

## Biodiversity Record: New records of venus clams of the genus *Sunetta* in Singapore

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**Subjects:** Venus clam, *Sunetta effossa* (Mollusca: Bivalvia: Veneridae);  
Venus clam, *Sunetta sunettina* (Mollusca: Bivalvia: Veneridae).

**Subjects identified by:** Tan Siong Kiat.

**Location, date and time:** Singapore Strait, Cyrene Reef; 19 February 2015; ca. 1700 hrs (for *Sunetta effossa*). Singapore Strait, Changi Coast Walk near Tanah Merah, beach outside National Service Resort and Country Club; 14 January 2020, ca. 1700 hrs (for *Sunetta sunettina*).

**Habitat:** Marine. Shallow coral reef exposed at low tides (for *Sunetta effossa*). Coastal sandy beach (for *Sunetta sunettina*).



Fig. 1. Sculpture and colouration of the exterior of left valve (left) and the interior of the right valve (right) of A: *Sunetta effossa*, shell length 20.6 mm (ZRC.MOL.26309), from Cyrene Reef. B: *Sunetta sunettina*, shell length 26.5 mm (ZRC.MOL.28069), from beach at National Service Resort and Country Club, Changi Coast Walk. (Photographs by: Tan Siong Kiat).

**Observers:** Toh Chay Hoon (for *Sunetta effossa*) and Tan Siong Kiat (for *Sunetta sunettina*).

**Observations:** Both specimens were collected as vouchers and deposited in the Zoological Reference Collection (ZRC) of the Lee Kong Chian Natural History Museum, at the National University of Singapore.

*Sunetta effossa* — One specimen measuring 20.6 mm in shell length (Fig. 1A), was encountered at Cyrene Reef on 19 February 2015. It was found on the surface of sandy areas of the reef flat, with some seagrass in the vicinity. It has been catalogued as ZRC.MOL.26309.

*Sunetta sunettina* — An example with a shell length of 26.5 mm (Fig. 1B), was obtained at the beach outside the National Service Resort and Country Club near Tanah Merah on 14 January 2020. It was found shallowly buried, with the edge of its shell partly exposed, at the sand flat exposed during low tide. It has been assigned the catalogue number ZRC.MOL.28069.

**Remarks:** Venerid clams of the genus *Sunetta* can be quite easily recognised by their solid shells with the ligament located in a peculiar sunken escutcheon (e.g., Lamprell & Whitehead, 1992; Fukuda et al., 2021). Sixteen living species are currently recognised (Huber, 2010; Fukuda et al., 2021).

Interestingly, this appears to be the first record of the genus *Sunetta* from Singapore, and neither species herein featured has been previously reported (see e.g., Tan & Woo, 2010, and references therein cited). *Sunetta effossa* and *Sunetta sunettina* from Singapore are nevertheless represented by a few lots in the ZRC, but curiously, none collected prior to the 2000s. Both species are presumably rare in Singapore. Their shells are only very occasionally seen on the beaches, usually around the eastern part of Singapore (personal observations), and the figured specimens are the only examples found alive.

**Literature cited:**

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- Tan SK & Woo HPM (2010) *A Preliminary Checklist of the Molluscs of Singapore.* Raffles Museum of Biodiversity Research, National University of Singapore, Singapore, 78 pp. Uploaded 2 June 2010. [https://lkcnhm.nus.edu.sg/wp-content/uploads/sites/10/app/uploads/2017/04/preliminary\\_checklist\\_molluscs\\_singapore.pdf](https://lkcnhm.nus.edu.sg/wp-content/uploads/sites/10/app/uploads/2017/04/preliminary_checklist_molluscs_singapore.pdf) (Accessed 26 June 2023).