

**PARASCOLOPSIS MELANOPHRYS, A NEW SPECIES OF
DWARF MONOCLE BREAM (TELEOSTEI: NEMIPTERIDAE)
FROM THE INDO-MALAYAN ARCHIPELAGO**

Barry C. Russell and P.K. Chin

ABSTRACT. - A new species of dwarf monocle bream, *Parascolopsis melanophrys*, is described from two specimens collected from fish markets in Kupang, West Timor, Indonesia, and Tawau, on the east coast of Sabah, Malaysia. The new species is distinguished from all other species of *Parascolopsis* in having a distinctive black triangular shaped spot above and behind the eye.

INTRODUCTION

Dwarf monocle breams of the genus *Parascolopsis* (family Nemipteridae) are small, bottom-living fishes usually occurring in moderately deep water (to 500 m) on outer shelf and continental slope waters throughout the Indo-West Pacific.

Russell (1990) recognised nine species: *P. aspinosa* (Rao & Rao), from the Western Indian Ocean; *P. boesemani* (Rao & Rao), from India; *P. eriomma* (Jordan & Richardson) and *P. inermis* Schlegel in Temminck & Schlegel, both widespread in the Indo-West Pacific; *P. qantasi* Russell & Gloerfelt-Tarp, from Indonesia; *P. rufomaculatus* Russell from North-western Australia; *P. tanyactis* Russell and *P. tosensis* (Kamohara) both widespread in the Western Pacific; and *P. townsendi* Boulenger, from the Western Indian Ocean. Subsequently two additional species have been described: Russell & Golani (1993) described *P. baranesi*, collected from deepwater trammel nets in the northern Gulf of Elat; and Russell (1995) described *P. capitinis*, collected from St John's Fish Market, Colombo, Sri Lanka.

To this list of species we add an additional species, described herein as new, collected from fish markets in Kupang, West Timor, Indonesia, and Tawau, Sabah, Malaysia.

METHODS AND MATERIALS

Methods of counting and measuring specimens follow Russell & Gloerfelt-Tarp (1984). Lengths of specimens are standard length (SL) unless otherwise indicated, and all measurements are expressed in millimetres rounded to the nearest 0.1 mm. In the description, measurements and counts for the holotype are given first; those for the paratypes, where different from the holotype, are enclosed in parentheses.

Specimens are deposited in the Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin (NTM) and the Fisheries Research Centre, Likas, Kota Kinabalu, Sabah (FRCL).

Parascolopsis melanophrys, new species

(Fig. 1)

Material examined. - Holotype - NTM S.13164-002, 163.5 mm SL, Indonesia, West Timor, Kupang, Pasar Kampung Solor, coll. B.C. Russell, 31 Oct.1992.

Paratype - FRCL 0022, 177.0 mm SL, Malaysia, Sabah, Tawau Market, coll. Tomoyashi Kajiwaru, 1987.

Diagnosis. - A species of *Parascolopsis* with the following combination of characters: head relatively large (2.9-3.0 in SL); pectoral fin rays 17; pectoral fins long, reaching a vertical at anus; pelvic fins moderately long, reaching to or just short of anus; gill rakers on first arch 10; scales on top of head reaching forward to between posterior margin of eye and posterior margin of pupil; suborbital naked; posterior edge of suborbital smooth, with a few denticulations posteriorly and a small spine at upper corner; lower limb of preopercle naked; body pinkish, with broad pale yellow lateral stripe; black triangular-shaped spot on nape above eye.

Description. - Dorsal rays X,9; anal rays III,7; pectoral rays 17; lateral line scales 35 (36); transverse scale rows $3\frac{1}{2} + 13\frac{1}{2}$; gill rakers 10.



Fig. 1. *Parascolopsis melanophrys*, holotype, NTM S.13164-002, 163.5 mm SL.

Body moderately deep, depth 2.8 (2.6) in SL; head 3.0 (2.9) in SL; head length 0.9 in body depth; snout short, rounded, 3.8 (3.6) in head; eye large, 2.7 (2.8) in head; diameter of eye greater than snout length, 0.7 (0.8) in snout; interorbital width 1.7 (1.8) in eye; suborbital shallow, least depth 4.3 (3.5) in eye; dorsal-fin length 1.9 (1.8) in SL; fourth or fifth dorsal spine longest, 2.1 (1.9) times length of first dorsal spine; second through fifth dorsal rays longest, 0.9 (1.0) times length of longest spine; anal fin length 5.8 (5.6) in SL; first anal spine 1.9 in second anal spine; second anal spine 0.9 in third anal spine; pectoral fins long, reaching to a vertical at anus, 1.2 (1.3) in head; pelvic fins reaching to or just short of anus, 1.4-1.5 in head.

Mouth moderate, maxilla reaching to below anterior margin of pupil; jaw teeth villiform, in narrow tapering bands in both jaws; upper jaw with 3-4 pairs and lower jaw with 5 pairs of slightly enlarged, recurved teeth anteriorly. Scales on top of head extending forward to between posterior margin of eye and posterior margin of pupil; snout and suborbital naked; suborbital rounded posteriorly, its edge smooth, with a few denticulations on posterior margin and a small spine at upper corner; preopercle with 5 transverse scale rows, lower limb naked; posterior margin of preopercle finely denticulate; dorsal fin emarginate; caudal fin slightly forked.

Colouration. - In life: body rosy pink, tinted with mauve, becoming silvery white on ventral surface; broad, pale lemon lateral stripe from above pectoral fin base at origin of lateral line to lower half of caudal fin base; diffuse lemon stripe along ventral midline from behind throat to base of caudal fin; indistinct traces of yellowish on opercle; distinctive triangular black spot above and behind eye on either side of nape; upper half of caudal fin pale pink, lower lobe pale yellow; dorsal and anal fins pale translucent pink; pectoral and pelvic fins translucent pale yellow.

Colour in alcohol pale brownish; triangular black spot above and behind eye on either side of nape.

Etymology. - Named *melanophrys*, from the Greek *melan*, black, and *ophrys*, eyebrow, in reference to the distinctive black markings on the nape of this species.

Distribution. - Known only from the type specimens, both collected from fish markets, one from Kupang, West Timor, Indonesia, and the other from Tawau on the east coast of Sabah, Malaysia.

DISCUSSION

This species appears to be close to *Parascolopsis inermis* (Schlegel in Temminck & Schlegel, 1843) and *P. tanyactis* Russell, 1986, but differs from these and all other species of *Parascolopsis* in possessing a distinctive black, triangular shaped spot above and behind the eye.

KEY TO THE WESTERN PACIFIC SPECIES OF *PARASCOLOPSIS*

1. Gill rakers on first arch 17 to 19 (Indo-W. Pacific) *P. eriomma*
- Gill rakers on first arch 8 to 10 2

2. Preopercle more or less entirely scaled or with an incomplete naked flange posteriorly on its free margin (S. Japan, Philippines, Indonesia) *P. tosensis*
- Preopercle with a distinct broad naked flange bordering its free margin 3
3. Pelvic fins not approaching anus, length of pelvic fins 1.6 to 1.9 in head; 4 or 5 transverse scale rows above lateral line; interorbital width 1.0 to 1.3 in eye (N.W. Australia) *P. rufomaculatus*
- Pelvic fins reaching close to or beyond anus, length of pelvic fins 1.2 to 1.8 in head; $2\frac{1}{2}$ to $3\frac{1}{2}$ transverse scale rows above lateral line; interorbital width 1.3 to 2.2 in eye 4
4. Triangular black spot above and behind eye (E. Malaysia, E. Indonesia) *P. melanophrys*
- No triangular black spot above and behind eye 5
5. Dusky band joining nostrils across snout; fourth or fifth dorsal ray elongate in larger specimens (Philippines, Indonesia, N.W. Australia) *P. tanyactis*
- Dusky band across snout absent; fourth or fifth dorsal ray not notably elongate (W. Pacific to E. Indian Ocean) *P. inermis*

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We thank Mr Yap Kon Shen, Director of Fisheries, Sabah, for permission to examine the specimen in the FRCL.

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Received 09 Mar 1996

Accepted 02 Apr 1996