

A shortsnout boxfish, *Ostracion rhinorhynchus* in the Singapore Strait

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Subject: Shortsnout boxfish, *Ostracion rhinorhynchus* (Teleostei: Tetraodontiformes: Ostraciidae).

Subject identified by: Sam Shu Qin.

Location, date and time: Singapore Strait off Pulau Seringat; 24 May 2018; 1320-1335 hrs.

Habitat: Marine. Subtidal zone of seawalls of large granite boulders, extending to 3-4 m depth, followed by sandy substrates.

Observers: Sam Shu Qin, with Ng Juat Ying, Toh Chay Hoon, Lisa Lim May Fung, Stephen Beng Sui-Leung & Marissa Mercado.

Observation: An example of about 10 cm total length was found with a fan-bellied filefish (*Monacanthus chinensis*) in a wire cage trap (bubu) at about 3 m depth.

Remarks: This species was last recorded from Singapore by Herre & Myers (1937: 49 as *Ostracion rhinorhynchus*) who mention a small example of 85 mm standard length taken from an unknown location. The shortsnout boxfish is distinguished from the locally common nasal boxfish (*Ostracion nasus*) (see Lim & Low, 2002: 153 as 'shortnose boxfish' *Rhynchostracion nasus*) by having a larger conical protruberance above its mouth (versus a smaller knob) and having black spots on the head and body (versus no black spots) (Allen & Erdmann, 2012: 1083-1084).

References:

- Allen, G. R. & M. V. Erdmann, 2012. *Reef Fishes of the East Indies. Volume III*. Tropical Reef Research, Perth, Australia. pp. 856-1292.
- Herre, A. W. C. T. & G. S. Myers, 1937. A contribution to the ichthyology of the Malay Peninsula. *Bulletin of the Raffles Museum, Singapore*. 13: 5-75.
- Lim, K. K. P. & J. K. Y. Low, 2002. *A Guide to Common Marine Fishes of Singapore*. Revised edition. Singapore Science Centre. 163 pp.



Shortsnout boxfish (left) and fan-bellied filefish (right) in the cage trap. Photograph by Sam Shu Qin