

Aquatic vertebrates observed at Kent Ridge Park

Subjects: Carp, *Cyprinus carpio* (Teleostei: Cypriniformes: Cyprinidae);
 Sultan fish, *Leptobarbus rubripinnis* (Teleostei: Cypriniformes: Cyprinidae);
 Tiger barb, *Puntigrus tetrazona* (Teleostei: Cypriniformes: Cyprinidae);
 Redtail rasbora, *Rasbora borapetensis* (Teleostei: Cypriniformes: Cyprinidae);
 Red-bellied pacu, *Piaractus brachypomus* (Teleostei: Characiformes: Serrasalminidae);
 Guppy, *Poecilia reticulata* (Teleostei: Cyprinodontiformes: Poeciliidae);
 Mozambique tilapia, *Oreochromis mossambicus* (Teleostei: Cichlidae);
 Marbled gudgeon, *Oxyeleotris marmorata* (Teleostei: Eleotridae);
 Siamese fighting-fish, *Betta splendens* (Teleostei: Osphronemidae);
 Giant snakehead, *Channa micropeltes* (Teleostei: Channidae);
 Common snakehead, *Channa striata* (Teleostei: Channidae);
 Malayan water monitor, *Varanus salvator* (Reptilia: Sauria: Varanidae);
 Red-ear slider, *Trachemys scripta elegans* (Reptilia: Testudines: Emydidae).

Subjects identified by: Contributor.

Location, date and time: Singapore Island, Kent Ridge Park; 21 June 2006; 1000-1105 hrs.

Habitat: Freshwater. Artificial ponds with earthen banks and rock bunds, in urban parkland.

Observer: Contributor.

Observations: The following fishes and reptiles were observed at the surface of the water, and along the edges of the ponds.

Cyprinus carpio – two large individuals of the ornamental variety; one of them shown in Fig. 1.

Leptobarbus rubripinnis – at least two examples, one of them shown in Fig. 2.

Puntigrus tetrazona – many individuals (Fig. 3).

Rasbora borapetensis – many individuals (Fig. 3).

Piaractus brachypomus – two large individuals were feeding at the surface on floating food pellets (Fig. 4).

Poecilia reticulata – present along the edges of the ponds (not photographed).

Oreochromis mossambicus – many individuals, including juveniles; a large male shown in Fig. 5.

Oxyeleotris marmorata – several juveniles among submerged debris and vegetation along the edges of the ponds (not photographed).

Betta splendens – present in the smaller ponds (not photographed).

Channa micropeltes – two adults of about 50-60 cm total length; a group of juveniles were feeding at the water surface (Fig. 6).

Channa striata – at least one adult (Fig. 7).

Varanus salvator – an adult of about 1.5 m total length swimming in the pond.

Trachemys scripta elegans – at least two individuals (Fig. 8).

Remarks: Of the 11 fish species herein recorded, only *Oxyeleotris marmorata* and *Channa striata* may be regarded as being native to Singapore. All the other fishes are non-native species and have been documented from reservoirs in Singapore (see: Ng & Tan, 2010). Some of them, such as *Cyprinus carpio*, *Leptobarbus rubripinnis*, *Puntigrus tetrazona*, *Piaractus brachypomus* and *Betta splendens*, are popular aquarium fish, and may have been discarded pets. Others, such as *Poecilia reticulata* and *Rasbora borapetensis* may have been stocked for controlling mosquito breeding. *Oreochromis mossambicus*, *Oxyeleotris marmorata* and *Channa micropeltes* are commonly reared in ponds as food fish (personal observations).

Of the two reptiles observed, the Malayan water monitor is native to Singapore. The two red-eared sliders were most likely abandoned pets.



Fig. 1. Dorsal view of a *Cyprinus carpio* of about 50 cm total length.



Fig. 2. Dorso-lateral view of a *Leptobarbus rubripinnis* of about 40 cm total length.



Fig. 3. Dorso-lateral view of *Puntigrus tetrazona* (3 examples, with black bars) and *Rasbora borapetensis* (more than 10 individuals, with blackish stripe and red tail base), around 4-5 cm total length.

Photographs by Tan Heok Hui



Fig. 4. Two examples of *Piaractus brachypomus*, each about 50-60 cm total length, with heads exposed at the water surface, feeding on floating food pellets.



Fig. 5. Dorsal view of a large male *Oreochromis mossambicus* of around 25 cm total length.



Fig. 6. A school of juvenile *Channa micropeltes*, each about 6 and 7 cm total length, feeding at the surface.



Fig. 7. Dorsal view of an adult *Channa striata*, of about 30 cm total length.

Photographs by Tan Heok Hui



Fig. 8. Dorso-lateral view of an adult *Varanus salvator*, around 1.5 m total length, in the water.



Fig. 9. Dorsal view of two *Trachemys scripta elegans*, with carapace lengths of between 15 and 20 cm.

Photographs by Tan Heok Hui

Reference: Ng H. H. & H. H. Tan, 2010. An annotated checklist of the non-native freshwater fish species in the reservoirs of Singapore. *COSMOS*. 6 (1): 95-116.

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