

Talang queenfish off Lazarus Island

Subjects: Talang queenfish, *Scomberoides commersonianus* (Teleostei: Carangidae).

Subject identified by: Contributor.

Location, date and time: Singapore Strait, off western side of Lazarus Island; 23 May 2017; 1450 hrs.

Habitat: Marine. Coral reef and granite rock bunds.

Observers: Contributor.

Observation: A large example of about one metre total length was encountered swimming in mid-water at about 3 m depth (see accompanying picture). It had a small shark-sucker (*Echeneis naucrates*) attached to the left side of its head above the pectoral fin.

Remarks: The talang queenfish seems to be rarely photographed alive in-situ in Singapore waters. This predatory fish inhabits coastal waters and estuaries (Lim & Low, 2002: 103) and is sought after by anglers as a game fish. It is sometimes fished for food, but is not eaten by many in the Chinese community for the five dark blotches on its side are said to be the finger prints of Tuah Peh Kong, a Taoist deity. The people who avoid eating this fish believe that this deity has reserved the fish for himself (Tham, 1973: 213; Wang & Lim, 2011).

References:

- Lim, K. K. P. & J. K. Y. Low, 2002. *A Guide to Common Marine Fishes of Singapore*. Revised edition. Singapore Science Centre. 163 pp.
- Tham A. K., 1973. Sea fish. In: Chuang S. H. (ed.). *Animal Life and Nature in Singapore*. Singapore University Press. pp.202-226.
- Wang L. K. & K. K. P. Lim, 2011. Queenfish *Scomberoides* spp. In: Ng, P. K. L., R. T. Corlett & H. T. W. Tan (eds.). *Singapore Biodiversity. An Encyclopedia of the Natural Environment and Sustainable Development*. Editions Didier Millet in association with the Raffles Museum of Biodiversity Research, Singapore. p. 425.



Lateral view of large Talang queenfish with a small shark-sucker attached to its head above the pectoral fin. Photograph by Sim Wan Ting

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