

Black-blotched porcupinefish at Cyrene Reef

Yong How Jonathan Tan

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Subject: Black-blotched porcupinefish, *Diodon liturosus* (Teleostei: Tetraodontiformes: Diodontidae).

Subject identified by: Zeehan Jaafar.

Location, date and time: Singapore Strait at Cyrene Reef; 9 February 2020; 1752 hrs.

Habitat: Marine. Coral reef. On the reef flat at low tide.

Observers: Yong How Jonathan Tan, Kok Sheng Loh and Ria Tan.

Observation: A black-blotched porcupinefish of about 20 cm total length was found trapped but still alive in an abandoned bubu (wire cage trap) together with a yellowtail pufferfish (*Arothron immaculatus*), a blue-spotted fantail ray (*Taeniura lymma*) and a dead copperband butterflyfish (*Chelmon rostratus*). The trapped fish were released and the trap disabled by the observers. The accompanying picture shows the porcupinefish, the pufferfish and the fantail ray inside the bubu.



Dorsal view of porcupinefish (bottom middle) with yellowtail puffer (top left) and blue-spotted fantail ray (top right) caught in a fish trap. Photographed in-situ by Yong How Jonathan Tan

Remarks: The black-blotched porcupinefish is known to occur in Singapore waters where it seems to be uncommon. It is recognized by the large white-margined dark brown patches on the back and sides, and below each eye (Lim & Low, 2008: 153). This species attains a maximum size of 50 cm total length, and inhabits coral reefs throughout the tropical Indo-west Pacific from the Red Sea and East Africa across Indonesia to Australia, Micronesia and Society Islands and north to Japan (Allen & Erdmann, 2012: 1099).

References:

- Lim KKP & Low JKY (1998) A Guide to Common Marine Fishes of Singapore. Singapore Science Centre. 163 pp.
Allen GR & Erdmann MV (2012) Reef Fishes of the East Indies. Tropical Reef Research, Perth, Australia. xiii + 1-424 (Vol. 1), 425-856 (Vol. 2), 857-1292 (Vol. 3).