



***Callogobius liolepis* Bleeker, a senior synonym of *Gobiopsis aporia* Lachner and McKinney (Teleostei: Gobiidae: *Gobiopsis*)**

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Abstract

Callogobius liolepis Bleeker in Koumans was briefly described from two specimens from Ambon. A later, more detailed description by Koumans was apparently based on Bleeker's unpublished description and specimens of *C. okinawae* (Snyder), considerably complicating the taxonomy of several species. Re-examination of the syntypes identifies *C. liolepis* as a species of the genus *Gobiopsis* Steindachner due to the absence of raised vertical ridges of papillae that characterise *Callogobius* and the presence of barbels in a pattern unique among gobiids to a subset of *Gobiopsis*. *Gobiopsis liolepis* (Bleeker) is determined as the senior synonym of *G. aporia* Lachner and McKinney based on the absence of head pores combined with the presence of a series of tightly spaced papillae over the eye, lateral scale counts of 36–42, pectoral-fin ray counts of 20–21, dorsal-fin ray counts VI+I, 10 and anal-fin ray counts of I, 9. The larger syntype is designated the lectotype and the smaller the paralectotype. Specimens identified as *C. liolepis* in museums or the literature are likely referable to *C. okinawae* (Snyder) or *C. bifasciatus* (Smith).

Key words: Gobiidae, *Gobiopsis*, *Callogobius liolepis*, taxonomy, Bleeker

Introduction

The taxonomy of many gobiid genera and species has been complicated by enormous numbers of synonyms generated through inadequate descriptions of small and diverse taxa. Despite many alpha taxonomic issues, *Gobiopsis* Steindachner, 1861 and *Callogobius* Bleeker, 1874 are relatively well-defined compared to most gobiid genera and are easily differentiated externally by the presence of barbels or distinctive raised ridges of papillae, respectively (e.g. Larson & Murdy 2001). In a review of gobioid genera, Koumans (1931:75) introduced *Callogobius liolepis* as an unpublished Bleeker name and provided a short description borrowed from Bleeker's notes: "*Callogobius liolepis* Blkr. (Museum name) differs from *C. hasselti* [sic] in having the base of the preoperculum and operculum naked, distance between the eyes broader, all scales being cycloid, snout longer." Although authorship of this species has generally been attributed to Koumans (e.g. Eschmeyer 2013), Koumans' (1931) unqualified attribution to Bleeker and use of his description indicates that Bleeker should retain authorship (International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature 1999: Article 50.1.1). Koumans (1932:14) later provided a more detailed description. Since that time, the species has been mentioned only infrequently in taxonomic literature and faunal lists.

McKinney and Lachner (1978) questioned the placement of this species within the genus *Callogobius*, but made no taxonomic recommendations. We examined the type materials of *C. liolepis* in 2007 to discover that, despite their poor condition, the two specimens could be determined as a species of *Gobiopsis*. In this paper we designate them as a lectotype and a paralectotype while presenting evidence to reassign the species to *Gobiopsis* and, further, to support synonymization of *G. liolepis* (Bleeker in Koumans 1931) as a senior synonym with *G. aporia* Lachner & McKinney, 1978. We also clarify misidentifications in the literature.

(1975) examined type specimens of *C. okinawae*, *C. hasseltii* and *C. liolepis* and determined that Takagi's specimens were *C. okinawae*. Goren (1979a,b) included *C. liolepis* in a key to *Callogobius* species and in a table of species and diagnostic characters for Red Sea and Indian Ocean *Callogobius*. Data were from Kouman's (1953b), but the species was likely included among Indian Ocean taxa through reference to Smith's (1958) identification of adult *C. bifasciatus* as Kouman's *liolepis* (as noted above).

Gobiopsis liolepis (Bleeker) is a relatively common species of the genus known from the Andaman Sea eastward to southern Japan and south through Indonesia, New Guinea and northern Australia (Lachner & McKinney 1978; museum collections).

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