

Elongate surgeonfish in the Singapore Strait

Subject: Elongate surgeonfish, *Acanthurus mata* (Teleostei: Acanthuridae).

Subject identified by: Contributor.

Location, date and time: Singapore Strait, off Sisters' Islands; 31 January 2015; afternoon.

Habitat: Marine. Fringing coral reef, at depth of about 5 m.

Observer: Contributor.

Observation: One individual of about 30 cm total length was observed and videographed swimming in the water column just off the reef.

Remarks: Due to the poor underwater visibility at the location and the rapid motion of the fish, the video images obtained do not show the subject in great clarity. However, the general shape, plain greyish body, distinct white line along the base of the dorsal fin (Figs. 1 & 2), yellowish dorsal and anal fins (Fig. 3), non-yellow pectoral fins, yellowish face mask, and dark peduncular spine (the latter three features noted in-situ by the contributor) are characteristic of *Acanthurus mata* (see Allen & Erdmann, 2012: 1022; Kuitert & Debelius, 2001: 53).

This species has been purchased from a market in Singapore (Tweedie, 1940: 75 as *Hepatus mata*), but the specimen may not have been obtained in Singapore waters. The present record would be a confirmation of the occurrence of *Acanthurus mata* in Singapore.

The contributor has also observed a possibly conspecific surgeonfish off Pulau Satumu in the Singapore Strait on 20 February 2015, but was unable to obtain any images of this example.



Fig. 1. Side view of the dorsal half of the fish showing the distinct white line along the base of the dorsal fin. Image extracted from a video clip by Jeffrey K. Y. Low.

References:

- Allen, G. R. & M. V. Erdmann, 2012. *Reef Fishes of the East Indies. Volume III*. Tropical Reef Research, Perth, Australia. p. 857-1292.
- Kuitert, R. H. & H. Debelius, 2001. *Surgeonfishes, Rabbitfishes and Their Relatives. A Comprehensive Guide to Acanthuroidei*. TMC Publishing, Chorleywood, UK. 208 pp.
- Tweedie, M. W. F., 1940. Additions to the collection of fishes in the Raffles Museum. *Bulletin of the Raffles Museum, Singapore*. 16: 68-82.



Fig. 2. Side view of the head and anterior body.



Fig. 3. Side view of entire fish showing the yellowish dorsal and anal fins.

Images extracted from video clips by Jeffrey K. Y. Low.

Contributor: Jeffrey K. Y. **Low**

Contact address: jeffrey_low@nparks.gov.sg / cat64fish@yahoo.com