

Biodiversity Record: New Singapore record of the parasitic snail, *Hypermastus acutus*

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Subjects: Parasitic snail, *Hypermastus acutus* (Mollusca: Gastropoda: Eulimidae);
Cake sand dollar, *Arachnoides placenta* (Echinodermata: Echinoidea: Clypeasteridae).

Subjects identified by: Chan Sow-Yan and Lau Wing Lup.

Location, date and time: Johor Strait / Singapore Island, Changi Beach Park; 8 November 2025; around 1722 hrs.

Habitat: Estuarine. Intertidal shore, in wet sand at low tide.

Observer: Lau Wing Lup.



Fig. 1. In-situ dorsal view of a cake sand dollar (*Arachnoides placenta*) with two live *Hypermastus acutus* (next to each other and indicated by arrow) on its dorsal surface. (Photograph by: Lau Wing Lup).

Observation: Two examples, 4.5 and 8 mm in shell height, were found on the dorsal surface of a cake sand dollar that was half-buried in the substrate (Fig. 1). The tentacles of the snail have alternating black and yellowish white markings. The orange-brown flesh can be seen through the translucent shell; the rest of the soft tissue are yellowish white with irregular dark mottling (Figs. 2 & 3).

The milky-white and translucent shell is distinctly elongated and slender with a sharply pointed apex. The surface is smooth and shiny with a porcellanous appearance. The aperture is relatively small, teardrop-shaped with a thin outer lip. The operculum is thin, flat, teardrop-shaped, and clear translucent to pale yellowish amber in colour. The operculum is paucispiral, with a small number of rapidly expanding coils swirling out from a distinct nucleus (Figs. 2 & 3).



Fig. 2. Apertural view of the adult *Hypermastus acutus* of 8 mm shell height.



Fig. 3. Lateral (top) and apertural views of the smaller specimen of 4.5 mm shell height.

(Photographs by: Lau Wing Lup)

Remarks: The featured snails represent a new record of *Hypermastus acutus* in Singapore (see Tan & Woo, 2010). Their appearance matches the holotype illustrated by Warén & Crossland (1991). *Hypermastus acutus* can be differentiated from the similar-looking and confamilial *Eulima adamsii* by being taller, having more whorls, slenderer and having a straighter outer lip margin. *Eulima adamsii* was rediscovered in Singapore by Leow (2020) at East Coast beach, attached to the dorsal surface of the same sand dollar host species.

Literature cited:

- Leow JJC (2020) Parasitic snail, *Eulima adamsii*, on sand dollar *Arachnoides placenta*. Singapore Biodiversity Records, 2020: 127.
- Tan SK & Woo HPM (2010) A Preliminary Checklist of the Molluscs of Singapore. Raffles Museum of Biodiversity Research, National University of Singapore, 78 pp. Uploaded 2 June 2010. https://lkcnhm.nus.edu.sg/wpcontent/uploads/sites/11/2024/02/preliminary_checklist_molluscs_singapore.pdf (Accessed 28 August 2026).
- Warén A & Crossland MR (1991) Revision of *Hypermastus* Pilsbry, 1899 and *Turveria* Berry, 1956 (Gastropoda: Prosobranchia: Eulimidae), two genera parasitic on sand dollars. Records of the Australian Museum, 43(1): 85–112.