

White-spotted eagle ray at Tanah Merah

Subject: White-spotted eagle ray, *Aetobatus mula* (Chondrichthyes: Batoidea: Myliobatidae).

Subject identified by: Contributors.

Location, date and time: Singapore Straits, east coast at Tanah Merah; 6 May 2011; 0630 hrs.

Habitat: Marine. In a shallow sandy lagoon behind an artificial seawall on reclaimed land.

Observer: Ria Tan.

Observation: A young example of about 70 cm disc width was observed in shallow water along the shore at low spring tide (see accompanying picture).

Remarks: Although the white-spotted eagle ray was recorded from Singapore since 1861 (Bleeker, 1861: 38, as *Aetobatis narinari*), it appears to be locally rare. This species can grow up to at least 3 m in disc width, and is recognised by its long and broadly rounded snout with a V-shaped nasal curtain, and numerous white spots covering the blackish dorsal surface of its body (Last et al., 2010, as *Aetobatus ocellatus*). Previously known as *Aetobatus narinari* and *Aetobatus ocellatus*, the present scientific name of this Indo-Pacific species is *Aetobatus mula* (see Kottelat, 2013: 29).

References:

- Bleeker, P., 1861. Mededeeling omtrent vischsoorten, nieuw voor de kennis der fauna von Singapoera. *Verlagen en Mededeelingen der Koninklijke Akademie van Wetenschappen, Letterkunde, en Schoone Kunsten te Amsterdam*. 12 (1): 28-63.
- Kottelat, M., 2013. The fishes of the inland waters of Southeast Asia: a catalogue and core bibliography of the fishes known to occur in freshwaters, mangroves and estuaries. *The Raffles Bulletin of Zoology*. Supplement No. 27: 1-663.
- Last, P. R., W. T. White, J. N. Caira, Dharmadi, Fahmi, K. Jensen, A. P. K. Lim, B. M. Manjaji-Matsumoto, G. J. P. Naylor, J. J. Pogonoski, J. D. Stevens & G. K. Yearsley, 2010. *Sharks and Rays of Borneo*. CSIRO Publishing, Australia. v + 298 pp.



Dorso-frontal view of eagle ray at Tanah Merah. Photograph by Ria Tan

Contributors: Ria **Tan** & Kelvin K. P. **Lim**
Contact address: nhmlimkp@nus.edu.sg (Lim)