

## Ramose murex *Chicoreus ramosus* spawning at Pulau Hantu

**Subject:** Ramose murex, *Chicoreus ramosus* (Mollusca: Gastropoda: Muricidae).

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

**Location, date and time:** Singapore Strait, off Pulau Hantu; 30 May 2015; around 1500 hrs.

**Habitat:** Marine. Coral rubble substrate at base of reef slope, at around 10 m depth.

**Observer:** Toh Chay Hoon.

**Observation:** A spawning female, measuring about 150 mm in shell length, was observed laying multiple egg capsules on a piece of sunken wood (Figs. 1 & 2).

**Remarks:** This appears to be the first direct observation and published record of a spawning ramose murex in Singapore waters. The number of capsules eventually laid by the observed specimen is not known. Egg clusters of the ramose murex may comprise less than a hundred to more than a thousand capsules each (Ruangchoy & Tantichodok, 1992; Mahmoud et al., 2013). A female may lay more than 4,000 egg capsules over a spawning period of more than two months (Nugranad & Promchinda, 1995).

The ramose murex is a large species that is found throughout the entire Indo-Pacific, from east and south Africa, the Red Sea to eastern Polynesia, and from southern Queensland (Australia) and New Caledonia northwards to Japan (Poutiers, 1998). Generally common in most of its range, it is commercially exploited in several countries, for its flesh, shell, and operculum (Aungtonya & Khokiattiwong, 1992; Edward et al., 1994; Poutiers, 1998; Mahmoud et al., 2013). In Singapore however, the species is regarded as nationally endangered (Chou & Tan, 2008). Larger specimens are mostly encountered by divers around the southern islands of Singapore. Juveniles have also been encountered in the intertidal sandy areas of Changi and Tanah Merah Ferry Terminal, while larger specimens are occasionally caught in trammel nets by fishermen operating in the area around Changi and Pulau Ubin (personal observations).

### References:

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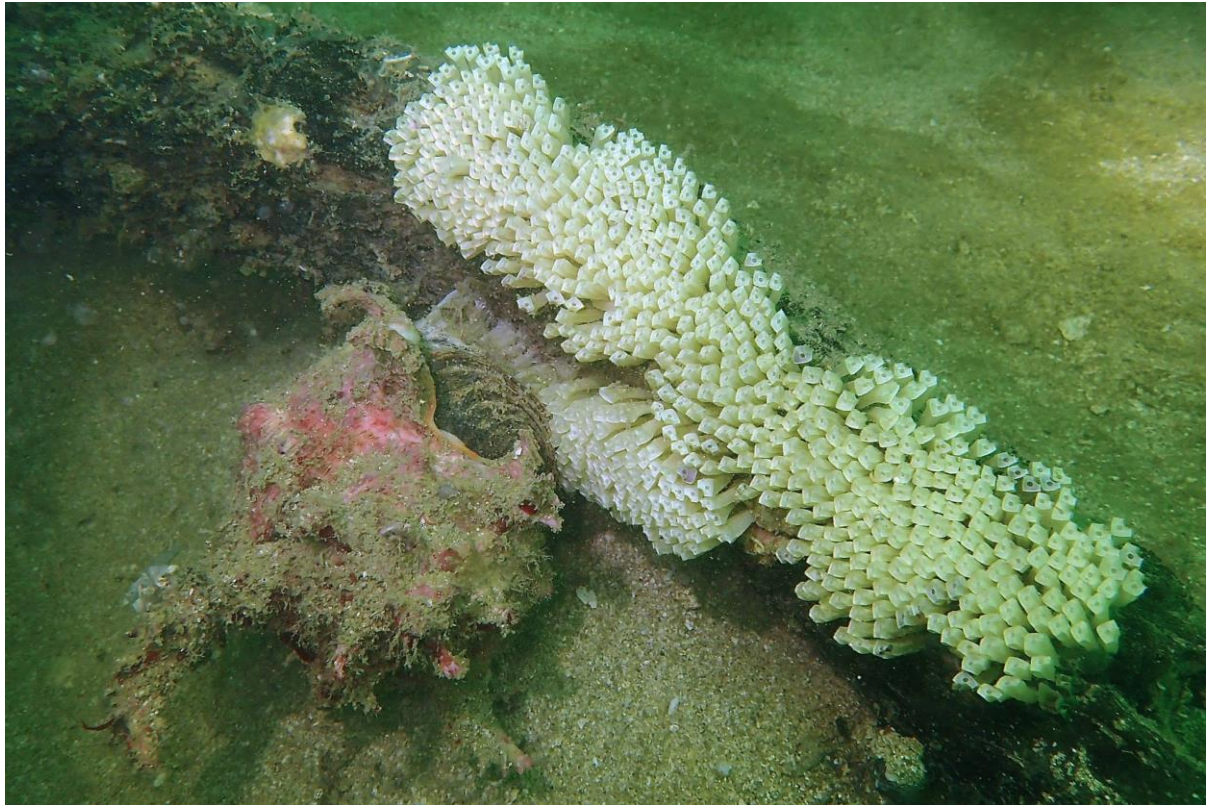


Fig. 1. Spawning ramose murex off Pulau Hantu.



Fig. 2. Another view of the same spawning ramose murex, with egg capsules in the foreground.

Photographs by Toh Chay Hoon