

## Juvenile map pufferfish in the Singapore Strait

**Subjects:** Map pufferfish, *Arothron mappa* (Teleostei: Tetraodontidae).

**Subjects identified by:** Keiichi Matsuura.

**Location, date and time:** Singapore Strait, off Pulau Hantu; 15 November 2015; 1030, 1910 hrs.

**Habitat:** Marine. Coral reef, between 8 and 10 m depth.

**Observers:** Ng Boon Leong (at 1910 hrs), Venus Tan and Tan Bok Leng (at 1030 hrs).

**Observation:** Two juvenile examples, each about 5 cm total length, were seen on the substrate at different parts of the reef (Figs. 1 & 2).

**Remarks:** The two subjects appear to be the juvenile form of the map pufferfish (*Arothron mappa*), a species that is recorded in Singapore waters (eg. Tan et al., 2010: 143). Matsuura (2009: 335) illustrates a slightly larger juvenile specimen of 4.9 cm standard length (about 6 cm total length) that is black and covered in large yellowish grey spots which have started to coalesce with one another to form a reticulated pattern. It is likely that these greyish spots have started as smaller yellow spots in younger fish like the examples featured here.

The spotted colour pattern of juvenile map pufferfish strongly resembles that of the guineafowl pufferfish, *Arothron meleagris*, which has not been recorded from Singapore or its surrounding seas. The guineafowl puffer is distinguished from its congeners in being black and densely covered in small white spots throughout its body. Although widespread throughout the tropical Indo-west Pacific, it appears to be found mainly around oceanic islands (Allen & Erdmann, 2012: 1088).

### References:

- Allen, G. R. & M. V. Erdmann, 2012. *Reef Fishes of the East Indies. Vol. III*. Tropical Reef Research, Perth, Australia. pp. 857- 1292.
- Matsuura, K., 2009. Tetraodontidae. In: Kimura, S., U. Satapoomin & K. Matsuura (eds.). *Fishes of Andaman Sea. West coast of southern Thailand*. National Museum of Nature and Science, Tokyo, Japan. pp. 334-337.
- Tan H. H., M. E. Y. Low & K. K. P. Lim, 2010. Fishes of the Marina basin, Singapore, before the erection of the Marina Barrage. *The Raffles Bulletin of Zoology*. 58 (1): 137-144.

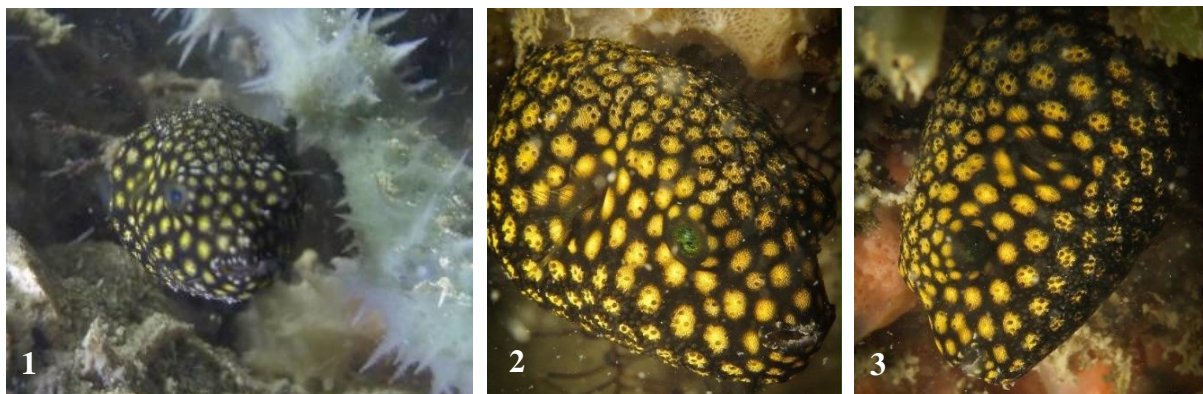


Fig. 1. Frontal view of juvenile puffer photographed at 1910 hrs. Photograph by Ng Boon Leong. Figs. 2 & 3. Fronto-lateral views of the head of a different but similar-sized individual photographed at 1030 hrs. Fig. 2 shows the right side. Fig. 3 shows the left side. Photographs by Venus Tan

Contributors: Ng Boon Leong, Venus Tan, Tan Bok Leng & Kelvin K. P. Lim  
Contact address: [nhmlimkp@nus.edu.sg](mailto:nhmlimkp@nus.edu.sg) (Lim)