Non-native fishes observed in marsh pond at West Coast Park

Subjects: Mozambique tilapia, Oreochromis mossambicus (Teleostei: Cichlidae); Fig. 1. Red tilapia, Oreochromis hybrid (Teleostei: Cichlidae); Fig. 2. Mayan cichlid, Cichlasoma urophthalmum (Teleostei: Cichlidae); Fig. 3. Three-spot cichlid, Cichlasoma trimaculatum (Teleostei: Cichlidae); Fig. 4. Zebra tilapia, Tilapia buttikoferi (Teleostei: Cichlidae); Fig. 5. African sharp-tooth walking catfish, Clarias gariepinus (Teleostei: Clariidae); Fig. 5.

Subjects identified by: Contributor.

Location, date and time: Singapore Island, West Coast Park, marsh pond near mouth of Pandan River, off Pandan Crescent; 16 June 2011; 1450-1500 hrs; 16 December 2013; 1030-1045 hrs.

Habitat: Semi-natural, tidal open marsh pond with brackish water, a sand-mud substrate and earth banks with mangrove vegetation.

Observer: Contributor.

Observation: A mixed assemblage of fish comprising of non-native species inhabiting brackish water was observed on two occasions. On 16 June 2011, a male Oreochromis mossambicus in breeding colours was displaying at its circular depression on the substrate (Fig. 1) and a group of four Oreochromis hybrid swam past in the shallows (Fig. 2). On 16 December 2013, a pair of Cichlasoma urophthalmum was observed at a depression on the mud, probably made by them for spawning (Fig. 3). In addition, a solitary Cichlasoma trimaculatum (Fig. 4), large numbers of Tilapia buttikoferi (single individual in Fig. 5), and three large Clarias gariepinus (between 30 and 80 cm total length) were seen in deeper waters. Among the alien species, native estuarine fishes such as grey mullet (Liza sp.) and tenpounder (Elops haiwaiiensis) were also noted.

Remarks: This appears to be the first record of the fish fauna inhabiting the brackish water marsh pond at West Coast Park. Except for Cichlasoma trimaculatum, all the non-native species have been recorded from reservoirs and other waterways in Singapore (Ng & Tan, 2010). Cichlasoma trimaculatum, which is used in the cultivation of the flowerhorn cichlid, seems to be a new record for Singapore.

Reference:
Fig. 2. Red tilapia (*Oreohromis* hybrid) on 16 June 2011.

Fig. 3. Pair of *Cichlasoma urophthalum* on 16 December 2013.

Fig. 4. A solitary *Cichlasoma trimaculatum* on 16 December 2013.

Fig. 5. *Clarias gariepinus* (70-80 cm total length) with *Tilapia buttikoferi* (above) on 16 December 2013.

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