

An apparently mating pair of whip-scorpions

Subjects: Whip-scorpion, *Thelyphonus* sp. (Arachnida: Uropygi: Thelyphonidae).

Subjects identified by: Contributor.

Location, date and time: Singapore Island, Bukit Timah Nature Reserve; 13 May 2005; evening.

Habitat: Primary lowland dipterocarp forest.

Observers: Contributor, with Norman Lim, Chan Kwok Wai, Alan Yeo and K. S. Lioe.

Observation: The accompanying picture shows two whip-scorpions, each about 3 cm in body length, interacting with each other at the base of a tree. The darker individual was positioned behind the paler one, with its head underneath the rear part of the former's raised abdomen while holding onto the sides of the abdomen with its pedipalps. The pair was not moving about and the union did not appear to be violent.

Remarks: The interaction between the two whip-scorpions featured herein appears to be mating behaviour, whereby the male (the darker individual at the rear) was probably in the process of transferring his sperm sac to the female's genital opening on her ventrum. Although not venomous, an alarmed whip-scorpion may spray an aerosol of irritating fluid that contains acetic acid from the base of its tail at its molester (Court & Wang, 2011).

Reference: Court, D. J. & L. K. Wang, 2011. Whip-scorpions. In: Ng, P. K. L., R. T. Corlett & H. T. W. Tan (eds.). *Singapore Biodiversity. An Encyclopedia of the Natural Environment and Sustainable Development*. Editions Didier Millet and the Raffles Museum of Biodiversity Research, Singapore. p. 504.



Photograph by Kelvin K. P. Lim

Contributor: Kelvin K. P. Lim
Contact address: nhmlimkp@nus.edu.sg