

Ecsenius caeruliventris* and *E. shirleyae*, two new species of blenniid fishes from Indonesia, and new distribution records for other species of *Ecsenius

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Abstract

Ecsenius caeruliventris is described from the Banggai and Togean islands, closely adjacent to the mid-NE coast of Sulawesi. *Ecsenius shirleyae* is described from various islands situated between 106°–02° E and 05°–08°S. Both species are members of the Prooculis species group of *Ecsenius*, which now comprises eight species and which are differentiated from each other solely on the basis of color patterns. All of the species are distributed allopatrically except for *E. bimaculatus*, which, in the southern part of its range, occurs sympatrically with *E. caeruliventris* and, probably, *E. shirleyae*. New distributional records are provided for several species of *Ecsenius*.

Key words: Blenniidae, *Ecsenius*, *Ecsenius shirleyae*, *Ecsenius caeruliventris*, fishes, Indonesia, new species, Prooculis species group

Introduction

This study is the fifth update on the blenniid fish genus *Ecsenius* since Springer's (1988) revision of the genus (Springer, 1991, 2002; Springer and Randall, 1999; Springer and Allen, 2001). The purposes of the present paper are to describe two new species in the Prooculis species group (Springer, 1988:105) and report new distribution records for other species of *Ecsenius*. *Ecsenius* now comprises 53 species, more than twice as many as the next speciose blenniid genus, *Meiacanthus* Norman.

The Prooculis species group is defined by a combination of characters, only one of which appears to be synapomorphic: presence on ventral surface of head of two bilateral pairs of small dark spots (Figure 1a, b; also Springer, 1988:figure 57) or single bilateral pair of elongate dark crescentic marks (Springer, 1988:figure 58) in at least some males, or two pairs of pale, round spots (Figure 2c; also Springer, 1988:figure 56; 1991:figure 8) or