

## Short-limbed supple skink at the Singapore Botanic Gardens

**Subject:** Short-limbed supple skink, *Lygosoma quadrupes* (Reptilia: Sauria: Scincidae).

**Subject identified by:** Contributor.

**Location, date and time:** Singapore Island, Singapore Botanic Gardens at the Bukit Timah Campus of the National University of Singapore; 29 February 2016; around 1100 hrs.

**Habitat:** Urban parkland. On the ground floor of a two-storey concrete building.

**Observer:** Contributor.

**Observation:** An example of about 7 cm snout-vent length and around 10 cm total length (see attached picture) was found on the floor of a toilet.

**Remarks:** *Lygosoma quadrupes* is a sub-fossorial lizard that is found in leaf litter in lowland forests as well as open agricultural land in many localities in Southeast Asia (Das, 2010: 240; Grismer, 2011: 621). Although the species was recorded from Singapore in 1847 (Cantor, 1847: 655 as *Lygosoma chalcides*), it was not mentioned or observed thereafter (see: Sworder, 1925; Grismer, 2011: 624). The featured example can be regarded as a rediscovery of this species in Singapore. However, its presence in an urban parkland hints at the possibility of it having been recently introduced with potted plants.

Within Singapore, *Lygosoma quadrupes* can be distinguished from the locally common garden supple skink (*Lygosoma bowringii*) by its comparatively longer body without blackish sides and smaller limbs. The tail of *Lygosoma quadrupes*, if undamaged, is as long as, or slightly longer than its body (see: photographs in Grismer, 2011: 621-622). The relatively short tail of the featured example could be a regenerated appendage.

### References:

- Cantor, T. E., 1847. Catalogue of reptiles inhabiting the Malayan Peninsula and islands. *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*. 16: 607-656, 897-952, 1026-1078.
- Das, I., 2010. *A Field Guide to the Reptiles of South-east Asia*. New Holland Publishers (UK) Ltd. 376 pp.
- Grismer, L. L., 2011. *Lizards of Peninsular Malaysia, Singapore, and their Adjacent Archipelagos. Their Description, Distribution, and Natural History*. Edition Chimaira, Frankfurt am Main. 728 pp.
- Sworder, G. H., 1925. The lizards of Singapore Island. *The Singapore Naturalist*. 5: 61-68.



Dorsal view of *Lygosoma quadrupes* from the Singapore Botanic Gardens. Photograph by Lim Liang Jim

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