

## Biodiversity Record: Mating small-toothed palm civets and a Sunda slow loris

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**Recommended citation.** Lo NYW & Ang JY (2025) Biodiversity Record: Mating small-toothed palm civets and a Sunda slow loris. Nature in Singapore, 18: e2025002. DOI: 10.26107/NIS-2025-0002

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**Subjects:** Small-toothed palm civet, *Arctogalidia trivirgata* (Mammalia: Carnivora: Viverridae);  
Sunda slow loris, *Nycticebus coucang* (Mammalia: Primates: Lorisidae).

**Subjects identified by:** Nicholas Lo Yong Wai and Ang Jun Yang.

**Location, date and time:** Singapore Island, Old Upper Thomson Road, on the side of the Central Catchment Nature Reserve; 29 November 2024; around 2152–2217 hrs.

**Habitat:** Edge of secondary forest.

**Observers:** Nicholas Lo Yong Wai, Ang Jun Yang, Jeffrey Teo and Lorenzo Zanirato.

**Observations:** At 2152 hrs, a slow loris was detected by its eyeshine in the canopy of a tree by the observers. A few minutes later, it was noticed moving away from its original position with increasing speed (Fig. 1). Two separate sets of eyeshine belonging to two small-toothed palm civets were spotted in the canopy of the tree adjacent to the slow loris. The slow loris repeatedly looked towards the direction of the civets, and the civets trailed the loris along the same path that it took. The loris also moved with increasing haste as the civets drew closer, but they were unable to catch up to the loris before it disappeared among the leaves of another tree.

The two civets then began mating with each other on the tree at 2211 hrs, with one mounting the other with thrusting motions (Fig. 2). They broke away from each other and took a brief break (Fig. 3) before resuming a second round of mating at around 2217 hrs (Fig. 4). Afterwards, one of the civets climbed higher into the canopy while the other rested on a branch (Fig. 5).

**Remarks:** A recent record via camera trap images, of a small-toothed palm civet feeding on a dead slow loris (Ang & Jabbar, 2023) heavily implies that the small-toothed palm civet is a predator of the slow loris. The apparent pursuit of the slow loris by the small-toothed palm civets, as well as the seeming eagerness of the loris to avoid the civets in the featured observation appear to support this.

Regarded as ‘critically endangered’ in Singapore (Lim et al., 2024), the small-toothed palm civet is arboreal, nocturnal and omnivorous. It is known to feed on fruits, figs, various invertebrate animals and small vertebrates, including squirrels. Although apparently solitary, it has also been observed travelling in pairs (see Goh & Seah, 2023). The species is known to produce two litters per year, each litter with 1–3 young (Jennings & Veron, 2009).

This seems to be the first record of in-situ mating behaviour of the small-toothed palm civet in Singapore.



Fig. 1. Slow loris apparently hurrying away from the scene when it saw the civets. (Photograph by: Nicholas Lo Yong Wai)



Fig. 2. Lateral view of small-toothed palm civets during their first round of mating. Fig. 3. Ventral view of the male (note his genitals) after the first round of mating. The female crouching with her back to the camera. Fig. 4. The pair mating for the second time. Fig. 5. One of the civets resting on a branch after two rounds of mating (Photographs by: Nicholas Lo Yong Wai).

**Literature cited:**

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