

## Giant grouper at Semakau

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**Subject:** Giant grouper, *Epinephelus lanceolatus* (Teleostei: Serranidae).

**Subject identified by:** Kelvin K. P. Lim.

**Location, date and time:** Singapore Strait, Semakau Landfill; 23 August 2017; around 0655 hrs.

**Habitat:** Marine. Intertidal reef flat at low tide.

**Observers:** Neo Mei Lin, Lisa Lim & Teo Say Chong.

**Observation:** An adult example of about 100 cm total length was found in a wire cage trap (bu-bu) and half-exposed to the air (see accompanying photographs showing the dorso-lateral and frontal profiles of the fish). As the specimen was still alive when encountered, the observers released it back into the sea.

**Remarks:** Although the giant grouper is native to Singapore waters (Wang & Lim, 2011: 274), imported stocks are also reared commercially in floating fish farms to supply restaurants (personal communication with K. K. P. Lim and Tan Heok Hui). Therefore, the origin of the featured individual seems uncertain. The ‘Sabah grouper’, an artificial hybrid of this species and the tiger grouper (*Epinephelus fuscoguttatus*) has been recorded in the wild state in Singapore (Cabrera et al., 2015; Tan, 2015). *Epinephelus lanceolatus* is known to grow to 2.7 m total length, is widely distributed from the Red Sea and East Africa eastwards to the Western Pacific, and is the largest species of grouper in that region. Wild stocks of this highly esteemed food fish are believed to be severely overfished (Allen & Erdmann, 2012: 274).



Photographs by Neo Mei Lin

**References:**

- Allen, G. R. & M. V. Erdmann, 2012. *Reef Fishes of the East Indies. Volume I*. Tropical Reef Research, Perth, Australia. xiii + 424 pp.
- Cabrera, B., D. Ong & Y. Siti Maryam, 2015. Probable breeding pair of grouper. *Singapore Biodiversity Records*. 2015: 154-155.
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- Wang L. K. & K. K. P. Lim, 2011. Groupers. Family Serranidae. 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, National University of Singapore. p. 334.