



## ***Scarus maculipinna*, a new species of parrotfish (Perciformes, Scaridae) from the eastern Indian Ocean**

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### **Abstract**

The parrotfish *Scarus maculipinna* is described from 14 specimens from the eastern Indian Ocean, including the Andaman Sea and Mentawai Islands, Sumatra. This species is distinct in having the following combination of characters: 14 pectoral rays, 4 median predorsal scales, and 3 rows of scales on the cheek, the lower row with 1 or 2 scales. In addition, the following features of color pattern are diagnostic: initial phase with body dark dorsally, pale ventrally with 3 narrow white stripes; snout and iris of eye and pectoral fin base yellowish; three distinctive black spots, one on the anterior dorsal fin, one on the anterior anal fin from the third anal spine to the second anal ray, and a small one at the base of the anterior pectoral fin ray; terminal-male phase complexly colored in blue-green, pink, and yellow with dark saddle extending from postorbital region to 4th dorsal spine and slanting anteroventrally to just behind pectoral fin base; head with a broad blue-green stripe on snout that divides to form a branch through upper eye, continuing a short distance beyond, and a branch through lower eye, extending onto opercle; chin and suborbital region pinkish yellow with a short transverse blue-green chin strap; an irregular blue-green zone ventrally on head that continues broadly onto side of chest and anterior abdomen; body blue dorsally posterior to dark saddle, a midlateral blue-green stripe on caudal peduncle that joins a large blue-green crescent in caudal fin. This species is similar to *Scarus flavipectoralis* and *Scarus hypselopterus* in features of color pattern, meristics and distribution.

**Key words:** Taxonomy, *Scarus*, parrotfish, Perciformes, Scaridae

### **Introduction**

The parrotfishes are a large and colorful group of coral reef fishes that are known to form a subgroup of the clade traditionally treated as the family Labridae, a phylogenetic position based on strong evidence from both morphological and molecular data (Gomon, 1997; Westneat & Alfaro, 2005). Despite increasing resolution of the position of parrotfishes within labrids, a formal revision of the classification of the Labridae and its component groups has not been recently proposed, in part because of the high level of research activity on phylogenetics of the group and the desire to have stability to the classification once it is revised. Thus, for the purposes of stability of nomenclature, we retain the family status of the Scaridae here and defer the discussion of classification reflecting phylogeny to larger taxonomic and phylogenetic studies.

Most parrotfishes are easily recognized by the fusion of their teeth to form beak-like dental plates and by the bright coloration of the males of most species, although basal parrotfish taxa such as *Cryptotomus* and *Nicholsina* possess jaws with unfused teeth. Ten genera of parrotfishes are recognized (Bellwood, 1994), of which *Scarus* is the largest, with over 50 species, and the only one present in all tropical and subtropical