

## Biodiversity Record: New Singapore record of the mandarin dragonet, *Synchiropus splendidus*

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**Subjects:** Mandarin dragonet, *Synchiropus splendidus* (Teleostei: Callionymidae).

**Subjects identified by:** Venus Tan.

**Location, date and time:** Singapore Strait, Sentosa Island, One°15 Marina; 22 April 2022; around 1730 hrs.

**Habitat:** Marine. On seabed along perimeter rock bund of marina, with substrate of silty sand and rocks, under floating pontoons at around 4 m depth.

**Observer:** Venus Tan.

**Observation:** Two mandarin dragonets, each of approximately 6 cm total length, were observed taking refuge between rocks (Fig. 1).

**Remarks:** The present observation represents the first record of *Synchiropus splendidus* in Singapore (see Ng, 2012). This ornate and colourful fish inhabits sheltered coastal reefs and lagoons in the western Pacific from the Ryukyu Islands and the Philippines south to Borneo and Java, New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Caroline Islands, New Caledonia, and northern Australia (Allen & Erdmann, 2012: 854). Singapore does not appear to be within its known range, but from the elusive behaviour exhibited by the featured subjects, this species could have been overlooked by recreational divers there. The mandarin dragonet is a well-known and popular aquarium fish (Sadovy et al., 2001; personal observations). Thus, it seems more likely that the featured two individuals were released by aquarium hobbyists.

### Literature cited:

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).

Ng HH (2012) The dragonets of Singapore (Actinopterygii: Perciformes: Callionymidae). Nature in Singapore, 5: 27–38.

Sadovy Y, Mitcheson G & Rasotto MB (2001) Early development of the mandarin fish, *Synchiropus splendidus* (Callionymidae), with notes on its fishery and potential for culture. Aquarium Sciences and Conservation, 3(4): 253–263.

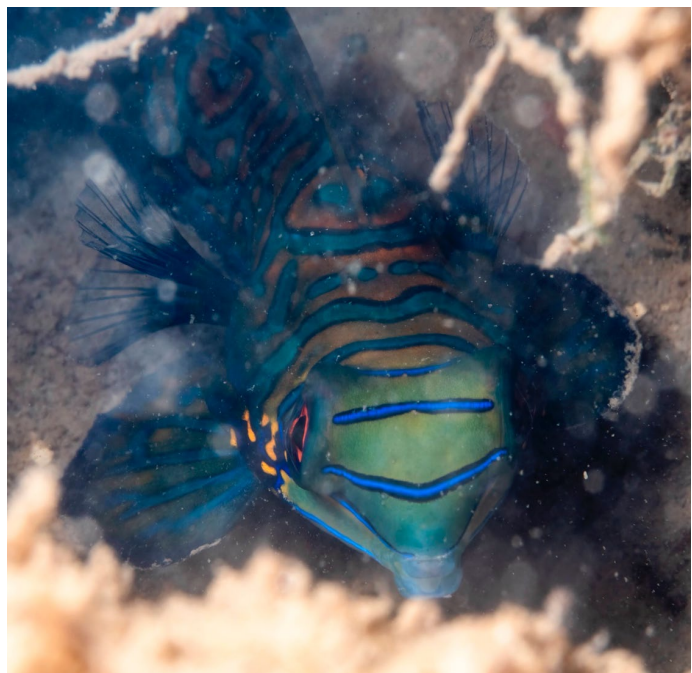


Fig. 1. Dorso-frontal view of one of the mandarin dragonets at the marina, in-situ. (Photograph by: Venus Tan)