

## Biodiversity Record: A record of the filefish, *Rudarius excelsus*, in Singapore

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**Subject:** Diamond filefish, *Rudarius excelsus* (Teleostei: Tetraodontiformes: Monacanthidae).

**Subject identified by:** Kelvin K. P. Lim and Zeehan Jaafar.

**Location, date and time:** Johor Strait at Changi Beach; 3 August 2019; morning.

**Habitat:** Estuarine. Intertidal shore with sand and silt substrates, and seagrass.

**Observers:** Lee Bee Yan and company.

**Observation:** A single specimen of 16.7 mm standard length (22.2 mm total length) was identified from among numerous specimens of juvenile fan-bellied filefish (*Monacanthus chinensis*). It has been preserved and deposited as a reference specimen under the catalogue number ZRC 57375, in the Zoological Reference Collection of the Lee Kong Chian Natural History Museum, at the National University of Singapore.

**Remarks:** This seems to be the first verified record of *Rudarius excelsus* in Singapore (Wang & Lim, 2011). Attaining a total length of 25 mm, this tiny species, which varies in colour from green to black, has been recorded in the western Pacific area from Australia (Queensland), New Guinea (Milne Bay), Borneo (Sabah) and the Ryukyu Islands (Allen & Erdmann, 2012). The present record appears to have extended its range considerably westward. The species is likely to be more widely distributed, but could have been overlooked due to its small size, cryptic appearance and apparent rarity.



Fig. 1. Lateral view of *Rudarius excelsus* [ZRC 57375] (Photograph by: Kelvin K. P. Lim).

A small filefish photographed in Singapore and identified as *Rudarius excelsus* is featured in Lee (2003: 120). However, the example in the picture has a distinctively concave snout, and appears to be a juvenile fan-bellied filefish, *Monacanthus chinensis*. The lateral profile of the head of *Rudarius excelsus* is rather straight in comparison (see Fig. 1).

**Acknowledgement:** This record is a result of the Singapore Marine Fish Expedition held in August 2019.

### Literature cited:

Allen GR & Erdmann MV (2012) Reef Fishes of the East Indies. Vol. 3. Tropical Reef Research, Perth, Australia, pp. 857–1292.

Lee K (ed.) (2003) Singapore Waters. Unveiling our Seas. Marine Conservation Group, Nature Society (Singapore), Singapore, 145 pp.

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