

Biodiversity Record: A sighting of the shining leaf chafer, *Parastasia basalis*, in Singapore

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Subject: Shining leaf chafer, *Parastasia basalis* (Insecta: Coleoptera: Scarabaeidae: Rutelinae).

Subject identified by: Kaoru Wada.

Location, date and time: Singapore Island, Toh Estate; 19 December 2021; around 2010 hrs.

Habitat: Suburban environment. At the ground level of a low residential building.

Observer: Elaine Lui.

Observation: A male specimen measuring 17.0 x 9.5 mm was found on tiles in the backyard. The beetle displayed thanatosis when handled and was photographed ex-situ (Fig. 1).



Fig. 1. Dorso-lateral (left) and dorsal views of *Parastasia basalis* from Toh Estate. (Photographs by: Isaac Seow-En)

Remarks: *Parastasia basalis* Candèze (1869) is amongst several species of the genus *Parastasia* found in Singapore. However, it is not among the 11 species of Rutelinae featured on the website of The Biodiversity of Singapore (2022). Kuijten (1992) cites three examples in the Natural History Museum in London collected from the Singapore University area and Botanical Garden, but these were suspected to have been imported with plant material. The type material of *Parastasia basalis* is from Sri Lanka, and the species has also been recorded in India (Kuijten, 1992; Wada, 2015).

It is not certain if *Parastasia basalis* is native to Singapore, but it appears to be locally rare. To our knowledge, there are two other recent specimens collected in the 1980s (Fig. 2). Preserved in the entomological collections of the Lee Kong Chian Natural History Museum at the National University of Singapore, is one example collected from Gerald Crescent on 13 November 1981. According to Cheong Loong Fah (personal communication), the other specimen was found in Queenstown on 18 September 1987. Both specimens were apparently obtained in urban environments.

One possible reason for the apparent rarity of *Parastasia basalis* is, unlike other nocturnal beetle species, it does not seem to be attracted to light sources (Steven Bosuang, personal communication on 18 December 2021).

Literature cited:

Candèze E (1869) Diagnoses de quelques Rutélides nouvelles. *Coleopterologische Hefte*, 5: 41–45.

Kuijten PJ (1992) A revision of the genus *Parastasia* in the Indo-Australian region (Coleoptera: Scarabaeidae: Rutelinae). *Zoologische Verhandelingen*, 275: 1–207.

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Wada K (2015) Systematic study of the genus *Parastasia* Westwood, 1842. PhD thesis, Kyushu University, Fukuoka, 567 pp.



Gerald Crescent, Singapore, 13.11.81
Collected by Y.F. Lim (coll. LKCNHM)



Queenstown, Singapore, 18.9.87
Collected by K.H. Soo (coll. L.F. Cheong)

Fig. 2. Two other specimens of *Parastasia basalis* known from Singapore, with their respective collection data.

(Photographs by: Benedict B.H. Yeap [left] and Loong Fah Cheong [right]).