A cheek-lined Maori-wrasse in the Singapore Strait

Daisuke Taira
d.taira@u.nus.edu

Subject: Cheek-lined Maori-wrasse, *Oxycheilinus digramma* (Teleostei: Labridae).

Subject identified by: Daisuke Taira.

Location, date and time: Singapore Strait off western Pulau Hantu; 16 April 2018; at around 1100 hrs.

Habitat: Marine. Along sloping riprap seawall, at around one metre depth.

Observer: Daisuke Taira

Observation: One example of about 20 cm was recorded on a video footage by a 360 degree camera (see attached pictures). It was swimming about just above granite boulders during high tide.

Remarks: The cheek-lined Maori-wrasse is distinguished from its close relatives by its slender head and fine diagonal lines on the lower cheek and gill cover. It grows up to 30 cm and inhabits coral reefs down to 60 m depth, and is widely distributed from the Red Sea and East Africa through Indonesia, to Australia, Micronesia and Samoa, and north to the Ryukyu Islands (Allen & Erdmann, 2012: 704).

*Oxycheilinus digramma* was recorded from Singapore based on a specimen obtained at the fish market (Tweedie, 1940: 75 as *Cheilinus diagrammus*) which may or may not have originated from Singapore waters. The present observation thus constitutes a confirmation of the species’ occurrence in Singapore.

References:

Note: This sighting was recorded as part of the project ‘Ecological engineering Singapore’s seawall to enhance biodiversity’ (MSRDP-P05) funded by Singapore’s National Research Foundation (R-154-000-566-490).