A striking seastar, *Euretaster insignis*, at Terumbu Hantu

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**Subject:** Striking seastar, *Euretaster insignis* (Echinodermata: Asteroidea: Velatida: Pterasteridae).

**Subject identified by:** Heng Pei Yan.

**Location, date and time:** Singapore Strait, western side of Terumbu Hantu; 18 July 2020; 1710 hrs.

**Habitat:** Marine. Coral reef, on coral rubble, at 14.5 m depth.

**Observer:** Heng Pei Yan.

**Observation:** During a leisure dive, one example (Fig. 1-3) with an approximate diameter of 13 cm, was spotted on the seabed at a depth of 14.5 m. When the seastar was first spotted, its open central orifice was expanding and contracting (Fig. 1), but no visible particles were expelled from the animal.

**Remarks:** This distinctively marked seastar is regarded as locally ‘endangered’ in Singapore (Lane, 2008: 135) where specimens have been reported from the Ayer Chawan Islands (now Jurong Island), Sultan Shoal and around Semakau (VandenSpiegel et. al., 1998: 435; Lane & Vandenspiegel, 2003: 72-73; Ng, 2012: 85). It is said to be ‘previously common on Labrador Beach but now rarely seen’ (Lane, 2008: 135). The extent and intensity of the red net-like markings appear to vary between individuals (compare featured subject with images in VandenSpiegel et al., 1998: 464, Pl. II, fig. 3; Lane & Vandenspiegel, 2003: 72; Ng, 2012: 85).

**References:**


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**Fig. 1.** Dorsal surface of *Euretaster insignis*, in situ, showing the animal expelling water out of its open central orifice.

Photograph by Heng Pei Yan
Fig. 2. Dorsal surface of *Euretaster insignis*, in-situ.

Fig. 3. Ventral surface of *Euretaster insignis*, in-situ.

Photographs by Heng Pei Yan