

## Rare scythe butterflyfish on display at aquarium museum

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A scythe butterflyfish, a species never before seen in local waters, has been taken in La Jolla Canyon, off La Jolla, and is now on display at the Vaughan Aquarium-Museum at UCSD's Scripps Institution of Oceanography, it was announced today.

This marks the first time the species has been recorded from the California mainland, Donald W. Wilkie, aquarium-museum director, said.

The six-inch, bright yellow specimen has a striking scythe-shaped black marking on its side that gives rise to the common and scientific name, *Chaetodon falcifer*, by which it is known, Wilkie said.

The specimen is displayed in Tank 15, the Farnsworth Bank (Catalina Island) exhibit of the aquarium.

Ronald R. McConnaughey, Scripps marine technician and diver, spotted the specimen, which was caught by the aquarium scientific collector Robert S. Kiwala in some 60 feet of water.

"The only other similar specimen taken in California was collected with a spear at 40 feet off Catalina Island," Wilkie said.

"To our knowledge, our specimen marks only the 10th ever caught and the first of the species ever to be displayed.

"It is a beautiful example of a fish that lives in deep water in the warmer part of its range and can inhabit surface waters at the cooler extremes of its distribution.

"Although most butterflyfishes are tropical, shallow-water species, the scythe butterflyfish belongs to a small group that normally lives in deep water.

"Since it is adapted to a lower temperature range than its surface-dwelling-cousin, it is not completely surprising to find it extending into the warm temperature waters of Southern California where the surface-water temperatures approximate the deep-water temperatures of the tropics."

Wilkie said the discovery of the species is of historical interest.

He said the species was first discovered in 1954 near Guadalupe Island, off Baja California, by Dr. Andreas Rechnitzer, then a student of Dr. Carl L. Hubbs, now professor emeritus of marine biology. The species was named and described by both in 1958.

"In 1965, the species was discovered in abundance at depths of 200 to 300 feet at Cape San Lucas, off the tip of Baja California, by Dr. Richard H. Rosenblatt, curator of fishes at Scripps, as he was diving in the Cousteau diving saucer," Wilkie said.

No other specimens were collected at the Cape until 1967, when, oddly enough, it was Bob Kiwala who captured one at 175 feet as he was skin diving.

"Bob removed the air from the fish's swim bladder with a hypodermic needle and successfully brought it alive to the surface.

"That same year another specimen was discovered and taken dead, in shallow, relatively cold, water in the Galapagos Islands area."

The Scripps Aquarium-Museum is open daily to the public at no charge, from, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.