

Indo-Pacific humpback dolphins off Lazarus Island

Subjects: Indo-Pacific humpback dolphin, *Sousa chinensis* (Mammalia: Cetacea: Delphinidae).

Subjects identified by: Contributors & Neo Mei Lin.

Location, date and time: Singapore Strait, channel between Lazarus Island and Kusu Island; 10 September 2014; around 0630 hrs.

Habitat: Marine. Sea channel with greatest depth of approximately 30 m.

Observers: Contributors, Jackson Chan & Samuel Tan.

Observation: Two adults with a juvenile were observed in the channel about 3 to 4m off the rocky shore of Lazarus Island. The observers were conducting an intertidal survey at the shore when they heard a distinctive loud noise, believed to be the sound of a dolphin exhaling water from its blowhole. The juvenile and presumably its mother dolphin surfaced side by side, followed shortly by another adult dolphin. They surfaced a few more times before swimming off. The accompanying photographs show the lateral views of the hind quarters (Fig. 1) and the head (Fig. 2) of the adult dolphins while they breached the surface of the water.

Remarks: It was suspected that the dolphins were attracted by the activity of the observers at the shore, and hence swam close to them, possibly out of curiosity. Indo-Pacific humpback dolphins are sometimes observed in the Singapore Straits, as well as the eastern Johor Straits. In Singapore, this species is regarded as 'endangered' (Lim et al., 2008: 202).

Reference: Lim, K. K. P., R. Subaraj, S. H. Yeo, N. Lim, D. Lane & B. Y. H. Lee, 2008. Mammals. In: Davison, G. W. H., P. K. L. Ng & H. C. Ho. *The Singapore Red Data Book. Threatened Plants & Animals of Singapore*. Nature Society (Singapore). pp. 190-207.



Fig. 1.



Fig. 2.

Photographs by Samuel Tan

Contributors: Teresa Stephanie **Tay** & Rene **Ong**
Contact address: tmstayt@nus.edu.sg (Tay)