

Biodiversity Record: Malaysian giant terrapin at MacRitchie forest

Teo Wei Ling Jeslynn

Email: jeslynnteo@gmail.com

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Subject: Malaysian giant terrapin, *Orlitia borneensis* (Reptilia: Testudines: Bataguridae).

Subject identified by: Tan Heok Hui.

Location, date and time: Singapore Island, Central Catchment Nature Reserve, MacRitchie forest along Sime Track; 6 March 2002; 1439 hrs.

Habitat: Shaded, shallow freshwater stream in mature secondary forest.

Observers: Teo Wei Ling Jeslynn and Shirasuna Hirokazu.

Observation: A large terrapin of about 70–80 cm carapace length was noted at the water surface near a bridge. It swam nearer to the edge of the bridge and stared at the observers for a couple of minutes (Figs. 1 & 2). It then submerged into the depths and disappeared from the observers' views.

Remarks: The Malaysian giant terrapin is believed to be an introduced species in Singapore with records from reservoirs and streams in the Central Catchment Nature Reserve and the Botanic Gardens (Ng & Lim, 2010; Chua, 2014; Law et al., 2014). The bold behaviour of the featured animal suggests that it had been habituated to human presence. It probably approached the observers expecting to be offered food.

Literature cited:

Chua MAH (2014) Malaysian giant terrapin at Nee Soon swamp-forest. Singapore Biodiversity Records, 2014: 45.

Law IS, Sankar A & Law IT (2014) Malaysian giant terrapin at the Singapore Botanic Gardens. Singapore Biodiversity Records, 2014: 274.

Ng TH & Lim KKP (2010) Introduced aquatic herpetofauna of Singapore's reservoirs. COSMOS, 6(1): 117–127.



Fig. 1. Dorsal view of the terrapin at the surface of the water, looking up at the observers. Fig. 2. Dorso-lateral view of the terrapin. (Photographs by: Teo Wei Ling Jeslynn)