

Biodiversity Record: Mango flower beetles, *Protaetia acuminata*, feeding on a mushroom

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Subjects: Mango flower beetle, *Protaetia acuminata* (Coleoptera: Scarabaeidae: Cetoniinae); Gilled mushroom, *Coprinus* sp. (Agaricomycetes: Agaricales: Agaricaceae).

Subjects identified by: Isaac Seow-En and Amy Choong.

Location, date and time: Singapore Island, Saraca Road, within residential compound, at ground level; 11 September 2021; around 1800 hrs.

Habitat: Suburban residential environment, at the base of a large mango tree.

Observer: Isaac Seow-En.

Observation: Four mango flower beetles, each about 1.4 cm, were observed on the cap of a mushroom, which was one of many that had sprouted earlier in the morning shortly after a period of rain. One beetle was actively feeding on the mushroom cap, while two were mating (Fig. 1). The mating pair separated shortly after (Fig. 2). Bite marks were seen on the stalk and cap of an adjacent mushroom of the same species (Fig. 3), presumably made by the same beetles. There were several ripe mangoes nearby which were not touched by beetles.

Remarks: *Protaetia acuminata* (Fabricius, 1775) is one of two species of cetonid beetle of the genus *Protaetia* Burmeister (1842) found in Singapore, the other being *Protaetia fusca* (Herbst, 1790). Both have been assigned the common name 'mango flower beetle'. *Protaetia* species are generalists, feeding on the nectar, pollen, fruit, flowers and leaves of numerous plant species, even invading the nests of stingless bees for their honey (Woodruff, 2016). This has allowed certain members to thrive as invasive species (Krell & Breidenbaugh, 2016). To my knowledge, this is the first record of flower chafers feeding on a mushroom, which was particularly surprising given the availability of overripe fruit in the vicinity.

Literature cited:

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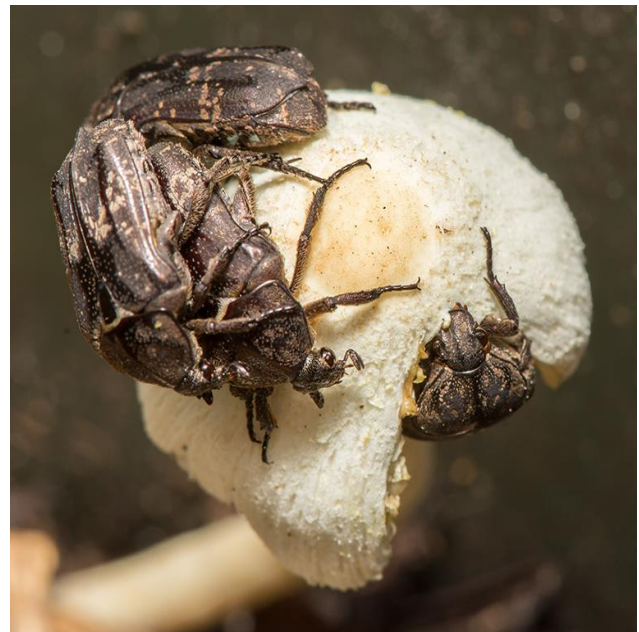


Fig. 1. Four *Protaetia acuminata* congregating and feeding. Note mating pair on the left. (Photograph by: Isaac Seow-En).



Fig. 2. Same four mango flower beetles on the mushroom with the mating pair separated, and the individual on the lower right actively feeding. (Photograph by: Isaac Seow-En).



Fig. 3. Adjacent mushroom without beetles but showing bite marks on the cap and stalk. (Photograph by: Isaac Seow-En).