

## Biodiversity Record: An unlikely record of the sweetlips, *Plectorhinchus macrospilus*, from Singapore

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**Subject:** Large-spotted sweetlips, *Plectorhinchus macrospilus* (Teleostei: Acanthuriformes: Haemulidae).

**Subject identified by:** Kelvin K. P. Lim.

**Location and date:** Singapore, obtained from a fish-market by Michael Tweedie in 1932.

**Habitat:** Marine.

**Observer:** Kelvin K. P. Lim. Based on examination of a specimen at the Zoological Reference Collection (ZRC) of the Lee Kong Chian Natural History Museum, at the National University of Singapore. It is one of a group of specimens that used to belong to the Raffles Museum, and the National Museum of Singapore. These, transferred to the National University of Singapore in the 1970s, are now part of the ZRC (see Tan, 2014).

**Observation:** One preserved example (Fig. 1) of 29 cm standard length (tip of snout to caudal base), was accessioned as ZRC 2757.



Fig. 1. Preserved specimen of *Plectorhinchus macrospilus* (ZRC 2757) (Photograph by: Kelvin K. P. Lim).

**Remarks:** The featured specimen was misidentified by Tweedie (1936: 26) as '*Plectorhynchus chaetodonoides*'. *Plectorhinchus macrospilus* is distinguished from the adult form of *Plectorhinchus chaetodonoides* (the harlequin sweetlips) in being more slender (body depth 2.5–2.8 in standard length) and having black stripes on its cheeks and truncate caudal fin. Attaining a maximum known size of 38 cm total length, this species appears to be restricted to the Andaman Sea where it has been recorded around the Andaman Islands, the Similan Islands, and the coasts of Myanmar and western Thailand (Allen & Erdmann, 2012). The natural occurrence of *Plectorhinchus macrospilus* in Singapore seems unlikely, and should be considered doubtful. The specimen ZRC 2757, being acquired at a market, was likely to have been imported.

### Literature cited:

Allen GR & Erdmann MV (2012) Reef Fishes of the East Indies, Vol. II. Tropical Reef Research, Perth, Australia, pp. 425–856.

Tan KYL (2014) Of Whales and Dinosaurs. The Story of Singapore's Natural History Museum. NUS Press, Singapore, xix + 266 pp.

Tweedie MWF (1936) A list of the fishes in the collection of the Raffles Museum. Bulletin of the Raffles Museum, Singapore, 12: 16–28.