

Juvenile flatfish at Keppel Bay Marina

Subject: Unidentified flatfish (Teleostei: Pleuronectiformes).

Subject examined by: Contributor.

Location, date and time: Singapore Island, marina at Keppel Bay; 20 April 2014; around 1030 hrs.

Habitat: Sheltered corner of the sea within a marina, by a floating pontoon with rich growth of soft corals, hydroids and other sessile marine organisms growing on the submerged lower edges.

Observers: Contributor, with Collin Tong.

Observation: Initially mistaken for a jellyfish, the transparent fish (about 5 cm total length) was swimming actively with an undulating motion close to the surface at a corner section of the pontoon. Other fish in the vicinity were at least 6 orbicular cardinalfish (*Sphaeramia orbicularis*). When approached with an underwater camera, it sank slightly deeper but did not descend out of sight.

Remarks: This appears to be a juvenile flatfish nearing the end of its pelagic larval stage. It probably belongs to the family Paralichthyidae or Bothidae as the position of both eyes are on the left side of the body, and the caudal fin is separate from the dorsal and anal fins (see Matarese & Busby, 2011: 318-322). The long and banner-like extension (Fig. 2) seems to be the first dorsal fin ray which may be separate from the rest of the dorsal fin. This feature is characteristic of flounders of the genus *Asterorhombus* in the family Bothidae, of which *Asterorhombus intermedius* was recently recorded from Singapore waters (Toh & Lim, 2014). However, the identity of this juvenile fish is yet to be confirmed.

References:

- Matarese, A. C. & M. S. Busby, 2011. Pleuronectiformes. In: Kendall, A. W. Jr. (ed.). *Identification of Eggs and Larvae of Marine Fishes*. National Museum of Nature and Science and Tokai University Press, Japan. pp. 311-328.
- Toh C. H. & K. K. P. Lim, 2014. New record of intermediate flounder in Singapore. *Singapore Biodiversity Records*. 2014: 84-85.



Fig. 1. Dorsal view of juvenile flatfish.



Fig. 2. Ventro-lateral view of fish with arrow indicating long dorsal fin extension.

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