

## Small cigar stick-insect at the Botanic Gardens

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**Subjects:** Small cigar stick-insect, *Orestes mouhotii* (Insecta: Phasmida: Heteropterygidae).

**Subjects identified by:** Francis Seow-Choen.

**Location, date and time:** Singapore Island, Singapore Botanic Gardens, rainforest; 2 and 25 January 2018; around 2100 and 2200 hrs.

**Habitat:** Small patch of lowland rainforest surrounded by urban parkland.

**Observer:** Marcus F. C. Ng.

**Observations:** A female of about 5 cm total length was found on a leaf of a palm on 2 January 2018 at around 2100 hrs (Fig. 1). A nymph of about 1.5 cm was seen on a railing of the boardwalk on 25 January 2018 at around 2200 hrs (Fig. 2).

**Remarks:** Although this small stick insect is classified as ‘endangered’ in Singapore (Seow-Choen, 2008: 103) based on a localised population in one small patch of forest in the Mandai and Upper Peirce area, it has subsequently been found to be very common on Pulau Ubin (Seow-Choen, 2017: 131). The featured examples may be the first records from the Singapore Botanic Gardens.



Fig. 1. Dorso-lateral view of adult *Orestes mouhotii* on 2 January 2018. Photograph by Marcus F. C. Ng



Fig. 2. Dorso-lateral view of a 1.5 cm nymph on a railing on 25 January 2018. Photograph by Marcus F. C. Ng

*Orestes mouhotii* is known to feed on various species of aroids, *Curculigo* spp., *Leea indica*, *Dioscorea glabra*, *Dracaena fragrans*, *Dracaena godseffiana* and the money plant (*Epipremnum aureum*). It is parthenogenetic and males of this species have not been found in Singapore (Seow-Choen, 2017: 131). The species had been placed in the genera *Datames* (see Seow-Choen, 1997: 126) and *Pylaemenes* (see Seow-Choen, 2000: 39).

**References:**

- Seow-Choen, F., 1997. *A Guide to the Stick & Leaf Insects of Singapore*. Singapore Science Centre. 160 pp.
- Seow-Choen, F., 2000. *An Illustrated Guide to the Stick and Leaf Insects of Peninsular Malaysia and Singapore*. Natural History Publications (Borneo), Kota Kinabalu, Malaysia. v + 173.
- Seow-Choen, F., 2008. Phasmids (Class Insecta: Phasmida). In: Davison, G. W. H., P. K. L. Ng & H. C. Ho (eds.). *The Singapore Red Data Book. Threatened Plants & Animals of Singapore*. Second edition. Nature Society (Singapore). p. 95-104.
- Seow-Choen, F., 2017. *A Taxonomic Guide to the Stick Insects of Singapore*. Natural History Publications (Borneo) with National Parks Board and Lee Kong Chian Natural History Museum. ix + 165 pp.