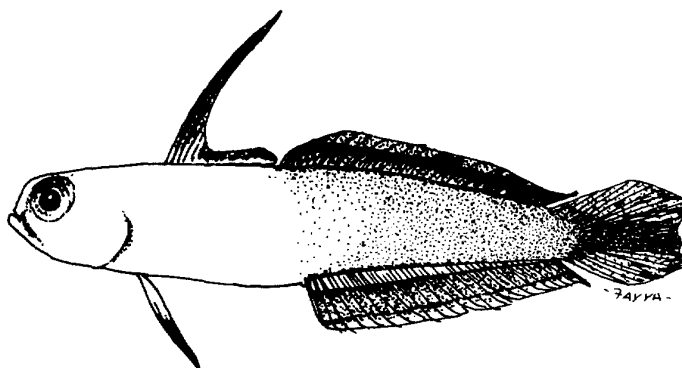


*Nemateleotris decora* Randall and Allen, 1973



**English Name:** Elegant dartfish  
**Local Name:** Fan dhidha funna  
**Size:** Max. 6cm

**Family:** MICRODESMIDAE  
**Order:** Perciformes  
**Specimen:** MRS/0361/91

**Distinctive Characters:** First dorsal fin with 6 spines. Second dorsal fin with I spine and 27-32 rays. Anal fin with I spine and 28-31 rays. Pectoral fin with 20-21 rays. Body depth 4.8-5.7 in standard length. Front of first dorsal fin elongated. Caudal fin emarginate

Colour: Body whitish, shading to deep purple posteriorly. Head whitish except lips, snout, and a broad median dorsal band which are violet. Prolonged anterior part of first dorsal fin orange-red. the leading edge magenta. Median fins coloured like body basally, then mainly orange-red with magenta bands.

**Habitat and Biology:** Found on the reef slope, hovering above burrows, usually at depths between 25-70 m. Does not stray far from its burrow in to which it quickly darts when frightened. May be seen solitary or in pairs. Feeds on zooplankton, especially copepods and crustacean larvae.

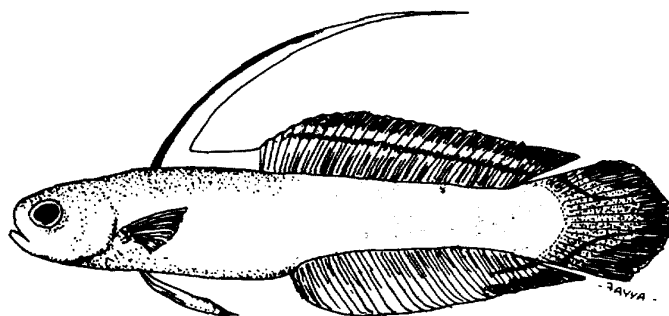
**Distribution:** Maldives to Western Pacific.

Remarks: *Nemateleotris decora* is one of the most remarkably coloured dart fishes in the Maldives. The superb colouration of this fish makes it a popular aquarium fish.

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*Nemateleotris magnifica* Fowler, 1938



English Name: Fire dartfish

**Local Name:** Dhidha funna

Size: Max. 8 cm

Family: MICRODESMIDAE

**Order:** Perciformes

Specimen: MRS/0293/88

**Distinctive Characters:** First dorsal fin with 6 spines. Second dorsal fin with 1 spine and 28-32 rays. Anal fin with 1 spine and 27-30 rays. Pectoral fin with 19-20 rays. Body depth 4.4-4.9 in standard length. Front of first dorsal fin extremely elongated. Caudal fin rounded.

Colour: Body whitish, shading to bright red posteriorly. A magenta streak on top of head. Spinous dorsal whitish, the basal half of leading edge red. Dorsal and anal fins primarily red, suffused with blackish posteriorly and distally. Caudal fin blackish red with two converging narrow dark olive bands.

**Habitat and Biology:** Found on the reef slope, hovering above burrows in sandy patches, at depths between 6 to 60 m. Does not stray far from its burrow in to which it quickly darts when frightened. Usually seen in pairs. Feeds on zooplankton, especially copepods and crustacean larvae.

Distribution: Indo-Pacific.

Remarks: *Nemareleotris magniflca* is found in shallower waters than *N. decora*. *N. magnifica* can be distinguished from *N. decora* by the colour patterns and the length of the elongated first dorsal spine which is much longer in *N. magniflca*. A popular aquarium fish.

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