

Flathead goby at Rifle Range forest

Subjects: Flathead goby, *Glossogobius* sp. (Teleostei: Gobiidae).

Subjects identified by: Kelvin K. P. Lim.

Location, date and time: Singapore Island, Central Catchment Nature Reserve, Rifle Range forest, water channel linking Upper Peirce Reservoir to MacRitchie Reservoir; 18 June 2014; around 2100 hrs.

Habitat: Concretised channel in mature secondary rainforest with clear freshwater flowing over sand substrate.

Observers: Noel Thomas & Nick Baker.

Observation: About three examples, the largest around 15 cm (see attached picture), were observed on the bottom of the channel. Other fishes at the habitat included peacock bass (*Cichla orinocensis*), barbs and rasboras.

Remarks: Gobies of the genus *Glossogobius* were not known from the reservoirs and waterways in the Central Catchment Nature Reserve (Ng & Lim, 1997), and this appears to be the first record. With only a dorsal view, and no specimens in the hand, the subjects could not be identified with certainty as the arrangements of papillae on the sides of the head require to be examined in detail. Possible candidates include the tank goby (*Glossogobius giuris*), the golden flathead goby (*G. aureus*) and the circumspect flathead goby (*G. circumspectus*), which are native to Singapore but typically inhabit the lower parts of rivers and in estuaries. Landlocked examples of these are present in estuarine reservoirs (Larson & Lim, 2005). However, the reservoirs of the Central Catchment Area have been cut off from their lower reaches since the 1960s, and it is not likely for large landlocked taxa to persist unnoticed for the past few decades. These gobies may have been deliberately introduced recently, or carried in with raw water piped over from the Tebrau River in Johor, Malaysia (see Ng & Tan, 2010: 104).

References:

- Larson, H. K. & K. K. P. Lim, 2005. *A Guide to Gobies of Singapore*. Singapore Science Centre. 164 pp.
- Ng H. H. & H. H. Tan, 2010. An annotated checklist of the non-native freshwater fish species in the reservoirs of Singapore. *COSMOS*. 6 (1): 95-116.
- Ng, P. K. L. & K. K. P. Lim, 1997. The diversity and conservation status of fishes in the nature reserves of Singapore. In: Chan, L. & R. T. Corlett (eds.). *Biodiversity in the Nature Reserves of Singapore. The Gardens' Bulletin, Singapore*. 49: 245-265.



Dorsal view of *Glossogobius* sp. of about 15 cm total length. Photograph by Nick Baker

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