages water but also filters pollutants naturally. Using moisture-loving natives like Vetiver grass and Pandan, it stabilizes soil and traps runoff. Today, it's a thriving habitat for local butterflies.

## KEY TRAITS OF PLANTS IDEAL FOR A BIO SWALE

**High Transpiration Rates**  
Purple fountain grass and lespedeza have high surface area, allowing them to easily absorb excess water from the swale and release it, helping the swale to recover after each storm.

**High Nutrient Uptake**  
Pandan and melastoma act as natural filters, absorbing pollutants before water reaches the groundwater table.

**Pollinator Support**  
Melastoma and lespedeza are both pollinators, which attracts carpenter bees and butterflies with vibrant purple flowers.

**Soil Stabilization**  
Vetiver grass has a deep and fibrous root system, creating channels in the soil that allow rainwater to soak into the ground.



# DISCOVER OUR CAMPUS

Our rewilding efforts have made NUS a sanctuary for wildlife, where diverse plants and animals can flourish right alongside the built environment.



As I was on my way home, a loud buzzing sound caught my attention. The sound was so intense and close that I stopped to look around. To my surprise, I spotted this cicada resting on a tree trunk just beside the path.

- Jess, NUS staff on her way to E5 Building



Cicada  
*Purana usnani*  
Near E5

Photo credit: Jess Chua



Huntsman Spider  
*Heteropoda venatoria*  
Nasi Ulam Garden

Photo Credit: Mahadi



Atlas Moths, mating on a Ficus tree  
*Attacus Atlas*  
AS7

Photo Credit: Mahadi



Male pink-necked Green Pigeon and chick  
*Treron vernans*  
Lee Kong Chian Natural History Museum

Photo Credit: Mahadi



Female pink-necked Green Pigeon  
*Treron vernans*  
SDE4

Photo Credit: Mahadi



Black-naped Oriole  
*Oriolus chinensis*  
COM1

Photo Credit: Mahadi



Collared Kingfisher  
*Todiramphus chloris*  
Central Library Forum Garden



Crimson Sunbird  
*Aethopyga siparaja*  
AS7

Photo Credit: Mahadi



Jungle Fowl  
*Gallus gallus*  
Ventus



Blue Trumpet Vine  
*Thunbergia grandiflora*

Photo Credit: Mahadi



Ruffled Fan Palm  
*Licuala grandis*  
MD4

Reaching its seasonal peak, the Licuala palm's ruby red fruit adds a vibrant splash of colour to MD4 in September 2025.

Photo Credit: Mahadi



Yellow-vented Bulbul  
*Pycnonotus goiavier*  
Ventus

Bulbul fledgling  
Ventus

Photo credit: Chloe Tan



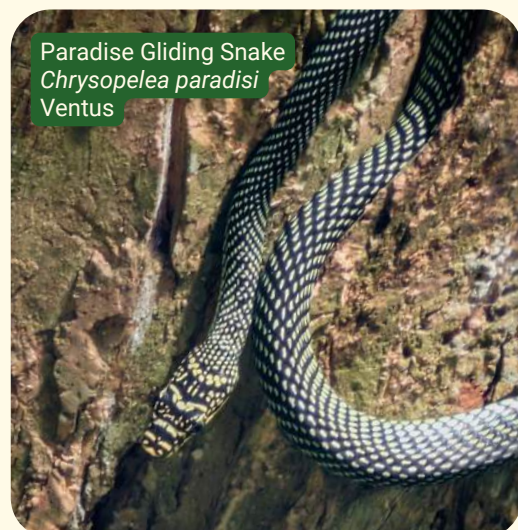
Giant Taro Bud  
*Alocasia macrorrhizos*  
Nasi Ulam Garden

Photo Credit: Mahadi



Oriental Pied Hornbill  
*Anthracoceros albirostris*  
LT13

Photo Credit: Mahadi



Paradise Gliding Snake  
*Chrysopelea paradisi*  
Ventus

Photo credit: Shirley Chew



Olive-backed Sunbird  
*Cinnyris jugularis*  
AS8 Rooftop

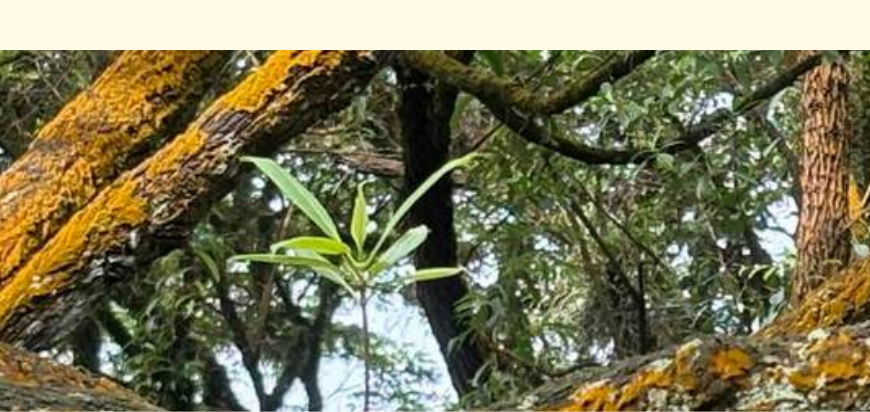
Photo Credit: Mahadi



Malayan water monitor,  
*Varanus salvator*  
Moving towards COM3 swale

Despite their size, monitor lizards are usually shy and prefer to stay away from humans. They are ecologically important scavengers and help to control prey populations.

Photo Credit: Mahadi



## NUS DISCOVERY WALKS

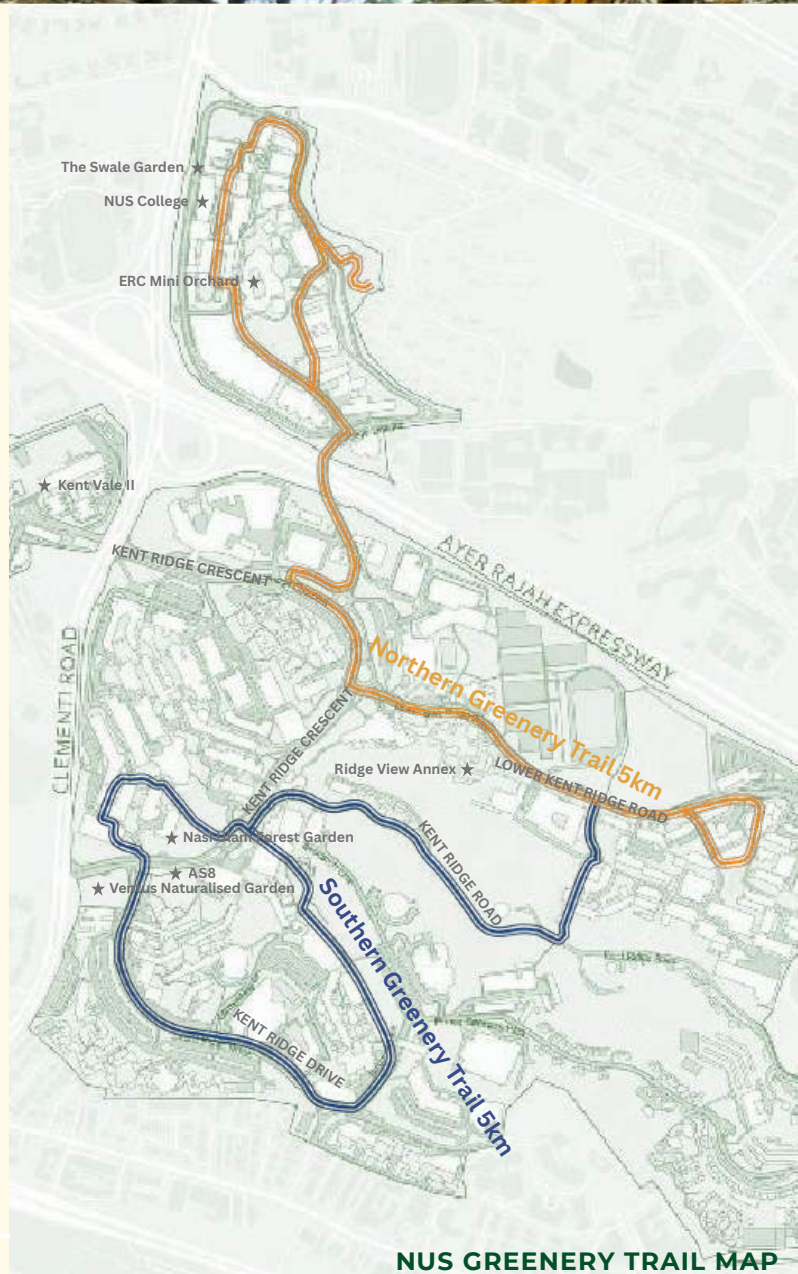
In 2025, the UCI community came together for the NUS Discovery Walk, an initiative focused on appreciation for our campus's natural environment. The walk featured a collaborative wellness segment with the Health and Wellbeing (HWB) team, allowing staff to engage in mindful reflection.

## JOIN THE WALKS

Curious to uncover the hidden corners and untold stories of our campus?

The Discovery Walk project is part of a broader effort by our UCI landscape team to connect people with our green infrastructure, through trails across the NUS Northern and Southern Greenery routes, offering a closer look at our "Nature Ways" while sharing the latest updates on our reforestation and rewilding efforts.

Keep an eye out for the official rollout!



NUS GREENERY TRAIL MAP



UCI staff participating in a Discovery Walk



## SHARE YOUR PHOTOS!

We want to see NUS through your eyes! Send us your photos of NUS flora and fauna and your photos could be featured in our next newsletter!

1. Upload to <https://tinyurl.com/NUSbiodiv>
2. Email [achiali@nus.edu.sg](mailto:achiali@nus.edu.sg) with the subject line "NUS Flora and Fauna Photo Submission", including your name, description of photo and where it was taken.



## We hope you enjoyed this issue!

A big thank you to our Environmental Enhancement Unit for their efforts in greening our campus!

<https://www.linkedin.com/company/ucinus/>

<https://uci.nus.edu.sg/>

See you in the next one!