



Additions to the ichthyofauna of the Tristan da Cunha Group, South Atlantic Ocean

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Abstract

Specimens of two, possibly three, rare species of fishes were collected at the Tristan da Cunha Group toward the end of a 2004 South Atlantic cruise (ICEFISH). The dragonet *Synchiropus valdiviae* (Trunov, 1981), was previously known from only two adult males taken on Walvis Ridge. We collected two adult females and three juveniles, which are described here. The pearlfish *Echiodon atopus* Anderson, 2005, was recently described from a specimen collected north of Inaccessible Island. It differs from congeners in its high precaudal vertebral count, equivalent dorsal and anal rays anterior to vertebra 31 and other features of the axial skeleton and fins. Lastly, an unusual specimen of the rockfish genus *Sebastes* taken in a commercial lobster pot represents either a previously unreported variant of *S. capensis* or an undescribed species. It differs from the typical South Atlantic *S. capensis* in its coloration and lack of supraocular spines.

Key words: *Synchiropus*, Callionymidae, *Echiodon*, Carapidae, *Sebastes*, Scorpaenidae, Tristan da Cunha Group, South Atlantic Ocean

Introduction

The marine fish fauna of the Tristan da Cunha Group and Gough Island, South Atlantic, was reviewed by Andrew et al. (1995) who counted 93 species in the area, including 25 they added mainly from sampling during commercial rock lobster operations. Andrew et al. discussed 12 papers concerning the Tristan ichthyofauna published since 1819, and provided the most comprehensive study of the island-groups' fishes to date. Nevertheless, we feel the deeper waters around the islands are more species rich than currently known as there has been little bottom trawling because of the rough, lava-reef benthos. The thalassobathyal zone, especially, is likely to yield previously unreported or undescribed species. Here we add an additional two species to the Tristan ichthyofauna and discuss a