

## Biodiversity Record: Two additional subspecies and a possible hybrid of pond slider, *Trachemys scripta*, in Singapore

Chen Xuanhe\* & Tan Jian Qing

Email: [xuanhezen@gamil.com](mailto:xuanhezen@gamil.com) (\* corresponding author) & [tanjianqing.personal@gmail.com](mailto:tanjianqing.personal@gmail.com)

**Recommend citation.** Chen X & Tan JQ (2026) Biodiversity Record: Two additional subspecies and a possible hybrid of pond slider, *Trachemys scripta*, in Singapore. 19: e2026060. DOI: 10.26107/NIS-2026-0060

---

**Subjects:** Cumberland slider, *Trachemys scripta troostii* (Reptilia: Testudines: Emydidae);  
Yellow-bellied slider, *Trachemys scripta scripta* (Reptilia: Testudines: Emydidae);  
Hybrid pond slider, *Trachemys scripta scripta* × *Trachemys scripta elegans* (Reptilia: Testudines: Emydidae).

**Subjects identified by:** Chen Xuanhe and Tan Jian Qing.

**Locations, dates and times:** Singapore Island at five locations —

- 1) Dairy Farm area; 15 March 2026; around 1400 hrs.
- 2) Telok Blangah area; 4 May 2026; around 1900 hrs.
- 3) Bedok Reservoir; 21 August 2025; around 1822 hrs.
- 4) Hougang area; 29 August 2025; around 1822 hrs.
- 5) West Coast Park; 23 May 2024; around 1056 hrs.

**Habitats:** Freshwater. Artificial pond in parkland adjacent to secondary forest (locations 1 & 2). Artificial lake in urban parkland (locations 3 & 4). Artificial pond of brackish water surrounded by mangrove and marsh vegetation, in parkland (location 5).

**Observers:** Chen Xuanhe and Tan Jian Qing.

**Observations:** Three yellow-bellied sliders (*Trachemys scripta scripta*) — a female of about 25 cm SCL (straight carapace length) (Fig. 1), a female of about 20 cm SCL (Fig. 2), and a male of about 15 cm SCL (Fig. 3), were observed at Bedok Reservoir, Hougang area, and West Coast Park, respectively. A subadult Cumberland slider (*Trachemys scripta troostii*) of about 10 cm SCL (Fig. 4) was sighted at the Dairy Farm area. A male pond slider of about 16 cm SCL (Fig. 5) from the Telok Blangah area has head markings resembling both the red-eared slider and the yellow-bellied slider (Fig. 5a), and is presumed to be an anthropogenic hybrid. The plastron (Fig. 5b), however, resembles that of a red-eared slider. Numerous red-eared sliders (*Trachemys scripta elegans*) were present at all five sites.

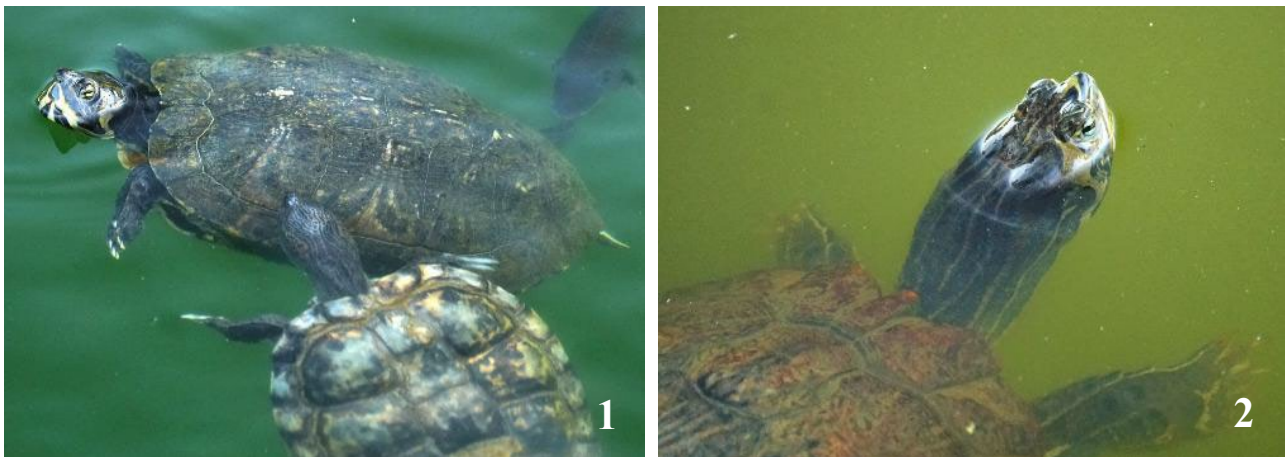


Fig. 1. Dorso-lateral view of a female yellow-bellied slider, about 25 cm SCL, with a melanistic male red-eared slider at Bedok Reservoir. Fig. 2. Dorso-lateral view of a female yellow-bellied slider, about 20 cm SCL, at Hougang area. (Photographs by: Tan Jian Qing).

**Remarks:** This appears to be the first record of the Cumberland slider and yellow-bellied slider in the wild state in Singapore (see Figueroa et al., 2023). Like the conspecific red-eared slider, they are native to the United States, and their presence in Singapore is presumably due to the pet trade. Both subspecies morphologically resemble the more common red-eared slider, but can be differentiated by the markings on their heads. The yellow-bellied slider, native to the southeastern states, has a large yellow blotch behind the eye, in contrast with the red or orange stripe of the red-eared slider, while having a more domed carapace. The Cumberland slider, native to the Cumberland and Tennessee River drainages, possesses a narrower yellow stripe behind the eye (see Ernst et al., 1994; Conant & Collins, 1998; Vamberger et al., 2020).

In Singapore, red-eared sliders can and do reproduce in the wild state (Leong & Lim, 2014; Chong & Yeo, 2022). However, it is believed that the unusual example shown in Fig. 5 is an abandoned individual that was produced from anthropogenic hybridisation by the pet trade. The authors have noted that such hybrid juveniles were occasionally offered for sale.



Fig. 3. Latero-frontal view of a male yellow-bellied slider, about 15 cm SCL, at West Coast Park. (Photograph by: Tan Jian Qing).  
Fig. 4. Lateral view of a Cumberland slider, about 10 cm SCL, at the Dairy Farm area. Fig. 5. Lateral view (a) and ventral view (b) of a probable anthropogenic hybrid *Trachemys scripta*, about 16 cm SCL, at the Telok Blangah area. (Photographs by: Chen Xuanhe).

**Literature cited:**

Chong E & Yeo DCJ (2022) Biodiversity Record: First record of in-situ hatching of red-eared sliders in equatorial Southeast Asia. *Nature in Singapore*, 15: e 2022044. DOI: 10.26107/NIS-2022-0044  
Conant R & Collins JT (1998) *A Field Guide to Reptiles & Amphibians*. Eastern and Central North America. Third edition, Expanded. Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston, 616 pp.  
Ernst CH, Lovich JE and Barbour RW (1994) *Turtles of the United States and Canada*. Smithsonian Institution Press, Washington and London, 578 pp.  
Figueroa A, Low, MEY & Lim KKP (2023) Singapore's herpetofauna: updated and annotated checklist, history, conservation, and distribution. *Zootaxa*, 5287: 1–378.  
Leong KWC & Lim KKP (2014) Successful hatching of red-eared sliders in Singapore. *Singapore Biodiversity Records*, 2014: 315–316.  
Vamberger M, Ihlow F, Asztalos M, Dawson JE, Jasinski SE, Praszag P & Fritz U (2020) So different, yet so alike: North American slider turtles (*Trachemys scripta*). *Vertebrate Zoology*, 70(1): 87–96.