

Group of ten smooth-coated otters at Pulau Ubin

Subjects: Smooth-coated otter, *Lutrogale perspicillata* (Mammalia: Carnivora: Mustelidae).

Subjects identified by: Contributors.

Location, date and time: Johor Straits, below main jetty of Pulau Ubin; 8 February 2014; 1200 hrs.

Habitat: Estuarine, rocky shore.

Observers: Contributors and others.

Observation: A group of 10 members comprising of adults first appeared near the rocks and swam below the jetty. The group was then separated by a bumboat, but quickly regrouped through vocalization. Several of them went onto the rocks and then leapt into the sea and swam away in the general direction towards the north eastern side of Singapore Island.

Remarks: This highly social species lives in pairs or in groups with up to 15 or more members (Shepherd & Shepherd, 2012: 64). Large groups are believed to centre around a female and her offspring from multiple generations (Hunter & Barrett, 2011: 156). The featured sighting may represent the largest group of smooth-coated otters recorded in Singapore.

References:

Hunter, L. & P. Barrett, 2011. *A Field Guide to the Carnivores of the World*. New Holland Publishers (UK) Ltd. 240 pp.

Shepherd, C. R. & L. A. Shepherd, 2012. *A Naturalist's Guide to the Mammals of South-east Asia*. John Beaufoy Publishing, England. 176 pp.



Photograph by Fung Tze Kwan

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