



PROTECTING AND MAINTAINING THE HERITAGE

Nicknamed “the City in a Garden”, Singapore is known as one of the greenest cities in the world. Efforts to continue “greening up” Singapore are never-ending, besides planting more trees and creating more greenery in the city, identifying, and conserving individual majestic trees is also critical for us as these mature trees are the natural heritage of Singapore. These trees take decades to mature elegantly, and they beautify our landscape, giving us a sense of identity.

The Club is pleased to note that two trees at The New Course have been endorsed as National Heritage Trees at the annual NParks Heritage Tree panel meeting held in October 2022. The trees were inspected by experts who have broad diversity of expertise. Qualifying criteria includes a girth of more than five metres and/or if the tree has a botanical, social, historical, cultural or aesthetic value. The Heritage Tree Scheme, announced by NParks on 17 August 2001, advocates the conservation of Singapore’s mature trees. The programme safeguards and promotes appreciation of our natural heritage, including initiatives such as installing interpretive signage and setting up a nomination scheme for the community.

As part of SICC’s sustainability initiatives, the Club will be organising tours that are open to the public, to bring nature lovers closer to these trees, stay tuned for more updates! In the meantime, keep a lookout for the majestic trees when you are golfing at The New Course!

What you need to know about the trees

The two tree species namely the Jelawai Jaha and the Common Pulai. These species are presumed to be a remnant of native species found in the Central Catchment jungles.

Common Pulai

(Located near The New Course, Peirce Hole 6)

Unique ID for Heritage Tree: HT 2022-320
Scientific name: Alstonia angustiloba
Girth: 6.33m @ 1.3m height
Height: 24.8m

The Common Pulai or Alstonia angustiloba is a mid-canopy tree that can reach up to 40m in height. It is native to Singapore and is naturally distributed across the primary or secondary forests and swamp forests of Sumatra, Peninsular Malaysia, Borneo, and Java.

It has buttress roots and its deeply fluted, dark grey trunk supports a pagoda-shaped crown. The Common Pulai has simple, glossy, dark green leaves that are oval-shaped and arranged in whorls. The tree exudes latex when any part of the plant is damaged. In Singapore, flowering can be triggered by distinctly cool dry weather, and the tree produces many sprays of creamy-white flowers accompanied by a heady fragrance reminiscent of burnt sugar.

The Common Pulai and Indian Pulai (Alstonia scholaris) are both similar looking and commonly planted in Singapore’s urban landscapes. However, they can be differentiated by a few characteristics such as the colour of the flowers and the stipules. The Indian Pulai has greenish-yellow flowers and the Common Pulai has creamy-white flowers. The Indian Pulai has a stipule at the base of the leaf petiole while the Common Pulai does not.

This Common Pulai tree had a girth of 6.33 m when it was endorsed as a Heritage Tree in 2022.

Jelawai Jaha

(Located near The New Course, Peirce Hole 5)

Unique ID for Heritage Tree : HT 2022-322
Scientific name : Terminalia subspatulata
Girth : 6.14m @ 1.3m height
Height : 37.2m

The Jelawai Jaha or Terminalia subspatulata is a forest tree that is native to Singapore and can grow up to 45m in height or more. It can also be found naturally distributed in the forests of Sumatra, Peninsular Malaysia, Borneo, and Java. The trunk is heavily buttressed, and the bark is pale brown with narrow cracks. This emergent species has a wide and flat-topped crown, and this character is particularly distinct in mature trees. Its open and tiered crown has been observed to be favoured by large birds of prey as nesting sites in Singapore.

The spathula-shaped leaves are leathery, bearing long leaf stalks, and spirally arranged, with their edges curved.

The Jelawai Jaha bears greenish to yellow flowers which are pollinated by insects while its flat, two-winged fruits are wind dispersed.

This Heritage Tree had a girth of 3m when measured at 5m height above the buttresses when endorsed as a Heritage Tree in 2022.

Bibliography:

Common pulai (2022) National Parks Board. Available at: <https://www.nparks.gov.sg/gardens-parks-and-nature/heritage-trees/ht-2022-320> (Accessed: December 20, 2022).

Jelawai Jaha (2022) National Parks Board. Available at: <https://www.nparks.gov.sg/gardens-parks-and-nature/heritage-trees/ht-2022-322> (Accessed: December 20, 2022).



Common Pulai

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Jelawai Jaha

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