

Biodiversity Record: Baler volute, *Melo melo*, at Seringat Kias Island

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Subject: Baler volute, *Melo melo* (Mollusca: Gastropoda: Volutidae).

Subject identified by: Abel Meng Wei Yeo.

Location, date and time: Singapore Strait at Seringat Kias Island; 20 September 2023; around 1100 hrs.

Habitat: Marine. Coral reef with silt substrate, near vertical seawall, at depth of about 6 m.

Observer: Abel Meng Wei Yeo.

Observation: A live example of around 15 cm shell length was observed during a day dive. Its shell was covered in silt, and the animal was moving on the substrate with its siphon and foot well extended (Figs. 1 & 2). No other conspecifics were seen in the vicinity.



Fig. 1. Wide view of *Melo melo* in-situ, crawling over the substrate, with its foot and siphon (pointing to the left) well extended, and shell covered in silt (Photograph by: Abel Meng Wei Yeo).



Fig. 2. Dorso-lateral view of the subject in-situ, with its siphon and foot contracted (Photograph by: Abel Meng Wei Yeo).

Remarks: *Melo melo* is regarded as an endangered species in Singapore (Davison et al., 2008). Sightings of this shell have been reported mainly in the eastern shores of Singapore: Changi Beach, Beting Bronok, Chek Jawa, Tanah Merah and East Coast Park (Tan, 2020). The most recent recorded sighting was at Changi Beach Park in 2020 (Yau & Low, 2020). This may be the first record of *Melo melo* around the islands in the south of Singapore.

Melo melo is a predatory snail, and has been recorded consuming the confamilial noble volute (*Cymbiola nobilis*) (budak, 2014). The species is often collected by man for various uses, including but not limited to ornamental decoration, food and as a receptacle to bail water out of boats (Tan, 2020).

Literature cited:

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