

Long-tailed macaques eating apple snails

Subjects: Long-tailed macaque, *Macaca fascicularis* (Mammalia: Primates: Cercopithecidae);
Channelled apple snail, *Pomacea canaliculata* (Mollusca: Gastropoda: Ampullariidae).

Subjects identified by: Contributor.

Location, date and time: Singapore Island, Lower Peirce Reservoir; 15 March 2016; 1805 hrs.

Habitat: Rocky shore of a large body of freshwater next to secondary forest.

Observer: Contributor.

Observation: A group of four macaques were seen actively foraging among rocks along the water's edge for apple snails. When a snail was caught, the monkey used its fingers to pry off the operculum and pull out the flesh to eat (Figs. 1 & 2). Some macaques would take more than one snail at a time (Fig. 3). The empty snail shells are then discarded (Fig. 4). The pink egg masses of the apple snail on the rocks were ignored.

Remarks: The long-tailed macaque is omnivorous and has a very flexible diet that includes fruit, seeds, leaves, insects, crabs and other small animals depending on availability (Phillipps & Phillipps, 2016: 180). The channelled apple snail is an introduced species that is native to South America, and is present in most reservoirs in Singapore (Tan et al., 2012: 129). It is interesting to note that a native primate is taking advantage of this easily available and invasive food resource.

References:

- Phillipps, Q. & K. Phillipps, 2016. *Phillipps' Field Guide to the Mammals of Borneo*. John Beaufoy Publishing Ltd., United Kingdom. 400 pp.
Tan S. K., S. Y. Chan & G. R. Clements, 2012. *A Guide to Snails and other non-marine Molluscs of Singapore*. Singapore Science Centre. 176 pp.



Fig. 1. Collecting apple snails.



Fig. 2. Extracting flesh from shell.



Fig. 3. Holding two snails while eating.

Photographs by Law Ing Sind

Contributor: Law Ing Sind
Contact address: lawingsind@yahoo.com.sg



Fig. 4. Empty apple snail shell discarded by a macaque.