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Two new species of deeper dwelling *Apogon* (Perciformes: Apogonidae) from Micronesia and South Pacific Ocean

THOMAS H. FRASER[1] & JOHN E. RANDALL[2]

[1] *Mote Marine Laboratory, 1600 Ken Thompson Parkway, Sarasota, FL 34236-1096 USA*

[2] *Bishop Museum, 1525 Bernice St., Honolulu, HI 96817-2704 USA*

Abstract

Apogon brevispinis is described from two specimens, the larger of which is missing the caudal peduncle, collected at the Austral Islands. This species has a tiny first dorsal-fin spine (5-8% of the third dorsal-fin spine length), 18-19 well-developed gill rakers on first arch, 5 predorsal scales, elongated last soft dorsal and anal fin-rays, 14 circumpeduncular scales, 5 broad tan-brown stripes alternating with 5 narrow whitish stripes, and an irregular dark caudal peduncle mark. *Apogon regula* is described from five specimens collected in Guam and the Carolina Islands. This species has a longer first dorsal-fin spine (10-15% of the third dorsal-fin spine length), 13-14 well-developed gill rakers on first arch, 4 predorsal scales, 12-13 circumpeduncular scales 5 broad golden-brown stripes alternating with 4 narrow whitish stripes, and dark brown broad stripes on the upper and lower caudal peduncle.

Key words: Apogonidae, cardinalfish, *Apogon*, *Apogon brevispinis*, *Apogon regula*, new species

Introduction

Cardinalfishes in *Apogon* are known to live at depths of more than 200 meters. Below about 30 meters collection by SCUBA gear becomes relatively rare because of the dangers of nitrogen narcosis. We describe two of these deeper dwelling species in the subgenus *Ostorhinchus*. There are a number of different species groups, based on variations of color patterns, slight differences in body and caudal-fin shape, gill-raker and pectoral fin-ray counts for which the limits are gradually becoming better defined. These two species belong to a large group of species, often difficult to identify, with 3 or more head and body stripes (blackish, brownish or yellowish in life). We expect both of these species to be more widely distributed than records suggest.

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