

New record of the tasselled blenny in Singapore

Subjects: Tasselled blenny, *Parablennius thysanius* (Teleostei: Blennidae).

Subjects identified by: Contributor.

Location, date and time: Singapore Strait (East Keppel Fairway, Terumbu Pandan, off Marina Bay), Marina Bay and eastern Johor Straits (off Changi); April, May & June 2002.

Habitat: Marine. Among fouling organisms growing on navigational buoys and their anchoring chains.

Observers: .Serena L. M. Teo, Tan Koh Siang, Cai Yi-xiong & Sin Tsai Min.

Observation: Specimens of the tasseled blenny were found among subtidal fouling organisms on navigational buoys that were deployed to aid vessel traffic. These buoys, each weighing 5 tonnes, were submerged up to 2 m below the surface of the water. They were removed from the sea for cleaning and servicing once every 3 years. It was during these cleaning sessions that specimens of the blenny and other fouling organisms were collected by the observers and preserved for study (see Lim et al., 2009: 41-42).

Material of *Parablennius thysanius* deposited in the Zoological Reference Collection of the Lee Kong Chian Natural History Museum, at the National University of Singapore (ZRC), consist of the following series:

- 1) ZRC 47243, 8 examples, largest 55.7 mm SL (standard length: from snout tip to tail base), from East Keppel Fairway, 5 June 2002. One of the specimens is illustrated in the accompanying picture
- 2) ZRC 47244, 6 examples, largest 45.9 mm SL, from Terumbu Pandan, 11 April 2002.
- 3) ZRC 47767, 24 examples, largest 52.4 mm SL, off Marina Bay, 21 June 2002.
- 4) ZRC 47768, 9 examples, largest 53.8 mm SL, from Marina Bay, 9 May 2002.
- 5) ZRC 47770, 1 example, 46.8 mm SL, from off Changi, June 2002.

SL refers to standard length, measured from the tip of the snout to the base of the caudal fin.



Lateral view of a *Parablennius thysanius*. Preserved specimen of 50.5 mm SL from ZRC 47243. Photograph by Kelvin K. P. Lim

Remarks: The tasselled blenny inhabits sheltered and often turbid coastal reefs, between 2 and 5 metres depth, in the tropical Indo-west Pacific, from the Persian Gulf across the East Indies to the Philippines. Its occurrence in Hawaii is believed to be due to human introduction (Allen & Erdmann, 2012: 829). The presence of the genus *Parablennius* in Singapore has been mentioned by Wang & Lim (2011), but this appears to be the first record of the species *Parablennius thysanius* in Singapore waters (see e.g. Fowler, 1938).

References:

- Allen, G. R. & M. V. Erdmann, 2012. *Reef Fishes of the East Indies. Volume II*. Tropical Reef Research, Perth, Australia. p. 425-856.
- Fowler, H. W., 1938. A list of the fishes known from Malaya. *Fisheries Bulletin, Singapore*. 1: 1-268.
- Lim S.-C., N. J. de Voogd & K. S. Tan, 2009. Fouling spones (Porifera) on navigation buoys from Singapore waters. *The Raffles Bulletin of Zoology*, Supplement No. 22: 41-58.
- Wang L. K. & K. K. P. Lim, 2011. Blennies. In: Ng, P. K. L., R. T. Corlett & H. T. W. Tan (eds.). *Singapore Biodiversity. An Encyclopedia of the Natural Environment and Sustainable Development*. Editions Didier Millet and the Raffles Museum of Biodiversity Research, Singapore. p. 244.

Note: The featured specimens were contributed by the observers, who are colleagues from the Tropical Marine Science Institute of the National University of Singapore, who were given the opportunity to survey fouling communities on the navigation buoys by the Hydrographic Department of the Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore. Their study was partially supported by the National University of Singapore's Academic Research Fund R347-000-044-123 to Tan Koh Siang, Sin Tsai Min and Serena Teo.

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