

Examples of live ear-snails, *Laemodonta punctigera*, in Singapore

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Subjects: Punctured ear-snail. *Laemodonta punctigera* (Mollusca: Gastropoda: Ellobiidae).

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

Location, date and time: Singapore Island, Sungei Tampines; 8 March 2020; about 1550 hours.

Habitat: Mangrove. About 0.5 meters above the highest tide mark in back mangrove, at low tide.

Observers: Chan Sow-Yan and Lau Wing Lup.

Observation: Many live examples, each around 6-7 mm in shell height, were seen on breathing roots, decaying tree branches, organic debris and hardened mud (Fig. 1). The shell is dirty yellow with brownish spiral bands of varying thickness, and many rows of pits on the surface. Some of these pits appear squarish (Fig. 2). Juveniles with lips that have not thickened may have no denticles around the aperture (Fig. 6), and bear hair-like periostracum projections on its spire which resemble a crown of thorns on some individuals (Fig. 3-5). The animal's foot is yellowish-white, the eyes are black, the body and snout greyish black, and the tentacles are pale grey.

Remarks: Members of the family Ellobiidae are widely distributed in the coastal areas of the Indian and western Pacific Oceans. Although the diversity of the Ellobiidae is relatively high in Singapore (Raven & Vermeulen, 2007; Tan & Woo, 2010; Tan et al., 2012), little is known of the habits of most species. This is especially so with the smaller species, such as *Laemodonta punctigera* featured here.

References:

- Raven H & Vermeulen JJ (2007) Notes on molluscs from NW Borneo and Singapore. 2. A synopsis of the Ellobiidae (Gastropoda, Pulmonata). *Vita Malacologia*, 4: 29-62.
- Tan SK & Woo HPM (2010) A preliminary checklist of the Molluscs of Singapore. Raffles Museum of Biodiversity Research, National University of Singapore. 78 pp.
- Tan SK, Chan SY & Clements GR (2012) A Guide to Snails and Other Non-marine Molluscs of Singapore. Singapore Science Centre. 176 pp.



Fig. 1. Live *Laemodonta punctigera* crawling on rotten wood, in-situ.



Fig. 2. Side view of a mature example, showing yellowish-white foot, black eyes, greyish-black body, snout and tentacles. Red arrows indicate squarish pits on the shell surface.

Photographs by Lau Wing Lup



Fig. 3. Frontal view of juvenile *Laemodonta punctigera*. Note the eyes between the base of the tentacles.



Fig. 4. Dorsal view of juvenile. Note crown-of-thorns like periostracum on its spire.



Fig. 5. Dorsal view of some *Laemodonta punctigera*. Note variation in shell pattern and hairy periostracal projections on juvenile shells.



Fig. 6. Apertural view of some *Laemodonta punctigera*. Arrow indicates the lack of denticles around the aperture of a juvenile snail. Distance between the black bars on the ruler on the right is 1 mm.

Photographs by Lau Wing Lup