

Spotted sand-diver at Changi

Subject: Spotted sand-diver, *Trichonotus setiger* (Teleostei: Trichonotidae).

Subject identified by: Tan Heok Hui.

Location, date and time: Johor Strait, Changi beach off National Service Resort and Country Club; 6 July 2016; between 0600 and 0700 hrs.

Habitat: Estuarine. Intertidal flats with sandy substrates.

Observers: Contributors.

Observation: An example of 100 mm standard length (snout to caudal fin base) (Fig. 1) was found flopping on an exposed sand flat. It was collected and deposited as a voucher specimen in the Zoological Reference Collection of the Lee Kong Chian Natural History Museum at the National University of Singapore. The distinctively projecting lower jaw and curious 'eye-lashes' (actually part of the iris) on the specimen are highlighted in Fig. 2.



Fig. 1. *Trichonotus setiger*, dorsal (top) and lateral views. Photographs by Tan Heok Hui

Remarks: Sand-divers are a group of benthic marine fish that is poorly known in Singapore. Of the six species known to occur in the Indonesian region, only *Trichonotus setiger* is recorded there (Ng et al., 2011: 437; Allen & Erdmann, 2012: 758). These fish typically occur in small groups, each group with multiple females and only a few males. They hover over sandy bottoms into which they dart when alarmed (Allen & Erdmann, 2012: 758).

References:

- Allen, G. R. & M. V. Erdmann, 2012. *Reef Fishes of the East Indies. Volume II*. Tropical Reef Research, Perth, Australia. pp. 425-856.
- Ng, P. K. L., R. T. Corlett & H. T. W. Tan (eds.), 2011. *Singapore Biodiversity. An Encyclopedia of the Natural Environment and Sustainable Development*. Raffles Museum of Biodiversity Research, National University of Singapore & Editions Didier Millet. 552 pp.

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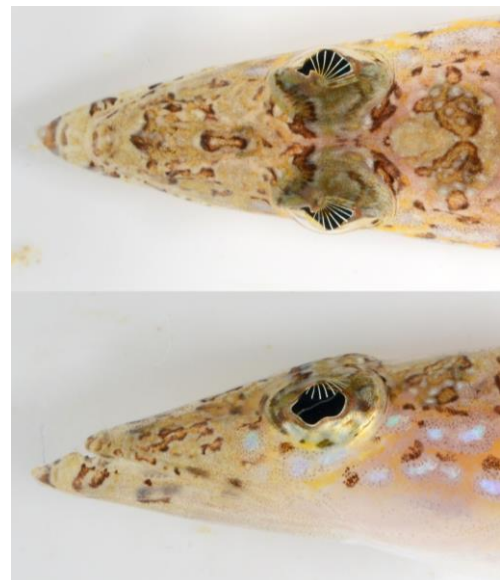


Fig. 2. Close up of head, with dorsal (top) and lateral views. Photographs by Tan Heok Hui