



Description of a new scorpionfish (Scorpaenoidei, Sebastobinae) from the tropical eastern Pacific

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Abstract

A new spiny scorpionfish, *Trachyscorpia verai*, is described from a single specimen caught by deepwater longline off Puerto López (Ecuador, Tropical Eastern Pacific). This scorpionfish is distinguished from all other species of *Trachyscorpia* by a unique combination of characters: dorsal-fin spines 12, vertebrae 26, and gas bladder absent. Other diagnostic characters are: maxilla unscaled, third dorsal spine long, and pelvic spine short. This is the second species of *Trachyscorpia* known from the TEP and the sixth worldwide.

Key words: *Trachyscorpia verai* n. sp., Sebastidae, Sebastobinae, TEP, Ecuador

Introduction

The scorpionfish subfamily Sebastobinae (Eschmeyer, 1986) comprises three genera: *Adelosebastes* Eschmeyer, Abe & Nakano, 1979; *Sebastolobus* Gill, 1881; and *Trachyscorpia* Ginsburg, 1953. The first genus is monospecific and confined to the North Pacific, the second genus comprises three species, mostly from the northern Pacific but two spreading south to Baja California (Orr *et al.*, 2000). The genus *Trachyscorpia* is more widespread and comprises five species (McCosker, 2008): *Trachyscorpia cristulata* (Goode & Bean, 1896) from the North Atlantic (both sides); *Trachyscorpia eschmeyeri* Whitley, 1970 from the southeastern Atlantic to the southwestern Pacific (South Africa to New Zealand); *Trachyscorpia carnomagula* Motomura, Last & Yearsley, 2007 from the southwestern Pacific; *Trachyscorpia longipedicula* Motomura, Last & Yearsley, 2007 from the southwestern Indian Ocean; and *Trachyscorpia osheri* McCosker, 2008 from the Galápagos Islands. All Sebastobinae are deep-water benthic fishes (200–2000 m).

The present specimen was identified as a sebastobine in the genus *Trachyscorpia* by the following characters: pectoral fin notably bilobed (vs. rounded in other subfamilies), 12 dorsal-fin spines (vs. 14–18 in *Sebastolobus*), 9 dorsal-fin soft rays (vs. 12–13 in *Adelosebastes*), head well ossified and with strong spines, teeth on the palatines, no occipital pit, lateral line (LL) of tubed scales continuing onto the caudal-fin base (Poss, 1999, Motomura *et al.*, 2007). This is the first member of the subfamily described from continental Ecuador (Jiménez-Prado & Béarez, 2004).

Material and methods

Counts and measurements were made following Hubbs and Lagler (1947), Eschmeyer (1969), Randall & Eschmeyer (2001), and Motomura *et al.* (2005). The last two soft rays of the median fins are counted as one as each pair is associated with a single pterygiophore. Total gill raker (GR) counts include rudiments. Vertebral