

Singapore

The graveyard shift: The Wildlife Rescuer

26 Mar 2016

For the past 10 years, Ms Boopal has been rescuing animals in need as part of Singapore's only round-the-clock wildlife response hotline service team.



SINGAPORE: Ms Boopal is part of Singapore's only 24-hour wildlife rescue hotline service team at the Animal Concerns Research & Education Society (ACRES).

The team behind the hotline responds to calls from any part of the island, at any time of the day. They help injured native animals and relocate those who have ventured into homes by releasing them safely back into the wild.

"Since young, I love animals. So I decided that I wanted to be a vet. But in the process of learning to be one, I realised I'm scared of dissecting live animals. So I chose to study Biology instead and started doing field work," shared Ms Boopal.

Ms Boopal's adventure at ACRES started after she became a volunteer in 2006. "When I was volunteering, I found that my values and the organization's values were aligned and it was perfect. Later, when I was offered a job here, I felt really lucky because it felt like I landed on my dream job," said Ms Boopal.

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As the Deputy Chief Director of ACRES, Ms Boopal oversees general and rescue operations, animal care and the training of volunteers and staff members in the day. At night, the rescue hotline becomes her main focus.

She loves her job although it did take a little bit of getting used to the late night shifts.

"In the beginning, I used to drink a lot of coffee and Redbull. And after a while, I realized I can drink Redbull and go to sleep like a baby. Sometimes I would even do two or three night shifts in a row," she shared.

This was not the best way to cope with the irregular work hours as it soon took a toll on her health.

"So I gave up caffeine fully and now I just depend on water to keep myself hydrated, eating on time and eating good meals. I used to snack at night a lot during the night too just to keep myself awake. I stopped all that," said Ms Boopal.

Ms Boopal's story is the final episode of The Other Sight of Singapore, a web series that profiles Singaporeans who work rotating shifts or night jobs. The series finds out what their job entails and how they adapt to working non-traditional hours.