

Biodiversity Record: Blackspot shark carcass at East Coast Park

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Subject: Blackspot shark, *Carcharhinus sealei* (Elasmobranchii: Carcharhiniformes: Carcharhinidae).

Subject identified by: Maryam Saleel Kolakkodan.

Location, date and time: Singapore Island/Singapore Strait, East Coast Park, Area H; 5 July 2022; around 0947 hrs.

Habitat: Marine. Beach with sand substrate.

Observers: Heng Li Seng and Kathy Tingting Xu.

Observation: A female example of 42 cm total length was found dead and stranded on the beach (Fig. 1). The carcass seemed to be physically intact and in good condition with no puncture marks or open wounds. The cause of death could not be determined.



Fig. 1. In-situ lateral view of the female blackspot shark carcass at East Coast Park. (Photograph by: Heng Li Seng).

Remarks: *Carcharhinus sealei* is a small shark species that occurs throughout the Central Indo-Pacific (Dulvy et al., 2021). It is distinguished from other inshore congeners by a diffused black blotch that covers most of the surface area of the second dorsal fin (White, 2012). Other morphological characters that define this species include a brownish grey dorsal body surface, rounded snout, and a very weak or absent inter-dorsal ridge (White, 2012; Ebert et al., 2021).

In Singapore, *Carcharhinus sealei* was last recorded in the eastern Johor Strait in July 2012 (Chim & Lim, 2014; Ng et al., 2015) and is locally regarded as Critically Endangered (Jaafar et al., 2024). Throughout its range, the primary threat to this shark is the incidental capture in multispecies fisheries (Dulvy et al., 2021). This species grows at a moderately rapid rate ($k\text{-value} = 0.37 \text{ year}^{-1}$), reaches maturity at a later age (6.1 years), and bears small litter sizes (2 pups); making it vulnerable to persistent exploitation (Clark-Shen et al., 2024).

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