

A pair of mating octopuses

Subjects: Octopus, *Octopus* sp. (Mollusca: Cephalopoda: Octopodidae).

Subjects identified by: Contributor.

Location, date and time: Singapore Straits, Pulau Subar Laut (Big Sister Island); 24 December 2015; around 1950 hrs.

Habitat: Marine, on coral reef flat in water of about 20 cm depth.

Observer: Contributor.

Observation: An octopus, with half of its body white and three black stripes down its front (at upper right of attached picture), was observed stretching one of its arms towards another octopus (at lower left of picture). The tip of the outstretched arm came into contact with the side of the body of the other octopus, which is mottled brown in colour. The two octopuses each have a head and body length of about 8 cm.

Remarks: The two octopuses appear to be mating, and the male is the one with the black-striped front. It is not known if the male of this particular species (herein unidentified) assumes this colour pattern during the mating act. According to Norman (2000: 206), the male octopus possesses a modified third arm with a curved gutter or groove along its length, and a spoon-like tip. During mating, the male will insert the tip of this modified arm into the oviduct of the female. Small packets of sperm are inserted into the start of the groove near the base of the arm, and then shunted to the tip of the arm and into the female's oviduct.

Reference: Norman, M., 2000. *Cephalopods. A World Guide*. Conch Books & IKAN. 318 pp.



Photograph by Ron K. H. Yeo

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