

Cavite cardinalfish from Pulau Hantu

Subjects: Cavite cardinalfish, *Ostorhinchus cavitensis* (Teleostei: Apogonidae).

Subjects identified by: Jeffrey K. Y. Low & Kelvin K. P. Lim.

Location, date and time: Singapore Straits off Pulau Hantu; 27 Oct 2013 at 1150 hrs, 1 May 2015 at 1422 hrs.

Habitat: Marine. Fringing coral reef with silty substrates at depths of between 5 and 9 m.

Observers: Contributors.

Observations: Adult examples of about 6 cm total length were observed hovering just off the sea floor. The subject with distended throat (Fig. 1) photographed on 27 October 2013 is believed to be a male brooding eggs in the mouth. At least two individuals were seen at a boat wreck on 1 May 2015 (Fig. 2).

Remarks: Cardinalfishes are mouth-brooders. During spawning, the female releases a large gelatinous egg mass that the male fertilises before he takes it into his mouth. There the eggs are taken care of until the larvae hatch (Allen & Erdmann, 2012: 367). The Cavite cardinalfish occurs in estuarine habitats as well as on coral reefs, and has been recorded from Pulau Hantu (Heng & Lim, 2013: 65; Ng & Lim, 2014: 1065).

The copepod-infested individual recorded by Tan (2014: 150 as *Ostorhinchus cavitiensis*) from off Pulau Satumu seems to be a misidentified juvenile of a species of *Cheilodipterus*, possibly *Cheilodipterus macrodon*, on account of its dark stripes and the unusually large blotch on its caudal peduncle (see: Ng & Lim, 2014: 1063). Note that *Ostorhinchus cavitensis* has a considerably smaller blotch on its caudal peduncle and lacks blackish stripes on its body.

References:

- Allen, G. R. & M. V. Erdmann, 2012. *Reef Fishes of the East Indies. Volume I*. Tropical Reef Research, Perth, Australia. xiii + 424 pp.
- Heng P. Y. & K. K. P. Lim, 2013. Some noteworthy reef fishes at Pulau Hantu. *Singapore Biodiversity Records*. 2013: 65-67.
- Ng H. H. & K. K. P. Lim, 2014. A preliminary checklist of the cardinalfishes (Actinopterygii: Gobiiformes: Apogonidae) of Singapore. *Check List*. 10 (5): 1061-1070.
- Tan H. H., 2014. Parasitic copepods infesting Cavite cardinal fish. *Singapore Biodiversity Records*. 2014: 150.



Fig. 1. Mouth-brooding individual on 27 October 2013. Photograph by Jeffrey K. Y. Low



Fig. 2. Two examples at a boat wreck on 1 May 2015. Photograph by Koh Kwan Siong

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