

Biodiversity Record: Occurrence of the sailfin tang, *Zebrasoma velifer*, in Singapore

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Recommended citation. Lim KKP & Jaafar Z (2023) Biodiversity Record: Occurrence of the sailfin tang, *Zebrasoma velifer*, in Singapore. Nature in Singapore, 16: e2023107. DOI: 10.26107/NIS-2023-0107

Subject: Pacific sailfin tang, *Zebrasoma velifer* (Teleostei: Acanthuriformes: Acanthuridae).

Subject identified by: Zeehan Jaafar and Kelvin K. P. Lim.

Location, date and time: Singapore Strait off Pulau Hantu (1°13.602'N 103°45.157'E); 11 August 2019; in the daytime.

Habitat: Marine. Coral reef, next to a jetty.

Observers: Tan Heok Hui and others.

Observation: A young example of 57.2 mm standard length (tip of snout to base of caudal fin) was collected during a dive, and preserved as a voucher specimen (ZRC 58331) in the Zoological Reference Collection, of the Lee Kong Chian Natural History Museum, at the National University of Singapore.

Remarks: This appears to be the first record of the surgeonfish genus *Zebrasoma* in Singapore waters (see Fowler, 1938; Wang & Lim, 2011).

Zebrasoma velifer occurs in the western and central Pacific, from the South China Sea eastwards to the Hawaiian and Pitcairn Islands. It is also present at the eastern end of the Indian Ocean along the western coast of Australia. Westwards from the Andaman Sea and western Sumatra, it is replaced by the Indian sailfin tang, *Zebrasoma desjardini*, which is similar in appearance but distinguishable by it having pale spots on the body and caudal fin (Kuitert & Debelius, 2001; Randall, 2001 as *Zebrasoma veliferum*; Allen & Erdmann, 2012).

The apparent rarity of *Zebrasoma velifer* in Singapore could be due to the species not preferring silty reefs and turbid waters, although singletons could occasionally have strayed in from neighbouring areas. Another possibility is that the individual was an abandoned pet. This species is a popular ornamental fish (Michael, 2001 as *Zebrasoma veliferum*) and wild caught individuals are imported from the Philippines and Indonesia for the aquarium trade (personal observations).



Fig. 1. Lateral view of *Zebrasoma velifer*: ZRC 58331 (Photograph by: Rene Ong).

Acknowledgement: This find is a result of the Singapore Marine Fish Expedition held in August 2019.

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