

Biodiversity Record: Unlikely record of the butterflyfish, *Chaetodon decussatus*, from Singapore

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Subject: Indian vagabond butterflyfish, *Chaetodon decussatus* (Teleostei: Acanthuriformes: Chaetodontidae).

Subject identified by: Kelvin K. P. Lim.

Location and date: Singapore, obtained from a fish market by Michael Tweedie in 1932.

Habitat: Marine.

Observer: Kelvin K. P. Lim. Based on examination of a specimen at the Zoological Reference Collection (ZRC) of the Lee Kong Chian Natural History Museum, at the National University of Singapore. It is one of a group of specimens that used to belong to the Raffles Museum, and the National Museum of Singapore. These were transferred to the National University of Singapore in the 1970s, and are now part of the ZRC (see Tan, 2014).



Fig. 1. Lateral view of the preserved *Chaetodon decussatus* [ZRC 2529].

Observation: One preserved example (Fig. 1) of 12.6 cm standard length (tip of snout to caudal base), was accessioned as ZRC 2529.

Remarks: The featured specimen of *Chaetodon decussatus* was misidentified by Tweedie (1936) as *Anisochaetodon (Linophora) vagabundus*. (= *Chaetodon vagabundus*). *Chaetodon decussatus* is similar in appearance to *Chaetodon vagabundus* (the vagabond butterflyfish) but differs in having a black zone (instead of a yellow and black zone) across the rear part of its dorsal fin and body (Allen & Erdmann, 2012). The distribution of *Chaetodon decussatus* seems to be restricted to the Indian Ocean, ranging from the coasts of Yemen, Oman, Pakistan, India, Sri Lanka, Maldives, the Andaman Sea, southern Indonesia, to Christmas Island and Timor (Allen & Erdmann, 2012). Its natural presence in Singapore and its immediate surroundings seems highly unlikely.

Although there appears to be no record, *Chaetodon vagabundus* is expected to occur in Singapore waters. This species has a wider distribution, ranging from East Africa eastwards through Indonesia to the Line and Tuamotu Islands, and Australia northwards to Japan and the Ogasawara Islands (Allen & Erdmann, 2012).

Literature cited:

Allen GR & Erdmann MV (2012) Reef Fishes of the East Indies, Vol. II. Tropical Reef Research, Perth, Australia, pp. 425–856.

Tan KYL (2014) Of Whales and Dinosaurs. The Story of Singapore's Natural History Museum. NUS Press, Singapore, xix + 266 pp.

Tweedie MWF (1936) A list of the fishes in the collection of the Raffles Museum. Bulletin of the Raffles Museum, Singapore, 12: 16–28.