

A cobia in the Singapore Strait

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Subject: Cobia, *Rachycentron canadum* (Teleostei: Rachycentridae).

Subject identified by: Daisuke Taira.

Location, date and time: Singapore Strait off western Pulau Hantu; 18 April 2018; at around 1130 hrs.

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

Observer: Daisuke Taira

Observation: One example of about 80 cm total length was recorded on video footage by a 360 degree camera (Garmin Virb 360) in the shallow area near the sloping riprap seawall during a high tide (see attached picture). Apparently the same individual swam past the camera a few times.

Remarks: The generally pelagic cobia attains a maximum known total length of 2 m, and occurs in tropical and subtropical seas throughout much of the world, except the eastern Pacific. The young cobia bears a striking resemblance to the shark sucker (*Echeneis naucrates*), with which it is sympatric, in body shape and colour pattern but lacks the suction disk on top of the head (Allen & Erdmann, 2012: 424). Although native to Singapore, the cobia is commercially reared in cages as food fish (Jaafar et al., 2012: 82; Ng et al., 2015: 319). It is possible that some wild examples are farm escapees.



A view of the lateral aspect of the cobia as it swam past the camera. Image extracted from video footage recorded by Daisuke Taira

References:

- Allen, G. R. & M. V. Erdmann, 2012. *Reef Fishes of the East Indies. Volume I*. Tropical Reef Research, Perth, Australia. xiii + 424 pp.
- Jaafar, Z., D. C. J. Yeo, H. H. Tan & R. M. O’Riordan, 2012. Status of estuarine and marine non-indigenous species in Singapore. *Raffles Bulletin of Zoology*. Supplement No. 25: 79-92.
- Ng H. H., H. H. Tan, K. K. P. Lim, W. B. Ludt & P. Chakrabarty, 2015. Fishes of the eastern Johor Strait. *Raffles Bulletin of Zoology*. Supplement No. 31: 303-337.

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