A megamerinid fly of the genus *Texara* at Labrador Park

Subject: Megamerinid fly, *Texara* sp. (Insecta: Diptera: Megamerinidae).

Subject identified by: Keith Bayless.

Location, date and time: Singapore Island, Labrador Park off Port Road; 29 July 2016; 1337 hrs.

Habitat: Mature secondary coastal forest.

Observer: Contributor.

Observation: At the edge of the forest in a sunlit clearing, two or three stilt-legged micropezid flies were observed. Among them was another insect (Figs. 1 & 2) of about 12 mm (length) with similar coloration and habit, but morphologically different. Initially thought to be a hymenopteran model for the micropezid flies, it is actually a true fly of the family Megamerinidae. The observed example behaved in a similar manner to the sympatric micropezids, resting frequently on low broad-leafed vegetation and periodically raising its forelegs.

Remarks: These gracile, long-legged flies are associated with forest habitats and usually perch on the leaves of low shrubs. Their forelegs are often raised in a display which suggests the waving antennae of small solitary ichneumonid wasps, and may provide a form of protective mimicry. Megamerinidae is a small family of true flies with around 15 species and two genera - the Palaearctic *Megamerina* and Oriental *Texara* (Marshall, 2012). Four species are known from Southeast Asia, but there are several undescribed Oriental taxa. These elongate flies have distinctive swollen and strongly marked hind femora. Their larvae live under bark and feed on other larval dipterans (Oosterbrook, 1998).

References:
Marshall, S., 2012. *Flies: The Natural History and Diversity of Diptera*. Firefly Books, New York.
Oosterbroek, P., 1998. *The Families of Diptera of the Malay Archipelago*. Brill Academic Publishers, Leiden.

Fig. 1. Dorso-lateral view of fly.   Fig. 2. Dorso-frontal view.

Photographs by Marcus F. C. Ng

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