

The marine snail *Pisania ignea* off Pulau Senang

Subject: *Pisania ignea* (Mollusca: Gastropoda: Buccinidae).

Subject identified by: Tan Siong Kiat.

Location, date and time: Singapore Strait, off Pulau Senang; 29 November 2014; at around 1720 hrs.

Habitat: Marine. Coral rubble and clay substrate at between 6 and 8 m depth.

Observer: Tan Heok Hui.

Observation: While diving over a patch of whitish clay substrate, the observer collected the silt-covered subject which he had spotted moving among small embedded stones and fissures (Fig. 1). The specimen has been cleaned (Fig. 2) and deposited as a voucher in the Zoological Reference Collection of the Lee Kong Chian Natural History Museum, National University of Singapore, under the catalogue number ZRC.MOL.7732. It has a shell length of 27.3 mm.

Remarks: Although not a new record, this is an interesting find as *Pisania ignea* appears to be very rare in Singapore waters today (personal observations). Singapore was mentioned as a distributional locality of this species as early as the late 1800s (see Tryon, 1881: 145). However, apart from a record from Raffles Lighthouse (Pulau Satumu) by Way & Purchon (1981 [see Purchon & Purchon (1981) for locality information]), there appears to have been no other confirmed reports of its occurrence there. This species was not recorded by the three-week long survey of the Singapore Strait conducted during the recent Comprehensive Marine Biodiversity Survey of Singapore (Sanpanich & Tan, 2016), which may perhaps be indicative of its relative scarcity in Singapore waters. This snail has been reported to prey on other gastropods (Kohn et al., 1997), but little else seems to be known about other aspects of its ecology and biology.

References:

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Fig. 1. In-situ photograph of the silt-covered *Pisania ignea* (in red circle) on white clay substrate.



Fig. 2. Dorsal (above) and lateral views of the snail (shell length 27.3 mm) with shell cleaned of silt, and with its body and siphon slightly extended.

Photographs by Tan Heok Hui.