

Biodiversity Record: Sunda slow loris feeding on tree sap

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Subject: Sunda slow loris; *Nycticebus coucang* (Mammalia; Primates; Lorisidae).

Subject identified by: Nicholas Lo Yong Wai.

Location, date and time: Singapore Island, Old Upper Thomson Road; 2 November 2024; around 2238 hrs.

Habitat: Edge of secondary forest.

Observers: Nicholas Lo Yong Wai, Ho Su Chin, Wayne Quah, Lorenzo Zanirato, Joanne Toh, Angel Ho, Finn Teo and Sam Pei Yi.

Observation: An individual of about 15–20 cm in body length was located by its eye-shine about 15–20 m above the ground, on what appears to be an Indian almond tree (*Terminalia catappa*, Angiosperms: Myrtales: Combretaceae). The loris was observed using its teeth to bite bark off the horizontal tree branch it was clinging to. Fragments of bark could be heard dropping from the branch. The animal then began licking the sap oozing out of the newly opened wound on the branch. It also licked sap from its hands (Fig. 1), and then licked a different tree wound on another part of the branch (Fig. 2). The loris fed on sap for about 20 minutes before climbing up a branch into the canopy and out of the observers' sights.



Fig. 1. Lateral view of slow loris licking its hands after feeding on the sap from the wound (pale area stripped of bark) on the branch it created. Fig. 2. The loris licking another wound on the tree branch (Photographs by: Nicholas Lo Yong Wai).

Remarks: The Sunda slow loris is regarded as an ‘endangered’ species in Singapore (Lim et al., 2024). It is an omnivore whose diet consists mainly of fruits supplemented with leaves, shoots, saps, gums, flowers, seeds, bird eggs, insects and the occasional bird (Nekaris, 2013). As shown in this observation, the loris excavates large holes in the wood of trees by gouging with its tooth comb, and then uses its long tongue to lap up the sap and gum (Nekaris, 2013).

Literature cited:

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