

Biodiversity Record: The stag beetle, *Aegus chelifera*, at the Sungei Tengah area

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Subjects: Stag beetle, *Aegus chelifera* (Insecta: Coleoptera: Lucanidae: Lucaninae).

Subjects identified by: Isaac Seow-En.

Location, date and time: Singapore Island, Sungei Tengah area, Lorong Semangka, facing the Tengah River (part of the Kranji Reservoir); 1 April 2021; 2115 hrs and 2145 hrs.

Habitat: Farmland, in proximity to secondary forest and a large body of freshwater.

Observers: Isaac Seow-En, James Khoo Hian Ze and Francis Seow-Choen.

Observations: Two *Aegus chelifera* were among many insects attracted to a large white sheet of cloth hung above a 20-watt ultraviolet light on a two-metre high platform. The light was turned on from 2030 hrs to 2230 hrs. At 2115 hrs, a female *Aegus chelifera* was found near the light, followed by a male at 2145 hrs. When handled, both beetles displayed thanatosis (Fig. 1). They were photographed ex situ (Figs. 2, 3), then released.

Remarks: *Aegus chelifera* MacLeay, 1819, was first collected in Singapore in 1909 by Henry Nicholas Ridley (The Biodiversity of Singapore, 2021). This diminutive and reclusive stag beetle is apparently seldom encountered even by Coleoptera enthusiasts. The featured observation suggests that the species is not rare in Singapore. One local photographer encountered six adult and two larval individuals at a single locality in one night (Moh, 2015). Although *Aegus chelifera* is native to Southeast Asia, it has recently been found in the Seychelles. It is speculated to have reached there on logs that washed ashore from Southeast Asia during the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami (Carpaneto et al., 2010).

Literature cited:

Carpaneto GM, Bartolozzi L, Mazzei P, Pimpinelli I & Viglioglia V (2010) *Aegus chelifera* Macleay 1819, an Asian stag beetle (Coleoptera Lucanidae) invading the Seychelles Islands: A threat for endemic saproxylic species? Tropical Zoology, 23: 173–180.

MacLeay WS (1819) Horae Entomologicae: Or Essays on the Annulose Animals. Vol. I. Part I. Printed for S. Bagster, London, 160 pp.

Moh D (2015) Night Walk at a Secret Place (07 Nov 2015). Beetles@SG. <https://beetlesg.blogspot.com/2015/11/night-walk-at-secret-place-7-nov-2015.html> (Accessed 8 April 2021).

The Biodiversity of Singapore (2021) *Aegus chelifera* MacLeay, 1819. <https://singapore.biodiversity.online/species/Arth-Hexa-Coleoptera-000674> (Accessed 8 April 2021).

Note: The authors would like to thank Alvin Seah for allowing them to operate a light trap in his private property.



Fig. 1. Two *Aegus chelifera* displaying thanatosis while being held in the hand. (Photograph by: James Khoo Hian Ze).



Fig. 2. Dorsal (left) and ventral (right) views of the 17-mm male *Aegus chelifera*. (Photograph by: Isaac Seow-En).



Fig. 3. Dorsal (left) and ventral (right) views of the 19-mm female *Aegus chelifera*. (Photograph by: Isaac Seow-En).