

Confirmed occurrence of the awl snail, *Striosubulina striatella*, in Singapore

Chan Sow-Yan

chansowyan@gmail.com

Subjects: Awl snail, *Striosubulina striatella* (Mollusca: Gastropoda: Achatinidae).

Subjects identified by: Chan Sow-Yan.

Location, date and time: Singapore Island, Mei Hwan Drive; 11 January 2019; late afternoon.

Habitat: Urban parkland. In playground, at the base of a tembusu tree.

Observer: Chan Sow-Yan.

Observation: At least three examples were seen exposed among leaf debris in the shade of a tembusu tree after light rain. One example, of about 10.2 mm shell length, is illustrated in Fig. 1. They were found together with the morphologically similar *Subulina octona* (Fig. 2).



Fig. 1. Dorsal view of *Striosubulina striatella* showing strong axial sculpture and dark mark on its eyestalk.



Fig. 2. Dorsal view of *Subulina octona* showing its smoother axial sculpture.

Photographs by Chan Sow Yan

Remarks: *Striosubulina striatella* was first recorded in Singapore as ‘? *Subulina striatella*’ with doubt by Maassen (2001). The species was described as *Helix striatella* from Principe Island in the Gulf of Guinea, West Africa by Rang (1831). It was recently introduced to East Africa (Rowson et al., 2010) among many other places. This snail is apparently not native to Singapore, and likely to have been introduced there earlier than Maassen’s record in 2001. It seems to have escaped detection due to its strong resemblance in both appearance and size to the locally abundant con-familial *Subulina octona*. Although both species have a similar truncated columella, *Striosubulina striatella* can be distinguished by its fine axial sculpture (if observed under a X10 hand lens), as well as a faint dark area on its eye stalks (see Fig. 1). *Subulina octona* has much smoother shell without distinct axial sculpture and lacks the dark mark on its eye stalks (see Fig. 2).

References:

- Maassen, W. J. M., 2001. A preliminary checklist of the non-marine molluscs of West Malaysia. "A handlist". *De Kreukel*. Extra editie 2001: 1-155.
- MolluscaBase, 2018. *Striosubulina striatella* (Rang, 1831). <http://www.molluscabase.org/aphia.php?p=taxdetails&id=1292542>. Accessed on 12 January 2019.
- Rang, M. S., 1831. Description des Coquilles terrestres recueillies pendant un voyage à la côte occidentale d’Afrique, et au Brésil. *Annales des Science Naturelles: Zoologie*. 24: 5-63, pl. 1-3.
- Rowson, B., B. H. Warren & C. F. Ngerza, 2010. Terrestrial molluscs of Pemba Island, Zanzibar, Tanzania, and its status as an “oceanic” island. *ZooKeys*. 70: 1-39.