

## Zebra spiny-eel and slender walking catfish in Lorong Banir stream

**Subjects:** Zebra spiny-eel, *Macrognathus zebrinus* (Teleostei: Mastacembelidae).  
Slender walking catfish, *Clarias nieuhofii* (Teleostei: Clariidae).

**Subjects identified by:** Nick Baker & Kelvin K. P. Lim.

**Location, date and time:** Singapore Island, Lorong Banir, stream and swamp between Upper Thomson Road and Nee Soon flyover; 7 January 2014; 2057 and 2123 hrs.

**Habitat:** Freshwater stream with silty substrate flowing through secondary forest.

**Observers:** Contributors.

**Observations:** One adult *Macrognathus zebrinus* of about 17 cm total length was photographed at 2123 hrs in the stream (Fig. 1). A large example of *Clarias nieuhofii*, between 45 and 50 cm in total length, was observed at the swamp adjacent to the stream at 2057 hrs (Fig. 3 & 4). Climbing perch (*Anabas testudineus*) and common snakehead (*Channa striata*) were also observed in the swamp.

**Remarks:** The zebra spiny eel is an introduced species that is native to Myanmar, and there is an established population in the Lower Seletar Reservoir (Ng, 2010). As the Lorong Banir stream links the Nee Soon swamp forest to the Lower Seletar Reservoir, the presence of this non-native species in the stream is cause for concern. We do not know if and how it will affect the native buff-backed spiny-eel (*Macrognathus maculatus*) that is considered 'critically endangered' in Singapore, and occurs upstream (Lim et al., 2008: 153). The slender walking catfish inhabits shaded forest streams and freshwater swamps with acidic waters. In Singapore, it appears to be restricted to the Central Catchment Nature Reserve and Pulau Tekong, and is regarded as a 'critically endangered' fish (Lim et al., 2008: 149).

### References:

Lim, K. K. P., H. H. Tan & J. K. Y. Low, 2008. Fishes. In: Davison, G. W. H., P. K. L. Ng & H. C. Ho (eds.). *The Singapore Red Data Book. Threatened Plants & Animals of Singapore. Second edition.* Nature Society (Singapore). pp. 145-154.

Ng H. H., 2010. The zebra spiny eel (*Macrognathus zebrinus*) – a non-native species in Singapore (Synbranchiformes: Mastacembelidae). *COSMOS*. 6 (1): 91-93.



Fig. 1. Dorsal view of zebra spiny-eel in Lorong Banir stream. Photograph by Nick Baker



Fig. 2. Dorsal view of slender walking catfish in swamp adjacent to Lorong Banir stream.



Fig. 3. Head of slender walking catfish.

Photographs by Nick Baker

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