

## Malayan freshwater shrimps attacking forest halfbeak

**Subjects:** Malayan freshwater shrimp, *Macrobrachium malayanum*  
(Crustacea: Decapoda: Palaemonidae).  
Forest halfbeak, *Hemirhamphodon pogonognathus* (Teleostei: Zenarchopteridae).

**Subjects identified by:** Contributor.

**Location, date and time:** Singapore Island, Central Catchment Nature Reserve, Nee Soon swamp-forest; 2 April 2014; ca. 2000 hrs.

**Habitat:** Natural freshwater stream under forest canopy, with sandy-clay banks, leaf litter, clear flowing water and riparian vegetation.

**Observer:** Contributor.

**Observation:** A forest halfbeak of about 6 cm total length was found lying on its side in a shallow part of the stream, being eaten alive by two shrimps, each about 3 cm in body length (Fig. 1). The fish had abraded skin and damaged fins on the posterior part of its body (Fig. 2).

**Remarks:** *Macrobrachium malayanum* is common in the streams in the Central Nature Reserves (Ng, 1990: 195). It is omnivorous and seems to be an active scavenger. It is not known if the fish was injured by the shrimps, or if the shrimps had attacked the fish only when they found it already injured and helpless. It is possible for the shrimps to have attacked the halfbeak if they had it cornered in a tight spot. In the darkness, the fish may have difficulty escaping.

**Reference:** Ng, P. K. L., 1990. Freshwater crabs and prawns of Singapore. In: Chou L. M. & P. K. L. Ng (eds.). *Essays in Zoology*. Papers Commemorating the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Department of Zoology, National University of Singapore. pp. 189-204.



Fig. 1. Halfbeak being attacked by two shrimps.



Fig. 2. Halfbeak with abraded skin and damaged fins on its posterior half.

Photographs by Tan Heok Hui

Contributor: **Tan Heok Hui**

Contact address: [nhmthh@nus.edu.sg](mailto:nhmthh@nus.edu.sg)