

MEDIA RELEASE

For immediate release

Do not release animals into the wild

Annual initiative reaches out to parks, nature areas and reservoirs

Singapore, 6 May 2016 – The National Parks Board (NParks) and PUB, Singapore’s national water agency will be carrying out ‘Operation No Release’, an annual initiative that aims to spread public awareness on the dangers of releasing animals into parks (including ponds), nature areas and reservoirs on 7-8 and 14-15 May (see Annex for full list of locations). Besides keeping a lookout for any sign of animal release at parks, nature reserves and reservoirs, the agencies will educate and advise members of the public on the harmful impact of releasing animals into the wild.

2 “Animals that are bred in captivity or captured from the wild deliberately to be sold are seldom equipped with the skills they need to survive in the wild,” says Mr Wong Tuan Wah, Group Director of Conservation, NParks. “Upon release, they would find it difficult to fend for themselves, especially in an unfamiliar environment and many are unlikely to survive. The ones that manage to adapt to their new surroundings may outcompete native species for resources, disrupting the delicate ecological balance.”

3 “Reservoirs and reservoir parks are important habitats for a wide variety of freshwater flora and fauna. The release of non-native species may introduce novel parasites and diseases into our native environment and waters, which may have impact on freshwater ecosystems and water quality. We strongly urge members of the public not to release animals into our reservoirs and waterways,” said Mr Ridzuan Ismail, PUB’s Director of Catchment and Waterways.

4 Ms Jessica Kwok, Group Director of AVA’s Animal Management Group reminds pet owners that a pet is a lifetime commitment. “It is irresponsible and cruel to abandon pets. Pets may not survive in the wild as they usually lack the natural instincts and ability to find food or fend for themselves. Pet owners who are unable to look after their pet anymore should find a suitable home for their pet. They can also approach an animal welfare group for help to re-home their pet,” she said.

5 First-time offenders caught releasing animals may be charged under the Parks and Trees Act and could be fined up to \$50,000, jailed up to six months, or both.

*** End ***

**List of parks, nature reserves and reservoirs taking part in Operation 'No Release'
2016**

1. Bukit Batok Nature Park
2. Bedok Reservoir
3. Dairy Farm Nature Park (includes Singapore Quarry)
4. Jurong Lake
5. Kranji Reservoir Park / Sungei Buloh Wetland Reserve
6. Labrador Nature Reserve
7. Lower Peirce Reservoir Park
8. Lower Seletar Reservoir Park
9. MacRitchie Reservoir Park
10. Marina Reservoir
11. Pandan Reservoir
12. Punggol Reservoir
13. Pulau Ubin
14. Serangoon Reservoir
15. Springleaf Nature Park
16. Upper Peirce Reservoir
17. Upper Seletar Reservoir Park