

Making the Invisible Visible: Digital Collections and Curation at the National University of Singapore Libraries

Lee Cheng Ean

University Librarian

National University of Singapore

National University of Singapore ...since 1905

3

Campuses

17

Schools/Faculties

30

University-level Research Institutes & Centres

Profile of Students *(as at Apr 2021)*

30.3K

Undergraduates

11.3K

Graduates

Total | 41.6K

Profile of Faculty & Staff *(as at Apr 2021)*

2.6K

Faculty

4.1K

Research

3.7K

Executive & Professional

1.9K

General

Total | 12.3K

NUS Libraries



Central Library



Chinese Library



CJ Koh Law Library



Music Library



Medical Library



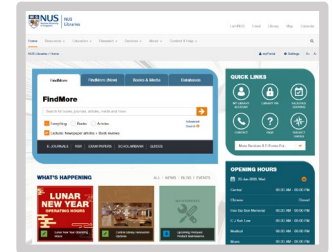
Hon Sui Sen Memorial Library



Science Library



East Asia Institute Library



Digital Library

Our Strategic Outcomes & Thrusts

1

Deliver Streamlined
& Focused Services
for the
Digital Generation

2

Be the
Collaborative Hub for
Experiential Phygital
Learning & Innovation

3

Grow Knowledge &
Capabilities for
Future Generations

Facilitate
student success



Advance
teaching excellence



Enhance
Organisational
Excellence



Increase research
visibility & impact



Create value
for the world



To be a Southeast Asian Resource Hub

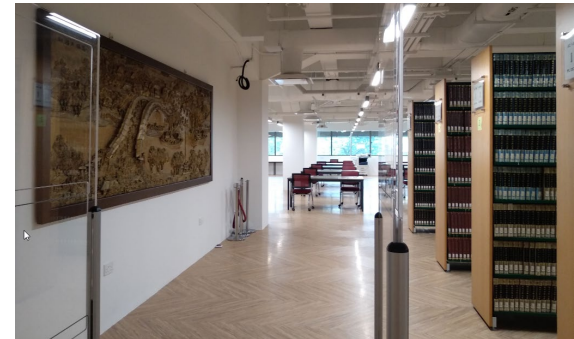
Collection & Content

- Curate and collect publications
 - in support of university-wide research, teaching and learning
 - in the print and digital format
 - in English, Chinese, Malay and Indonesian languages
- Focus on the humanities and social sciences

To be a Southeast Asian Resource Hub

Collection & Content

- Singapore-Malaysia Collection
 - broad and in-depth coverage of the economic, geographical, historical, political and social developments of Singapore, Malaysia, Brunei and ASEAN as an entity
- Southeast Asian Chinese Collection
 - rich collection of Chinese overseas newspapers, and commemorative publications by Chinese clan associations, Chinese schools, trade unions and religious institutions in Singapore, Malaysia, and Brunei through active solicitation



To be a Southeast Asian Resource Hub

Access & Discovery

- Accelerate the digitisation effort on rare and distinctive sources including primary sources, with external partners & individuals to increase open access to Southeast Asian content
- Facilitate access to digitised resources through a **Discovery Platform** that supports both novice and advanced researchers

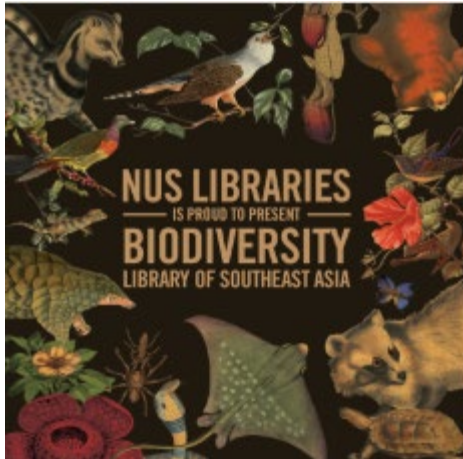


Emeritus Prof Edwin Thumboo

To be a Southeast Asian Resource Hub

Access & Discovery

- Meet potential demand for data sources on Southeast Asia for digital scholarship research and education



NUS Libraries

Curry Puff Reef Crab

Patyopoda griseonuda, common name Curry Puff Reef Crab, has an "Endangered" status in the Singapore Red List.

Body with a 6cm. Body and claws chocolate brown and covered with large rounded bumps; smoothen sides on the body edges with regular recessed-highlighted in pale bars that make the creature resemble a curry puff or ga. Pincers large and thick with dark brown claws. Like other brightly coloured Xanthid crabs, it is probably poisonous. A size-matching crab that is sometimes seen among coral and rubble.

Year of Signaling

1897 1933 1993 2024

Singapore
Date of record: 1897

Pulau Pawai
Date of record: 11/1993
Must

Sultan Shoal , Near Singapore
Date of record: 12/1993

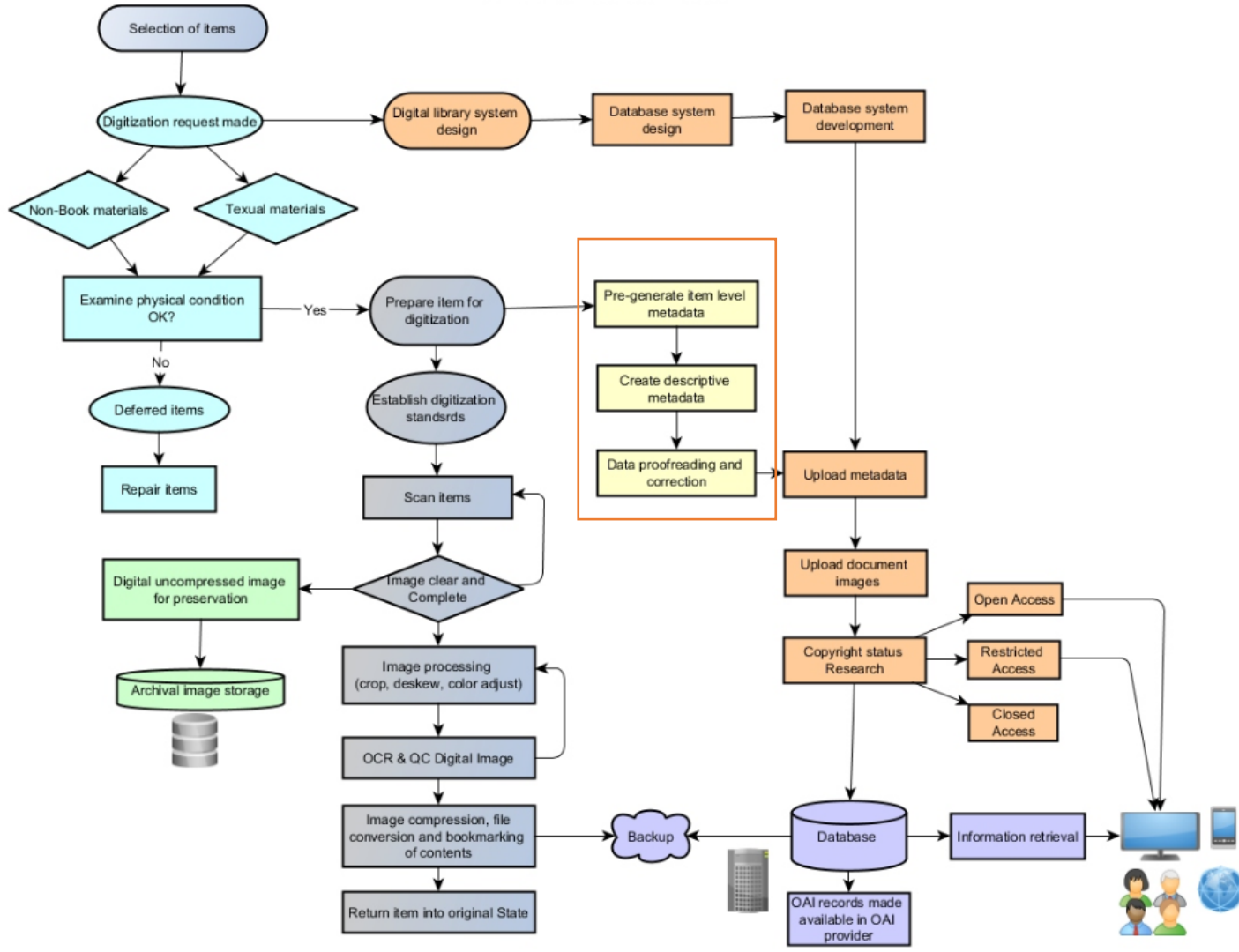
First Prev 1 2 3 Next Last

Leahli © iStock.com

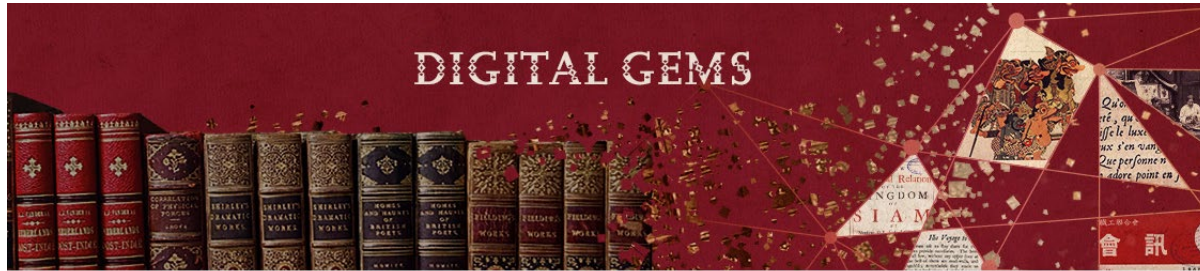
Exponential Growth from ... 2016



Digitisation Process



Digital Gems Portal



A digital gateway that connects novice and advanced researchers with key, rare, historical, and primary source resources at any time and from anywhere



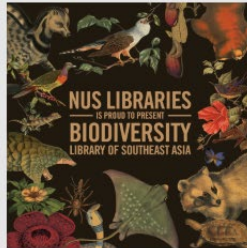
History, Culture & Heritage

This collection comprises mostly published books and periodicals, but...



SG: A Sense of History

This select bibliography lists materials on the history of Singapore from its...



Biodiversity Library of Southeast...

Digital library of biodiversity literature on Southeast Asia which aims to make th...

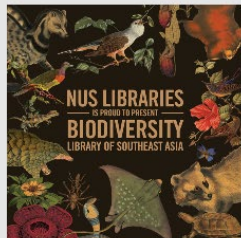


Chinese in Southeast Asia

Historical Documents on the Chinese in Southeast Asia

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

Collections



Biodiversity Library of Southeast...

Digital library of biodiversity literature on Southeast Asia which aims to make th...



China Meteorological Publication...

A digital collection of daily China weather records spanning 1872-1951...



Chinese in Southeast Asia

Historical Documents on the Chinese in Southeast Asia



Chinese Newspapers

NUS Libraries has a comprehensive collection of more than 150 Chinese...



History, Culture & Heritage

This collection comprises mostly published books and periodicals, but...



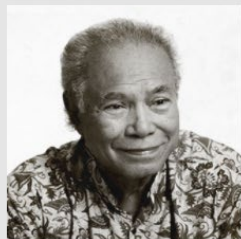
Index to Primary Sources on...

It contains file lists and indexes of Colonial Office files that deal with the...



Koh Kim Yam Private Papers

Dr Koh Kim Yam was appointed medical officer-in-charge of the Middle Road...



Edwin Thumboo Private Papers

Edwin Thumboo is a renowned poet and academic in Singapore. The...



English Newspapers



Everyday Life in Singapore

A collection of sketches of common spaces in Singapore between 2014 a...



Historical Maps of Singapore

This website provides viewing of 31 sets of maps scanned and georeferenced ...



Medicine and Health

The Medical and Health Collection contains historical medical information...



Pre-War Japanese Publications o...

Pre-War Japanese Publications on Southeast Asia

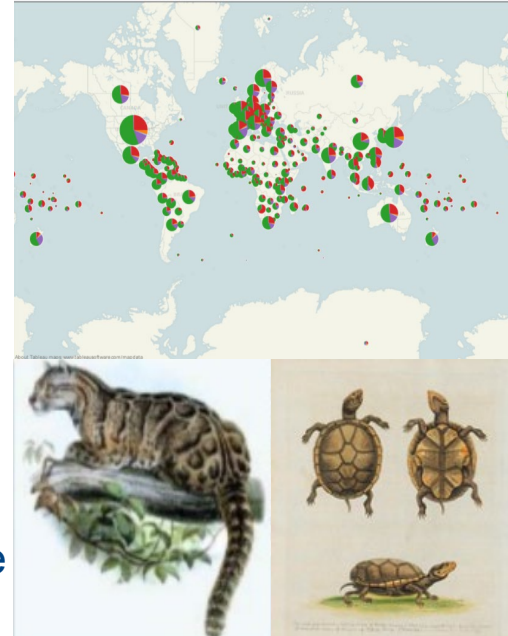


SG: A Sense of History

This select bibliography lists materials on the history of Singapore from its...

Collaboration with Researchers & Institutions

- **Linking the Digital Humanities to Biodiversity History in Singapore and Southeast Asia**
 - Social Science Research Thematic Grant (Ministry of Education, Singapore)
 - NUS's Asia Research Institute, Yale-NUS, Geography Department, NUS Libraries
 - National Parks Board (NParks), National Library Board (NLB), Oxford University Museum of Natural History, University of Philippines
 - **NUS Libraries' roles** – Manage digitization project, create descriptive metadata, Host online collections



Collaboration with Researchers & Institutions

- **Acquire and digitise primary resources related to Singapore biodiversity specimens**
 - NUS Lee Kong Chian Natural History Museum
 - Complement the heritage collection building exercise of Singapore undertaken by National Library Board (Singapore)
 - Various museums, archives and institutions and university libraries in the USA and UK



Credit: LKCNHM



Collaboration with Researchers & Institutions

- **Digitise the historical Singapore specimen image collection held by NUS Lee Kong Chian Natural History Museum**
 - 117,000 items of slides, negatives and prints, built by the Museum over 80 years
 - **NUS Libraries' roles** – create descriptive metadata, Host online collections

Data Sharing Efforts - National

Start your search Search
Advanced Search

One Search, many sources.

- Books
- Magazines & Articles
- Audiovisuals
- Images
- Newspapers
- Records & Papers
- Websites
- Physical Objects
- eJournals

One Search by National Library Board (Singapore)

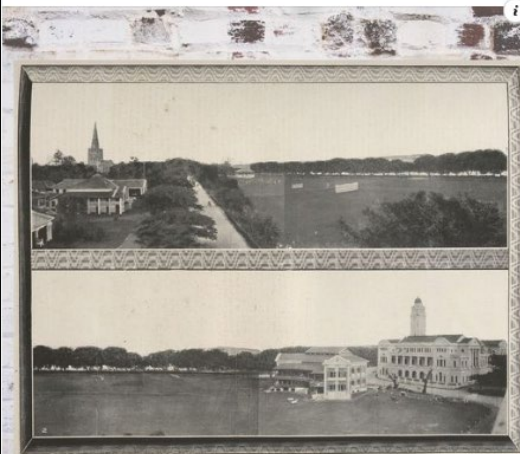
National Library Singapore with National Archives of Singapore.
Paid partnership

"From the harbour the town presents a very picturesque appearance, with its long sweep of imposing waterfront buildings, dominated by the light house [sic] on Fort Canning's wooded slopes, the clock-tower of the Victoria Memorial Hall, and the spire of St. Andrew's Cathedral rising out of a mass foliage."

A description of Singapore town found in "Twentieth century impression of British Malaya" published in 1908. The publication detailed the history, people, commerce, industries and resources of British Malaya through images and text. Read all about it and travel back in time at <https://digitalgems.nus.edu.sg/.../2dd2f63a-c32d-4abb...>

Our recent collaboration with [NUS Libraries](#) expanded OneSearch's results to include more than 19,000 records in their Special Collections, providing you with even more rare and historical records such as the one you are looking at. Head on down to OneSearch at <https://search.nlb.gov.sg/> to discover more.

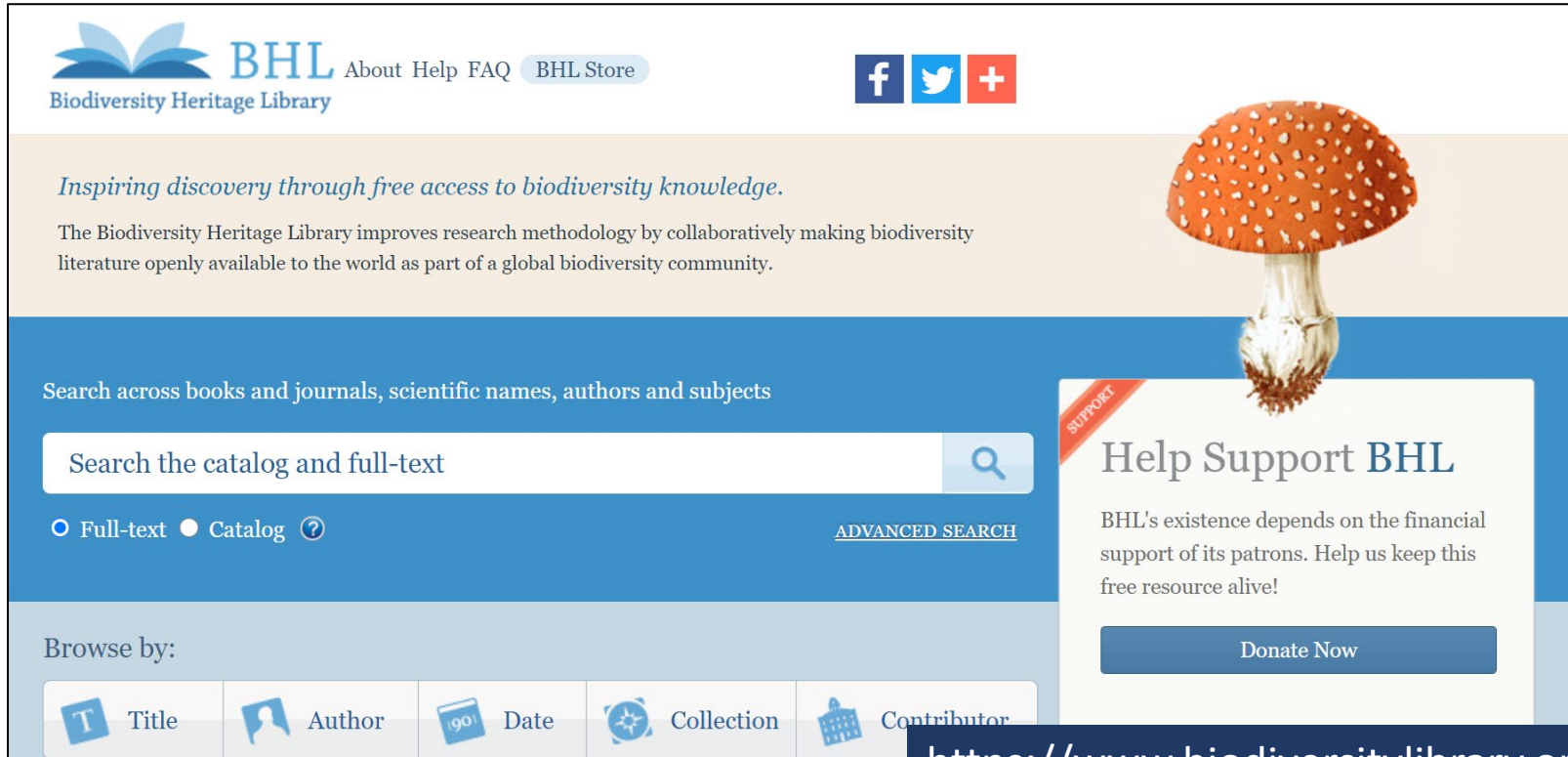
#onesearch #singaporehistory #standrewscathedral #victoriameorialhall #fortcanning




VIEW FROM THE ROOF GARDEN OF THE GRAND HOTEL DE LEDOYE, SHOWING THE RAFFLES HOTEL, VICTORIA MEMORIAL HALL, AND ST. ANDREW'S CATHEDRAL.




8 shares
Share

Data Sharing Efforts - International



 **BHL** About Help FAQ [BHL Store](#)


Biodiversity Heritage Library


  

Inspiring discovery through free access to biodiversity knowledge.

The Biodiversity Heritage Library improves research methodology by collaboratively making biodiversity literature openly available to the world as part of a global biodiversity community.






Search across books and journals, scientific names, authors and subjects

Search the catalog and full-text 

Full-text Catalog 

[ADVANCED SEARCH](#)

Browse by:

 Title  Author  Date  Collection  Contributor

SUPPORT

Help Support BHL

BHL's existence depends on the financial support of its patrons. Help us keep this free resource alive!

[Donate Now](#)

Data Sharing Efforts - International

Pacific Rim Library
A PRRLA Program

Select Language ▼

INSTITUTIONS EXPLORE COLLECTIONS VISIT PRRLA HELP ABOUT US

EXPLORE OUR COLLECTIONS

Search the Library

The screenshot shows the Pacific Rim Library search results page. The search bar at the top contains the text "Search the Library". Below the search bar, there are two search results displayed. The first result is titled "The Birds of Singapore Island" and is from the National University of Singapore, dated 1927. The second result is titled "Catalogue of the Birds in the Provincial Museum, N.-W.P. and Ouch, Lucknow, on the 1st April, 1889" and is also from the National University of Singapore, dated 1890. The page includes a filter sidebar on the left with sections for Institutions, Collections, Authors, and Decade. The Decade section is expanded, showing a list of decades from 2010 to 1960 with checkboxes. The page also features a "CLEAR FILTERS" button at the bottom of the filter sidebar.

Pacific Rim Library
A PRRLA Program

INSTITUTIONS EXPLORE COLLECTIONS VISIT PRRLA HELP ABOUT US

Select Language ▼

Search the Library

First Previous 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Next Last

Display 10 Sort by Relevance ▼

FILTER

Institutions ▼

- National University of Singapore (343)

Collections ▼

- Books (343)

Authors ▼

Decade ▼

- 2010 (26)
- 2000 (6)
- 1990 (3)
- 1980 (4)
- 1970 (14)
- 1960 (25)

CLEAR FILTERS

Title: The Birds of Singapore Island

Collection(s): Books

Institution: National University of Singapore

Date: 1927

[View Item at National University of Singapore](#)

Title: Catalogue of the Birds in the Provincial Museum, N.-W.P. and Ouch, Lucknow, on the 1st April, 1889

Collection(s): Books

Institution: National University of Singapore

Date: 1890

[View Item at National University of Singapore](#)



Future plan

- Creating new digital collections in specific areas of study and raising awareness about their potential
- Facilitating innovative use of collections as well as creating new learning opportunities
- Using emerging technologies to increase the accessibility and usage of our unique and distinctive collections
- Creating digital preservation platform for our digitized collections and university archives collection



THANK YOU

Keep well and stay safe!