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Biodiversity Record: Confirmed occurrence of the sea catfish, *Plicofollis tonggol*, in Singapore

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Subject: Roughback sea catfish, *Plicofollis tonggol* (Teleostei: Siluriformes: Ariidae).

Subject identified by: Aidan Raphael Keh and Jiayuan Lin.

Location, date and time: Singapore Strait, Bedok Jetty; 13 March 2026; around 1938 hrs.

Habitat: Marine. Coastal sea over silty bottom with sparse coral rubble, at around 5 m depth.

Observers: Aidan Raphael Keh and Jiayuan Lin.

Fig 1. Ex-situ lateral view of *Plicofollis tonggol* in life. (Photograph by: Aidan Raphael Keh).

Observation: An example of 19.2 cm standard length (measured from tip of snout to base of caudal fin) (Fig. 1) was caught on hook and line, using cut tamban (*Sardinella fimbriata*) as bait. The specimen was donated to the Zoological Reference Collection, of the Lee Kong Chian Natural History Museum, at the National University of Singapore, and assigned the accession number ZRC 69889.

Remarks: Although this species has been recorded from Singapore in the past as *Ariodes tonggol* (see Bleeker, 1859–1860; Bleeker, 1861), it was not included in the last compilation of ariid diversity in Singapore (Ng, 2012, as *Plicofollis crossocheilus*). Due to the apparent absence of specimens for verification, the early records were suspected to be based on misidentification of congeners such as *Plicofollis argyropleuron* (see Ng, 2012). The featured subject confirms the occurrence of *Plicofollis tonggol* in Singapore.

Plicofollis tonggol is characterised by the following morphological features: 1) exposed head shield rugose to granular, striate over the supraoccipital process, sides and apex of supraoccipital process convex, and process more oblong than triangular (see Fig 2), 2) snout conical, 3) granular teeth in two patches on each side of palate, longitudinally arranged, anterior patches oval, while posterior patches broadly oval or pear-shaped, their long axes running obliquely along palate so that patches tend to converge distally (see Fig 3), palatal teeth low, rounded and globular, some bluntly conical, much fewer teeth in anterior patch than in posterior upper tooth patches (Kailola, 1999, as "*Arius*" *crossocheilus*). It is possible that sightings of this species prior to this observation have been overlooked due to morphological similarities with its congeners.

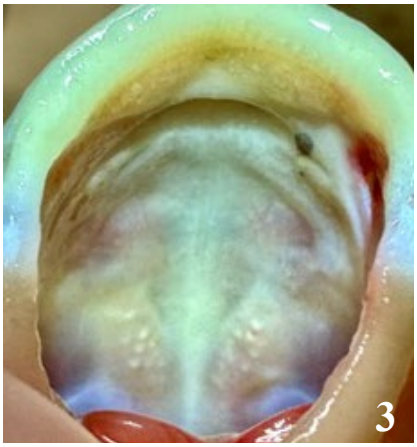

Fig. 2. Dorsal view of the head of the subject with snout pointing to the left. Fig. 3. Roof of the subject's mouth showing the anterior and posterior tooth patches. (Photographs by: Aidan Raphael Keh).

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