First record of the big-eared pipistrelle in Singapore


benjamin_lee@nparks.gov.sg (Lee), robert_teo@nparks.gov.sg (Teo)

Subject: Big-eared pipistrelle, Hypsugo macrotis (Mammalia: Chiroptera: Vespertilionidae).

Subject identified by: Benjamin P.Y.-H. Lee, in consultation with Gábor Csorba. Identified from the attached photographs (Fig. 1-3).

Location, date and time: Pulau Ubin, Chek Jawa Wetlands; 8 December 2017; 2230 hrs.

Habitat: Intertidal sand and mud flats.

Observer: Chung Yi Fei.

Observation: An example was caught in a mist net set up for shorebirds. It was determined to be an adult male, and the following measurements were taken: forearm: 31.9 mm, tail: 20.0 mm, ear: 11.5 mm, weight: 4.3 g. The bat was released thereafter. The specimen is herein illustrated with dorsal (Fig. 1), ventral (Fig. 2), and ventrolateral (Fig. 3) views.

Remarks: Diagnostic characters of Hypsugo macrotis include the large, broad ears, and the whitish, translucent wings (Fig. 1-3). The morphologically similar white-winged pipistrelle, Hypsugo vordermanni, which occurs on Borneo and Biliton Island, also has large ears and white wings, but is smaller (fore-arm length to 30 mm) and has a relatively longer skull (Francis, 2008: 242 as Pipistrellus vordermanni; Lim et al., 2016: 172).

Hypsugo macrotis is a poorly known and apparently rare bat species that is recorded from Indonesia (Bali; Lombok; Sumatra at Padang, Enggano Island and Nias; and possibly Java), and Peninsular Malaysia (Selangor and Seremban in Negeri Sembilan). The species is known from several habitats. It has been netted around lowland rainforest, in a plantation, and feeding low over coastal lagoons and open mudflats near mangroves (Francis, 2008: 242; Görfl et al. 2016; Lim L.-S. et al., 2016: 170, 176). In Seremban, a maternity colony of between 10 and 20 individuals was found roosting in a school building in the centre of the city (Lim et al., 2016: 175).

This the first record of Hypsugo macrotis from Singapore (see Baker & Lim, 2012: 156-171). It lends support to Woodruff & Turner (2009) who predicted the species to occur till the southern end of the Malay Peninsula. It also suggests that Hypsugo macrotis may not be as rare as it seems if more surveys on bat diversity are conducted in coastal areas.

References:
Fig. 1. Dorsal view of *Hypsugo macrotis*.

Fig. 2. Ventral view.

Fig. 3. Ventro-lateral view (image tilted 90° to the right).

Photographs by Chung Yi Fei