

Green iguana at Sungei Tengah

Subject: Green iguana, *Iguana iguana* (Reptilia: Sauria: Iguanidae).

Subject identified by: Kelvin K. P. Lim.

Location, date and time: Singapore Island, Sungei Tengah Road, compound of Orchidville plant nursery; 27 November 2013; around 1200 hrs.

Habitat: Open scrub and farmland.

Observer: Joseph Phua.

Observation: An individual of about 40 cm total length was photographed on the concrete floor outside a building (see attached picture).

Remarks: Individual adult green iguanas have been seen recently in various parts of Singapore Island, such as a housing estate in Kovan (Yeo, 2014), the Botanic Gardens and the Sungei Buloh Wetland Reserve (Chua, 2007). These were believed to be abandoned pets.

The contributors visited Orchidville at Sungei Tengah Road on 11 April 2015 to interview the staff about the iguana in the attached image that was obtained about two years earlier. Although they did not manage to observe any iguana on that visit, they learnt from the staff that examples of various sizes, from juveniles to large adults, have been seen regularly in the plant nursery. Members of the staff were able to distinguish them from the changeable lizard (*Calotes versicolor*) and Malayan water monitor (*Varanus salvator*) that also occur in the area. They added that, unlike the other two lizards, the iguanas eat vegetables and blossoms. This is a strong indication that there is a breeding population of this alien species in the Sungei Tengah area.

References:

Chua E. K., 2007. Feral iguana attacks *Varanus salvator* at Sungei Buloh Wetland Reserve. *Biawak*. Quarterly journal of the International Varanid Interest Group. 1 (1): 35-36.

Yeo, J. W. L., 2014. Green iguana at Kovan. *Singapore Biodiversity Records*. 2014: 119.



Photograph by Joseph Phua

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