

## Starry triggerfish from Sentosa

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**Subject:** Starry triggerfish, *Abalistes stellatus* (Teleostei: Tetraodontiformes: Balistidae).

**Subject identified by:** Tan Heok Hui.

**Location and date:** Singapore Strait, off Sentosa Island; 11 October 2013.

**Habitat:** Marine. In a bay partly surrounded by rock bund, with silty substrate.

**Observer:** Lionel Ng.

**Observation:** One example of 25.5 cm standard length (from snout tip to base of caudal fin) was found caught in a wire cage fish trap (bubu). This specimen is illustrated below.

**Remarks:** The starry triggerfish inhabits environments with muddy or fine silt-sand substrates, occasionally near reefs at depths of over 4 m. It is solitary and occurs throughout the Indo-West Pacific, from the Red Sea and East Africa, across Indonesia to northern Australia and Fiji, northwards to Japan (Allen & Erdmann, 2012: 1060).

Locally, this fish occurs in the Singapore Strait where it has been recorded from Pulau Hantu (Lim & Low, 1998: 149). It is used as a food fish, and occasionally offered for sale in wet markets (personal observations).

### References:

- Allen, G. R. & M. V. Erdmann, 2012. *Reef Fishes of the East Indies. Volume III*. Tropical Reef Research, Perth, Australia. pp. 857-1292.
- Lim, K. K. P. & J. K. Y. Low, 1998. *A Guide to Common Marine fishes of Singapore*. Singapore Science Centre. 163 pp.



Lateral view of starry triggerfish from Sentosa. Photograph by Tan Heok Hui