

Biodiversity Record: Golden gliding snakes at Marina Bay

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Subjects: Golden gliding snake, *Chrysopelea ornata ornatissima* (Reptilia: Squamata: Colubridae).

Subjects identified by: James Chua.

Location, date and time: Singapore Island, Marina Bay, Gardens by the Bay; 13 August 2021; 1140 and 1217 hrs.

Habitat: Urban parkland with exotic ornamental plants.

Observers: James Chua and Lee Jingyi.

Observations: Two individuals, both about one metre in total length, were sighted separately on the same day. The first example was spotted at 1140 hrs at the Sun Pavilion (cactus display area), slithering with tongue flicking (Fig. 2) amongst the shrubs and eventually resting in the open on some branches (Fig. 1). At least four brown anoles (*Anolis sagrei*), potential prey items for the snake, were observed in its vicinity (Fig. 2). The snake was observed flicking its tongue (Fig. 3), but remained immobile on the branch. The second snake was spotted at 1217 hrs not more than 10 m away from the first, slithering up a tree as it was starting to rain (Figs. 4, 5).

Remarks: The golden gliding snake appears to be an introduced species in Singapore. It was recently found at Shenton Way in May 2013 (Thomas & Boopal, 2014), Perahu Lane in Lim Chu Kang in April 2015 (Maury & Low, 2015), and Gardens by the Bay in January 2017 (Ng, 2017). This latest record from Gardens by the Bay may indicate that a population of this species is established there.

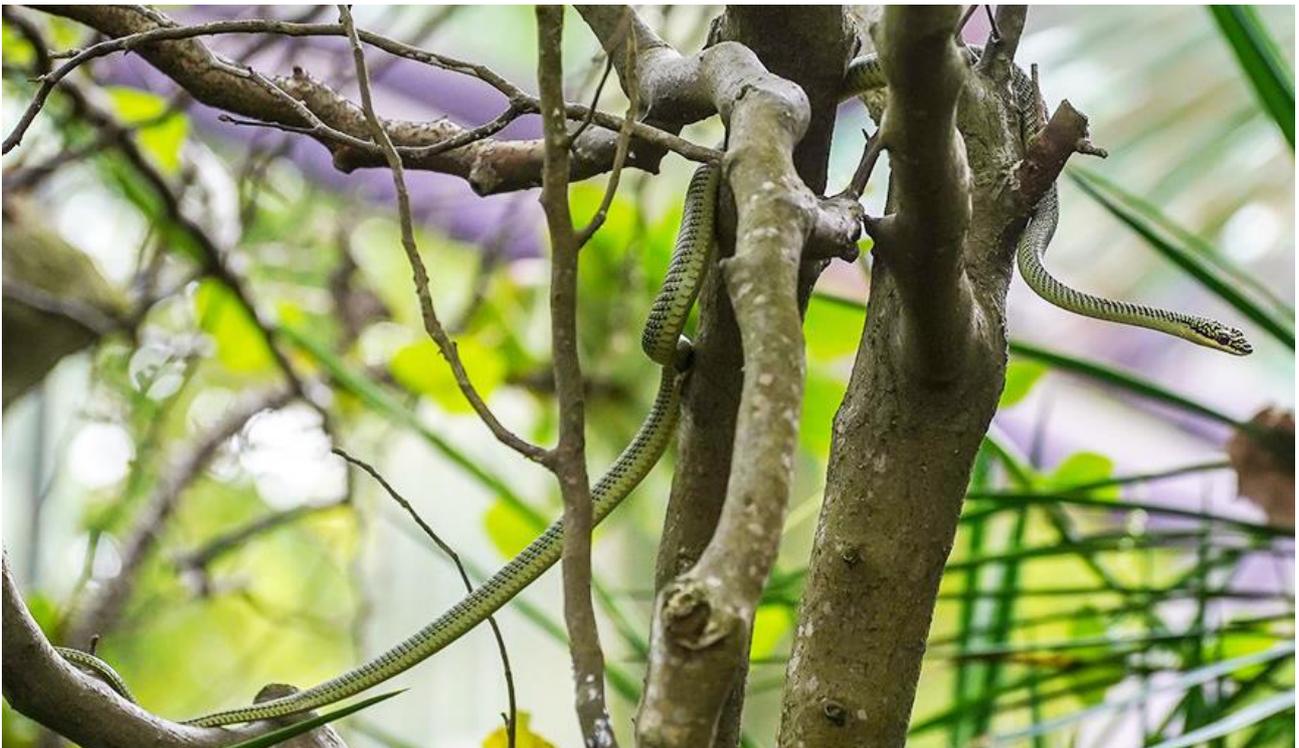


Fig. 1. In situ lateral view of the first golden gliding snake resting in the open on some branches at Gardens by the Bay, Singapore. (Photograph by: James Chua).



Fig. 2. In situ view of first golden gliding snake (top left circle) in close proximity to a brown anole (bottom right circle), a potential prey item. (Photograph by: James Chua).



Fig. 3. Latero-ventral view of the head of the first golden gliding snake as it flicked its tongue. (Photograph by: James Chua).



Fig. 4. Second golden gliding snake slithering vertically up a tree at Gardens by the Bay, Singapore. (Photograph by: James Chua).



Fig. 5. Dorsal view of the rear part of the second golden gliding snake showing the colour pattern on the scales. (Photograph by: James Chua).

Literature cited:

- Maury N & Low M-R (2015) Golden gliding snake at Lim Chu Kang. Singapore Biodiversity Records, 2015: 76.
Ng T (2017) Golden gliding snake at Marina South. Singapore Biodiversity Records, 2017: 14.
Thomas N & Boopal A (2014) Golden gliding snake at Shenton Way. Singapore Biodiversity Records, 2014: 51.