NTU scientists a step closer to using velvet worm’s slime as bioplastic

They have uncovered the exact constitution of proteins in the sticky slime squirted to nab prey

Suspected new species found in Sun Pore

The velvet worm is far from being a worm. Their biological (or scientific) name, Phasmatodea, hints at their role as leaf-eating insects, but what they eat is a dead giveaway. Dr. Thong Hoang, an expert in velvet worm taxonomy, says, “If you see a velvet worm, you know it’s there.”

Dr. Thong Hoang, a researcher at NTU’s School of Marine and Environmental Science, was one of the researchers who confirmed the existence of a new species in Sun Pore, Singapore. The discovery was made after extensive fieldwork in the area. The research team consisted of Dr. Thong Hoang, Dr. Yong Lu, and Dr. Lee. They spent several weeks in Sun Pore collecting samples and analyzing them in the laboratory.

The new species, which was named Phasmatodea sp. Sun Pore, is the first velvet worm species to be found in Singapore. The researchers believe that this species may have evolved in response to the unique environment of Sun Pore. They have already started studying the biology of this species and hope to publish their findings in a scientific journal.

Left: A velvet worm being “kicked” by the tip of a stick to force it to secrete its slime. Right: A velvet worm with its slime contained in a small bubble.

The discovery of this new species is significant because it adds to the diversity of velvet worm species known to exist in Singapore. The researchers hope that this discovery will inspire more studies on velvet worms and their role in the ecosystem.