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Forum: Get nature groups, students involved in forest restoration

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Growing up in Singapore, my experiences with wildlife were mostly restricted to visits to the Singapore Zoo.

It was not until my army days that I saw wild boars and scorpions in the wild. Once, I even caught a rare glimpse of what was probably a Malayan flying fox.

Exciting, organic experiences like these made me appreciate just how much wildlife Singapore has to offer.

Thus, it was heartening to read about the plan to restore coastal forest habitats in Labrador from next year ([Coastal forest at southern waterfront to be restored](#), Nov 8).

Singapore's forests are home to 35,000 species of plants and animals, some of which are unique to Singapore and cannot be found elsewhere.

While Singapore may pride itself on being a City in Nature, its nature reserves are far more important for biodiversity than the trees it plants along the roadside.

It would be sad if, in the future, Singaporeans can share with our children only stories about the animals we saw, and not be able to give them the same experiences we had.

By protecting our nature reserves, we are not just protecting the wildlife there, but also preserving experiences for our future generations.

While the efforts of the National Parks Board (NParks) and the Ministry of National Development are commendable, I propose two suggestions to make them even better.

NParks could consider getting nature groups who have spent years learning about the reserve on board.

These nature groups could have valuable knowledge which could provide insights for restoration efforts, and they may have some fresh ideas to offer, too.

Another idea is to have school students plant trees.

Since children will be the ones benefiting the most from green spaces, why not involve them in the process? It would make them feel they have a personal stake in conserving these spaces.

Students might also achieve a sense of pride in helping to restore a nature reserve, which could translate into a stronger desire to protect the environment.

Ultimately, the ones who benefit the most from restoration efforts are not today's adults, but future generations who would be able to experience Singapore's biodiversity in its full glory.

Source: <https://www.straitstimes.com/opinion/forum/forum-get-nature-groups-students-involved-in-forest-restoration>