

## Description of *Haploblepharus kistnasamyi*, a new catshark (Chondrichthyes: Scyliorhinidae) from South Africa

BRETT A. HUMAN<sup>1</sup> & LEONARD J. V. COMPAGNO<sup>2</sup>

*Shark Research Centre, South African Museum, Iziko - Museums of Cape Town, PO Box 61 Cape Town 8000, South Africa*

<sup>1</sup>current address: 27 Southern Ave, West Beach SA 5024, Australia.

### Abstract

A new species of catshark, *Haploblepharus kistnasamyi* **sp. nov.** (Class Chondrichthyes, Order Carcharhiniformes, Family Scyliorhinidae) is described from kwaZulu-Natal, South Africa. The type series includes the holotype, RUSI 39835, and two paratypes, RUSI 6075 and RUSI 6077. This species was previously recognised as a variant of *H. edwardsii* (Schinz 1822), which occurs along the southern coast of South Africa. The colour pattern of *H. kistnasamyi* is superficially similar to *H. edwardsii* although distinct; however *H. kistnasamyi* is distinguished from all other *Haploblepharus* in having a stockier build compared to its congeners, a less depressed head and trunk, and a compressed caudal peduncle.

**Key words:** *Haploblepharus kistnasamyi* **sp. nov.**, Scyliorhinidae, Carcharhiniformes, taxonomy, South Africa

### Introduction

The genus *Haploblepharus* Garman 1913 is a little known group of small to medium-sized catsharks (family Scyliorhinidae Gill 1862) endemic to southern Africa and ranging along the coasts of Namibia and South Africa.

Three species of *Haploblepharus* are currently recognised (Human, 2003, in prep.), *H. edwardsii* (Schinz 1822), *H. pictus* (Müller & Henle 1838), and *H. fuscus* Smith 1950. Species identification of this group has been historically problematic and stems from the use of colour patterns and poor morphological characters in species identification keys.

Under the name of *H. edwardsii*, Bass *et al.* (1975) illustrated a female *Haploblepharus* specimen taken from kwaZulu-Natal, South Africa, that they referred to