

Flower mantis, *Theopropus elegans*, at MacRitchie forest

Serin Subaraj

serinsubaraj@yahoo.com

Subject: Banded flower mantis, *Theopropus elegans* (Insecta: Mantodea: Hymenopodidae).

Subject identified by: Nicky Bay.

Location, date and time: Singapore Island, Central Catchment Nature Reserve, MacRitchie forest along Sime Track; 16 February 2018; 0925 hrs.

Habitat: Mature secondary forest.

Observer: Serin Subaraj.

Observation: An adult of about 4 cm body length (see accompanying picture showing a lateral view of the body, and frontal view of the head), was found at about 2.5 m off the ground on the trunk of a large tree. When approached, the mantis leapt off the tree trunk and landed on the observer who then relocated it to some foliage nearby. While being photographed, the mantis remained rather still, but seemed very wary of the camera. Its swollen abdomen suggests that it is a gravid female.

Remarks: Although widely distributed throughout Southeast Asia, the forest dwelling *Theopropus elegans* appears to be rare in Singapore where live examples were photographed at MacRitchie forest in June 2006, Upper Peirce forest in August 2008, and the Bukit Timah Nature Reserve in June 2008. The gravid female from Bukit Timah even laid an elongated strand of about 120 eggs that hatched into orange-coloured nymphs (Leong & Teo, 2008). Subsequently, Bay (2012) photographed a large nymph from an unspecified location in the Central Catchment Nature Reserve, and a possible hatchling at Venus Drive.



Photograph by Serin Subaraj

References:

- Bay, N., 2012. The flower mantis of Singapore. *Macro Photography in Singapore*. <http://www.nickybay.com/2012/05/flower-mantis-of-singapore.html>. Accessed on 21 February 2018.
- Leong T. M. & S. C. Teo, 2008. Records of the praying mantis, *Theopropus elegans* (Westwood) (Mantodea: Hymenopodidae: Hymenopodinae) in Singapore, with notes on oviposition and hatching. *Nature in Singapore*. 1: 211-214.