

Australian cockroach at Upper Thomson

Subject: Australian cockroach, *Periplaneta australasiae* (Insecta: Blattaria: Blattidae).

Subject identified by: Contributor.

Location, date and time: Singapore Island, Upper Thomson, area under Singapore Island Country Club south of Lower Peirce Reservoir; 8 August 2009; 1711 hrs.

Habitat: Open parkland flanked by abandoned rubber plantation.

Observer: Contributor, with Leong Tzi Ming, Foo Sai Khoon and David Groenewoud.

Observation: An example of about 3 cm body length was observed at about 1.5 m up on the trunk of a tembusu tree (*Fagraea fragrans*) at the edge of a golf course. See accompanying picture.

Remarks: In Singapore, the Australian cockroach is apparently a non-native insect. It resembles the American cockroach (*Periplaneta americana*) in general appearance, but is smaller and has a distinct yellow stripe on the anterior outer edge of its forewing.

Although regarded as a pest of buildings in many areas of the tropics (Teo, 1990: 178), the Australian cockroach tends to be more commonly found outdoors among vegetation in gardens and parks (Goh et al., 2002: 19). The contributor finds this to be the case in Singapore. Unlike the American cockroach that is ubiquitous in urban areas, he has never encountered the Australian cockroach in buildings. He also finds the Australian cockroach to be considerably rarer, and has seen it only on vegetation.

References:

- Goh, B. P. L., N. S. Sodhi, D. Li, S. H. Ho & P. K. L. Ng, 2002. *A Guide to Urban Creatures*. Singapore Science Centre. 160 pp.
- Teo L. H., 1990. Biology of household insects. In: Chou L. M. & P. K. L. Ng (eds.). *Essays in Zoology*. Department of Zoology, National University of Singapore. p. 177-187.



Photograph by Kelvin K. P. Lim

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