identifying southeast asian seahorses (*Hippocampus* spp.) common in trade

**Is the seahorse smooth or spiny?**  
Note: If you are not certain, choose the option marked with an *.

- **Smooth***
- **Spiny**

**Are the cheek spines hooked, double, or single?**

- **Hooked**
- **Double**
- **Single***

**Is the nose spine low/absent or high?**

- **Low/absent**
- **High***

**Are the cheek spines single or double?**

- **Single**
- **Double***

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**H. trimaculatus**  
Three spots on back  
Max. height 17cm

**H. mohriki**  
Very long tail  
Short snout  
Max. height 8cm

**H. kelloggi**  
Chunky body rings  
Max. height 28cm

**H. kuda**  
Low/blunt spines  
Max. height 17cm

**H. spinosissimus**  
Single or double cheek spines  
Max. height 17cm

**H. histrix**  
Long snout  
Black tips on spines  
Max. height 17cm

**H. barbouri**  
Striped snout  
Prominent eye spine  
Max. height 15cm

**H. kuda**  
Low/blunt spines  
Max. height 17cm

**H. spinosissimus**  
Single or double cheek spines  
Max. height 17cm

**H. histrix**  
Long snout  
Black tips on spines  
Max. height 17cm

**H. barbouri**  
Striped snout  
Prominent eye spine  
Max. height 15cm

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**Female**  
In females, body does not extend past bottom of dorsal fin. If you are uncertain it is likely male.

**Male**  
Unless marked, all diagrams on this page are male seahorses.

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**measuring seahorses**

- **Trade height**  
  Distance from the bottom of the dorsal fin to the tip of the coronet

- **Standard length**  
  Sum of the head length, trunk length and tail height

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All drawings © Laurence Richardson  
All data from Lourie et al. 2004. A guide to the identification of seahorses. Project Seahorse and TRAFFIC  
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smooth seahorses

- 3 dark spots on body (sometimes)
- Low coronet
- Hook-like cheek spine
- Distinct coronet
- Narrower body than *H. kuda*

spiny seahorses

- Black-tipped, sharp body spines
- Long nose spine
- Single cheek spine
- Double cheek spines
- Striped snout
- Blunt spines

*H. trimaculatus*

*H. mohnikei*

*H. kelloggi*

*H. kuda*

*H. comes*

*H. histrix*

*H. spinosissimus*