

## Biodiversity Record: Fan-bellied filefish obtained on baited hook in the Johor Strait

Daniel Zhi Yi Choong\* & Soon Keong Wee

Email: [dzy.choong@gmail.com](mailto:dzy.choong@gmail.com) (\*corresponding author), [wees0021@e.ntu.edu.sg](mailto:wees0021@e.ntu.edu.sg)

**Recommended citation.** Choong DZY & Wee SK (2023) Biodiversity Record: Fan-bellied filefish obtained on baited hook in the Johor Strait. Nature in Singapore, 16: e2023017. DOI: 10.26107/NIS-2023-0017

---

**Subject:** Fan-bellied filefish, *Monacanthus chinensis* (Teleostei: Tetraodontiformes: Monacanthidae).

**Subject identified by:** Daniel Zhi Yi Choong and Soon Keong Wee.

**Location, date and time:** Johor Strait between Singapore Island and Pulau Tekong; 8 April 2022; around 1600 hrs.

**Habitat:** Estuarine. Shallow coastal waters over sand and coral rubble.

**Observer:** Daniel Zhi Yi Choong.

**Observation:** An example of about 23 cm total length was caught with rod and reel from an approximate depth of 10 m off a boat. It took a hook baited with fresh prawn meat during clear weather in an area of coral rubble. The fish was photographed (Fig. 1) while temporarily landed on the boat, before being safely released.

**Remarks:** *Monacanthus chinensis* is distributed in coastal waters of the Indo-Pacific region from tropical Australia north through Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines to China and the Ryukyu Islands (Allen & Erdmann, 2012). This is a common species around Singapore in areas of seagrass and reef (Lim & Low, 1998), including the eastern Johor Strait (Ng et al., 2015) where the featured example was obtained. The authors have previously not caught this species on baited hook, and they believe that its small mouth does not enable it to be easily taken by anglers.



Fig. 1. Lateral view of the fan-bellied filefish that was landed. Note its small mouth. (Photograph by: Daniel Zhi Yi Choong).

### Literature cited:

- Allen GR & Erdmann MV (2012) Reef Fishes of the East Indies. Tropical Reef Research, Perth, Australia, lii + 1–424pp. (Vol. 1), 425–856pp. (Vol. 2), 857–1292 pp. (Vol. 3).
- Lim KKP & Low JKY (1998) A Guide to Common Marine Fishes of Singapore. Singapore Science Centre, 150 pp.
- Ng HH, Tan HH, Lim KKP, Luidt WB & Chakrabarty P (2015) Fishes of the eastern Johor Strait. Raffles Bulletin of Zoology, Supplement No. 31: 303–337.