

Malayan swamp skink *Sphenomorphus* sp. at MacRitchie forest

Subject: Malayan swamp skink, *Sphenomorphus* sp. (Reptilia: Sauria: Scincidae).

Subject identified by: Contributor.

Location, date and time: Singapore Island, Central Catchment Nature Reserve, forest north of MacRitchie Reservoir; 29 March 2013; 2034 hrs.

Habitat: Mature secondary forest, among leaf litter at the edge of a shallow stream.

Observers: Contributor with Ng Bee Choo & Tony O'Dempsey.

Observation: An individual about 5 cm in total length (fig. 1) was disturbed amongst leaf litter at the edge of a shallow stream. The skink 'swam' in a sinuous motion across the stream, coming to rest on the other side of the stream partly submerged. Figure 2 shows the body of the skink submerged, and only the front part of the head, including the eyes and nostrils, emerged.

Remarks: This cryptic skink is apparently undescribed. It is listed in Baker & Lim (2012: 160) as "restricted to a few areas and rare" in Singapore. It is usually found in close proximity to freshwater, particularly along forest streams.

Reference: Baker, N. & K. K. P. Lim, 2012. *Wild Animals of Singapore. A Photographic Guide to Mammals, Reptiles, Amphibians and Freshwater Fishes*. Reprint with corrections and updates. Draco Publishing and Distribution Pte. Ltd. and Nature Society (Singapore). 180 pp.



Fig. 1



Fig. 2

Photographs by Nick Baker

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