

## **Bird-watching trip to Semakau Landfill on 21/March/2010**

By Wing Chong

It was a gloomy Sunday morning on 21/March, when we met at Marina South Pier for a Bird-watching trip to Semakau Landfill. Besides the 3 Nature Society Singapore arranged guides there were 68 participants from various business units of Sembawang Corporation Design & Construction. The 72-seater ferry took 40 minutes to take us to the island.

At the jetty, the group was given a brief background and current status of the landfill. There after, the participants began to explore the island in 3 groups. The participants were provided with more information about the nature of Semakau Landfill as they reached the various points of the landfill. A few Gray Herons were seen flying off from the island. A Great-billed Heron was seen in shallow water of the west shore. Due to the poor weather condition, other than some Swiflets and Swallows there was very little other birdlife.

With the help of vans from NEA the group proceeded to visit the South Western corner. An Osprey was spotted feeding on a rock and Paddyfield Pipits were seen in short grass. We stayed briefly around a shelter as we chit-chatted on some conservation issues.

The group then tracked through the previous Semakau Island to have a glimpse of the island's past. As we walked through the island there we spotted many abandoned cultivated plants like Mango tree, Rambutan tree, Coconut Palm, Pinang Palm, and some varieties of bamboo. We loitered a little on the narrow shore. Some Tape Sea-grass was seen washed up to the shore. Some small Fiddler-crabs were seen running on the beach and some Oyster were also seen on some left-over jetty structures.

NEA's vans brought us back to the office area, saving us the 2 Km track back. We visited the Visitor Center where there were exhibits of the landfill's past, present and future, in the form of static displays of photographs and posters. We were also treated to a video show on the Semakau Landfill and conservation towards Zero Landfill. We left the island with better understanding of the mission and evolving role of Semakau Landfill. The weather had dampened the trip somewhat but it was a knowledge filled leisure trip. It was still drizzling when we left the island.

Photos on next page



At Semakau Landfill jetty



At Semakau beach