

Biodiversity Record: Crosseyed cardinalfish, *Fowleria aurita*, in Singapore

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Subject: Crosseyed cardinalfish, *Fowleria aurita* (Teleostei: Kurtiformes: Apogonidae).

Subject identified by: Jiayuan Lin.

Location, date and time: Singapore Island, seawall between Marina South Pier and Marina Cruise Centre, 10 July 2022, around 2103 hrs.

Habitat: Marine. Rocky reef edge around 2 m depth, in hole between rocks.

Observer: Jiayuan Lin.

Observation: One individual of around 10 cm total length (Fig. 1) was caught along the seawall during a high, outgoing tide. It was landed by hook and line, using a small hook baited with tiger prawn (*Penaeus monodon*) meat. The fish took the bait around two minutes after it was lowered into a hole between rocks. The fish was released after photography.



Fig. 1. *Fowleria aurita* caught at Marina South Pier. (Photograph by Jiayuan Lin)

Remarks: The cross-eyed cardinalfish previously was recorded from Singapore by Weber & de Beaufort (1929) as *Apogon auritus*, and subsequently by Herre & Myers (1937) and Tweedie (1940) as *Apogonichthys auritus*. After having examined some specimens from Singapore, Ng & Lim (2014) re-identified these previous records as *Fowleria variegata*, the variegated cardinalfish, and presumed that all previous ‘*Apogon/Apogonichthys auritus*’ recorded from Singapore were *Fowleria variegata*. Since then, the variegated cardinalfish has also been reported from Singapore by Tan & Lim (2014) and Ng (2018).

Fowleria aurita is distinguished from *Fowleria variegata* by its uniformly brown body and the lack of dark spots on the fins and body (see Kuiter & Kozawa, 2019). There still exists the possibility that some of the early records may have been correctly identified, but this cannot be ascertained without examining the original material. Therefore, the featured specimen here represents the first confirmed example of *Fowleria aurita* in the country.

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