

## A cheek-lined Maori-wrasse in the Singapore Strait

Daisuke Taira

[d.taira@u.nus.edu](mailto:d.taira@u.nus.edu)

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

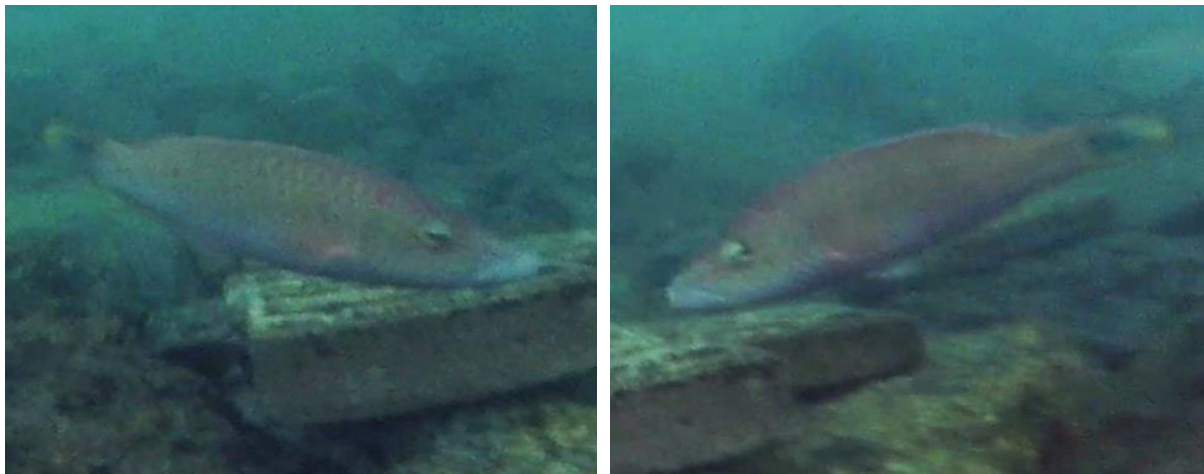
**Subject identified by:** Daisuke Taira.

**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.



Views of the lateral aspects of the fish as it was darting about near the seawall. Images extracted from video footage recorded by Daisuke Taira

**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:

- Allen, G. R. & M. V. Erdmann, 2012. *Reef Fishes of the East Indies. Volume II*. Tropical Reef Research, Perth, Australia. pp. 425-856.
- Tweedie, M. W. F., 1940. Additions to the collection of fishes in the Raffles Museum. *Bulletin of the Raffles Museum, Singapore*. 16: 68-82.

**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).