Slime thread of the arboreal snail *Helicarion perfragilis*

**Subject:** *Helicarion perfragilis* (Mollusca: Gastropoda: Helicarionidae).

**Subject identified by:** Tan Siong Kiat.

**Location, date and time:** Singapore Island, Bukit Timah Nature Reserve, visitor centre along road; 10 April 2009; 1810 hrs.

**Habitat:** Parkland at edge of primary rainforest.

**Observers:** Contributor & Leong Tzi Ming.

**Observation:** A small (shell length about 5 mm) whitish snail was observed lowering itself head first to the ground from the tip of a palm frond some 3 m above (Fig. 1 shows distance covered with white arrow), suspended only by a thin thread of slime. The thread did not break until the snail touched the ground. When it was first noticed, the snail was in mid-air, and already halfway to the floor. It completed its descent from that point in about 5 minutes. On its way down, there was no wind, but the snail kept twirling round and round. Although the snail kept its body straight (Figs. 2 & 3), it did arch its body every once in a while (Fig. 4). It probably took about 10 minutes for the snail to make this 3 m high descent with its slime thread.

**Remarks:** This observation illustrates the incredible strength and durability of the slime thread excreted by *Helicarion perfragilis* which was able to stretch some 3 m without breaking (see also Tan, 2012). *Helicarion perfragilis* is a common arboreal snail in open vegetated areas that is often overlooked due to its small size.