

Biodiversity Record: Spotted porcupinefish at Sentosa

Tan Heok Hui* & Tammy Lim

Lee Kong Chian Natural History Museum, National University of Singapore, Singapore 117377;

Email: nhmthh@nus.edu.sg (*corresponding author)

Recommended citation. Tan HH & Lim T (2022) Biodiversity Record: Spotted porcupinefish at Sentosa. Nature in Singapore, 15: e2022078. DOI: 10.26107/NIS-2022-0078

Subject: Spotted porcupinefish, *Diodon hystrix* (Teleostei: Tetraodontiformes: Diodontidae).

Subjects identified by: Kelvin K. P. Lim.

Location, date and time: Sentosa Island, Tanjung Rimau; 18 June 2022; around 0720 hrs.

Habitat: Marine. On coral reef flat exposed at low tide.

Observer: Tammy Lim.



Fig. 1. Side view of dead porcupinefish. Fig. 2. Dorsal view. Fig. 3. Ventral view with small carrion flies scattered on the fish's underside. (Photographs by: Tammy Lim)

Observation: A dead individual of about 35 cm total length was found exposed on the rocks during low tide (Figs. 1–3). The carcass was foul smelling and attracted many flies (Fig. 3).

Remarks: *Diodon hystrix* is one of four species of porcupinefishes known to occur in Singapore waters (see Fowler, 1938; Adib, 2020; Tan, 2020; Tan & Patch, 2021). It is distinguished from the other local species of porcupinefishes in having long, movable spines; small black spots over the dorsal surface of its head and body, without dark blotches or bars. It is also the largest among them, growing to over 70 cm in total length (see Allen, 2020).

It is possible that the featured individual had been dead for more than a day, and it is likely to have died in Singapore waters. *Diodon hystrix* was first reported in Singapore in 1904 (Duncker, 1904), and the specimen here seems to be the first confirmed record in the country for over a century.

Literature cited:

- Adib A (2020b) A freckled porcupinefish at Changi. Singapore Biodiversity Records, 2020: 117.
Allen GR (2020) A Field Guide to Tropical Reef Fishes of the Indo-Pacific. Tuttle Publishing, Tokyo, 315 pp.
Duncker G (1904) Die fische der malayischen Halbinsel. Mitteilungen aus dem Naturhistorischen Museum in Hamburg, 21: 135–207, 2 pls.
Fowler HW (1938) A list of the fishes known from Malaya. Fisheries Bulletin, Singapore, 1: 1–268.
Tan YHJ (2020) Black-blotched porcupinefish at Cyrene Reef. Singapore Biodiversity Records, 2020: 40.
Tan HH & Patch JD (2021) Biodiversity Record: An orbicular burrfish, *Cylichthys orbicularis*, at Sentosa. Nature in Singapore, 14: e2021079.