



# Article

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## A new species of *Trichonotus* (Perciformes: Trichonotidae) from Somalia and redescription of *Trichonotus cyclograptus* (Alcock, 1890) with designation of a lectotype

ERI KATAYAMA<sup>1,4</sup>, HIROYUKI MOTOMURA<sup>2</sup> & HIROMITSU ENDO<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Department of Zoology, National Museum of Nature and Science, 4-1-1 Amakubo, Tsukuba, Ibaraki 305-0005, Japan.

E-mail: ekata@kahaku.go.jp

<sup>2</sup>The Kagoshima University Museum, 1-21-30 Korimoto, Kagoshima 890-0065, Japan. E-mail: motomura@kaum.kagoshima-u.ac.jp

<sup>3</sup>Laboratory of Marine Biology, Faculty of Science, Kochi University, 2-5-1 Akebono-cho, Kochi 780-8520, Japan.

E-mail: endoh@kochi-u.ac.jp

<sup>4</sup>Corresponding author

### Abstract

A new sand diver *Trichonotus somaliensis* n. sp. (Trichonotidae) is described on the basis of 13 specimens collected off the coast of Somalia at a depth of 38–78m. The new species is most similar to *T. arabicus* and *T. cyclograptus* in lacking elongated anterior dorsal-fin spines and having dark markings on the lateral body surface in males. However, the new species differs from the others in having the following characters: lateral-line scales 54–57; gill rakers on first arch 5–6+18–24; 12–14 blotches on upper half of body in both sexes; first dorsal-fin soft ray length in males 19–28% of standard length; and no free dorsal pterygiophores. *Trichonotus cyclograptus*, a poorly known species, is redescribed on the basis of the newly-designated lectotype and paralectotypes.

**Key words:** Trichonotidae, *Trichonotus cyclograptus*, *Trichonotus somaliensis*, new species, sand diver, redescription, Somalia

### Introduction

Species of the genus *Trichonotus* Bloch & Schneider, 1801, characterized by their preference for sandy bottom habitats, are widely distributed in the Indo–West Pacific, including the Red Sea (Clark & Pohle 1996). Among the nine valid species currently recognized, the males of six have elongated dorsal-fin spines (Katayama & Endo 2010). Although the remaining species [*Trichonotus arabicus* Randall & Tarr 1994, *T. cyclograptus* Alcock (1890) and *T. filamentosus* (Steindachner 1867)] lack that feature, the dorsal-fin height in each is more than twice the body depth.

A poorly known trichonotid fish, *Taeniolabrus cyclograptus* Alcock, 1890, (currently included in *Trichonotus*) was originally described on the basis of eight syntype specimens (one dissected) from the Bay of Bengal, no additional specimens having been reported since. Menon and Yazudani (1968) and Menon and Rama-Rao (1970) reported on the type specimens of *T. cyclograptus*; however, they didn't give a description. Katayama and Endo's (2010) recent comparison of *T. cyclograptus* with other congeneric species was based solely on the original description, the type specimens of *T. cyclograptus* apparently having not been reexamined since the original description.

In his description of *Trichonotops* [currently regarded as a junior synonym of *Trichonotus* (see Nelson, 1986)] *multistriatus*, Kotthaus (1977) also reported on two unidentified species, "*Trichonotops* spec. (1) and (2)", based on 12 and 79 specimens, respectively, collected off the coast of Somalia, western Indian Ocean, but refrained from naming them because of a lack of comparative material of other *Trichonotus* species. Examination of Kotthaus's specimens (deposited in the Zoologisches Institut und Zoologisches Museum der Universität Hamburg) during the present study, revealed that *T.* sp. 1 and 2 were large males and small females, respectively, of a single undescribed