Subject: Freckled porcupinefish, *Diodon holacanthus* (Teleostei: Tetraodontiformes: Diodontidae).

Subject identified by: Adib Adris.

Location, date and time: Johor Strait, Changi Beach near Changi Ferry Terminal; 23 June 2020; 0610 hrs.

Habitat: Estuarine shore with sandy, soft bottom rich with bivalves.

Observer: Adib Adris.

Observation: An example of about 12 cm total length was seen swimming in very shallow but clear water of around 25 cm depth amid a light drizzle during low spring tide. It was caught and held temporarily in a plastic receptacle for photography (see accompanying picture), and released thereafter.

Remarks: The freckled porcupinefish is similar in general appearance to the black-blotched porcupinefish (*Diodon liturosus*), an example of which was recently recorded at Cyrene Reef (Tan, 2020: 40). It is distinguishable from the latter species by having long erectile spines on the forehead, paler brown blotches without white margins, a pair of brown patches above the ears, and black spots on the dorsum. This species attains a maximum size of 38 cm in total length, and inhabits coral reefs and open sandy areas throughout the world in tropical, subtropical and warm temperate seas (Allen & Erdmann, 2012: 1098 as *Diodon holacanthus*).

Although already recorded in Singapore waters (see Fowler, 1938: 239 as *Diodon holacanthus*), the freckled porcupinefish appears to be locally uncommon.

References: