

# KEEPING *Wildlife* Encounters **SAFE**

**WE SHARE SINGAPORE WITH A HOST OF CREATURES, SOME OF WHICH OCCASIONALLY VENTURE INTO OUR COMFORT ZONE. HOW SHOULD YOU BEHAVE TO HAVE SAFE AND RESPONSIBLE ENCOUNTERS WITH WILDLIFE?**

Singapore is a modern metropolis — and also one of the world's greenest cities. It aims to be a 'City in Nature', which is not just the National Parks Board's vision for the country, but also a key pillar of the Singapore Green Plan 2030, a national movement for sustainable development. In tandem with expanding green spaces is the increase in wildlife living in them. This means that Singapore residents may occasionally come across these creatures.

Be they cute and cuddly or something less adorable, our diverse wildlife is something to treasure. In honour of World Wildlife Day (3 March), here are three tips to keep in mind the next time you are face-to-face with wildlife.

## Stay calm and don't provoke them

It's only natural that residents of urbanised Singapore are sometimes rattled by brushes with wildlife. But it's best that you remain calm, avoid making sudden moves, and gradually back away from them. Provoking wildlife is discouraged as they can become defensive when feeling threatened.

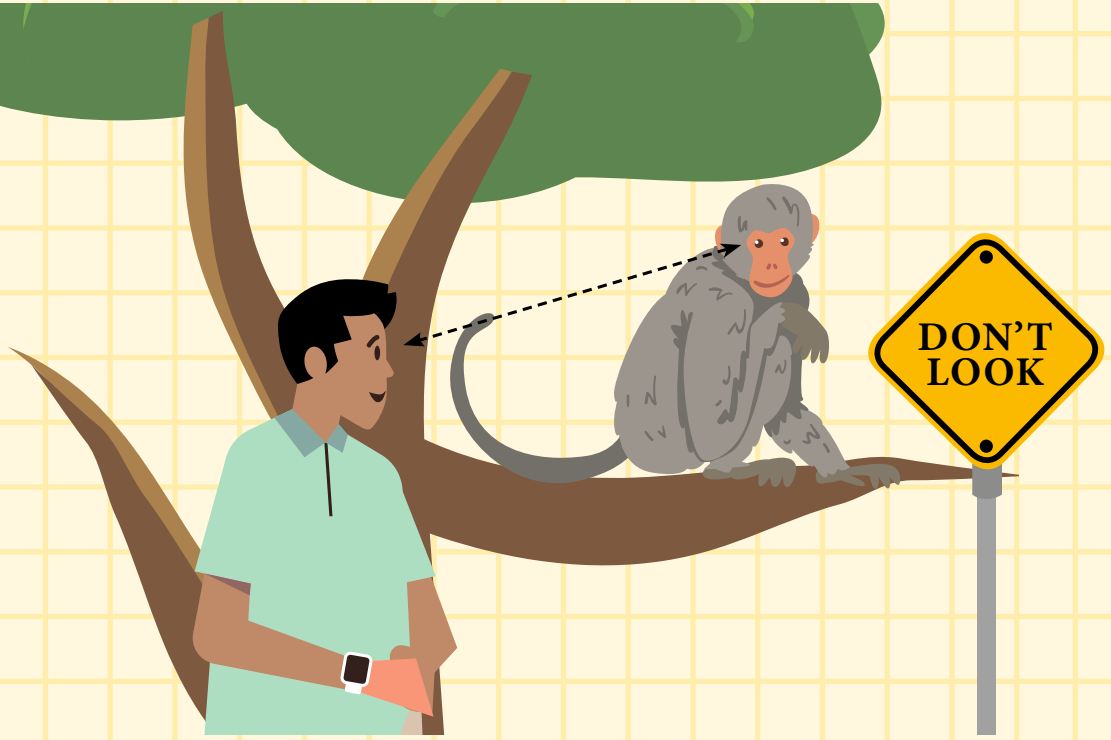
Wildlife is unpredictable, so never touch them, no matter how cute they are. This includes **otters**, which have gained quite a following here.



**Wild boars** can weigh up to 100kg! Be especially alert if you see an adult with its young — mother boars tend to be defensive towards perceived threats.

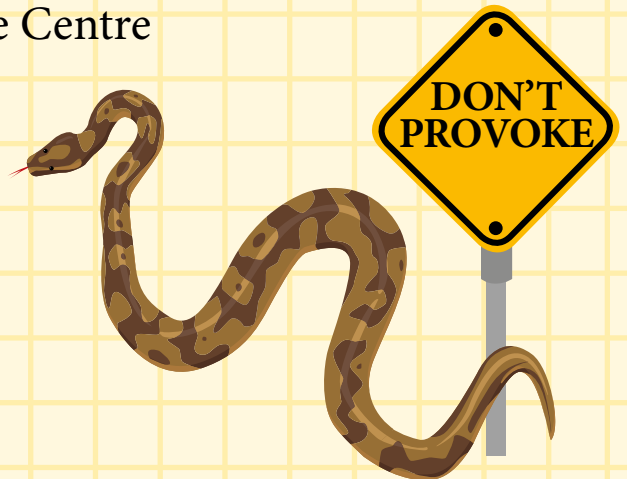


For **long-tailed macaques**, back away from them and avoid making eye contact with them.

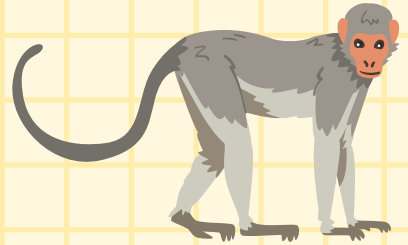
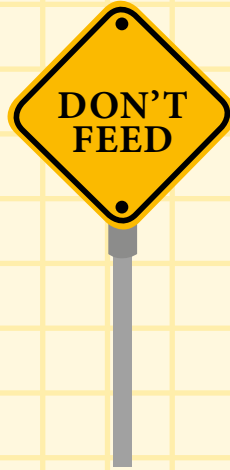


If you come across a **snake**, refrain from trying to drive it away. If it's in a public area or in your premises, leave the area immediately, and seek help from either the National Parks Board (1800 476 1600) or ACRES Wildlife Rescue Centre (9783 7782).

If it's in its natural habitat (e.g. up in a tree), leave it alone and maintain your distance.



## 2 Don't feed the wildlife



Feeding wildlife interferes with their ability to independently and capably forage for food — they may even lose that ability altogether!



If wildlife come to rely on handouts given by humans, they could

- end up spending more time in areas inhabited by humans, resulting in increased wildlife-human encounters
- become more aggressive towards humans



Feeding, coupled with a lack of natural predators in Singapore, can cause wildlife numbers to increase, resulting in increased wildlife-human encounters.

### 3 Keep food out of sight

Some long-tailed macaques, accustomed to being fed by humans, have been known to grab items — particularly food packages — carried by humans. So keep such items out of sight or dispose of them when approaching areas with possible animal activities.



Keep food out of view so that wildlife are not tempted to enter your flat. Long-tailed macaques have been



captured on camera entering HDB homes — some have even learnt to open sliding windows! — and helping themselves to fruits and other goodies.

To prevent long-tailed macaques from rummaging through your garbage, double-knot your refuse bags before placing them into rubbish bins, then secure the bin covers with bungee cords.



In addition to the tips mentioned, a healthy dose of caution and respect will go a long way in ensuring that encounters between humans and members of the animal kingdom remain safe and even enjoyable. As a little city-state, Singapore residents have to learn to live alongside its wild neighbours harmoniously as we transform into a City in Nature.



**Scan the QR code to learn the appropriate behaviour when encountering different species of wildlife.**