

## Spotted eagle rays at Sentosa

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**Subjects:** Spotted eagle ray, *Aetobatus ocellatus* (Chondrichthyes: Myliobatiformes: Myliobatidae).

**Subjects identified by:** Tan Heok Hui.

**Location, date and time:** Sentosa Island, Palawan Beach; 1 August 2017 between 1300 and 1500 hrs, 27 August 2019 at 1011 hrs and 17 September 2019 at 1520 hrs.

**Habitat:** Marine. Partially enclosed artificial lagoon with open sand and silt substrates.

**Observer:** Ahmad Lutfi bin Saimin.

**Observations:** Solitary individuals of around 50 cm disc width were sighted in the lagoon on three separate occasions. From the configuration of white markings on the dorsal surface, the sightings are of different individuals. The first was videographed underwater on 1 August 2017 while the observer was snorkeling (Fig. 1). The two sightings in 2020 were recorded on video at the surface from a floating bridge connecting the beach to a rocky islet (Fig. 2 & 3). Both rays were swimming in shallow water.

**Remarks:** The spotted eagle ray inhabits coral reef, off beaches, estuaries and sheltered bays. *Aetobatus ocellatus* is widespread in the Indian Ocean and the western and central Pacific; and attains a maximum known disc width of 250 cm (Allen & Erdmann, 2012: 66). The three individuals recorded here thus appear to be juveniles. This species is not frequently seen in Singapore. Apart from the three reported here, there are recent records from Tanah Merah (Tan & Lim, 2014; Tan, 2020; as *Aetobatus mula*) and Labrador Beach (Tan, 2020 as *Aetobatus mula*). In August 2020, a 15 kg specimen was landed, apparently at East Coast Park (Zuraimy, 2020).

### References:

- Allen GR & Erdmann MV (2012) Reef Fishes of the East Indies. Tropical Reef Research, Perth, Australia. pp. xiii + 1-424 (Vol. 1), 425-856 (Vol. 2), 857-1292 (Vol. 3).
- Tan R (2020) Wild fact sheets. White-spotted eagle ray. [Accessed on 17 November 2020] <http://www.wildsingapore.com/wildfacts/vertebrates/fish/myliobatidae/narinari.htm>.
- Tan R & Lim KKP (2014) White-spotted eagle ray at Tanah Merah. Singapore Biodiversity Records, 2014: 189.
- Zuraimy A (2020) Stingray (Spotted Eagle Ray) 15 kg caught Singapore Beach 8<sup>th</sup> August 2020. Video at [youtube.com/watch?v=F9OCL\\_hzpF4](https://youtube.com/watch?v=F9OCL_hzpF4)



Fig. 1. Dated 1 August 2017



Fig. 2. Dated 27 August 2019.



Fig. 3. Dated 17 Sep 2019.

Fig. 1-3. Dorsal views of three different eagle rays observed at Palawan Beach, Sentosa Island. Screenshots from videos recorded by Ahmad Lutfi bin Saimin