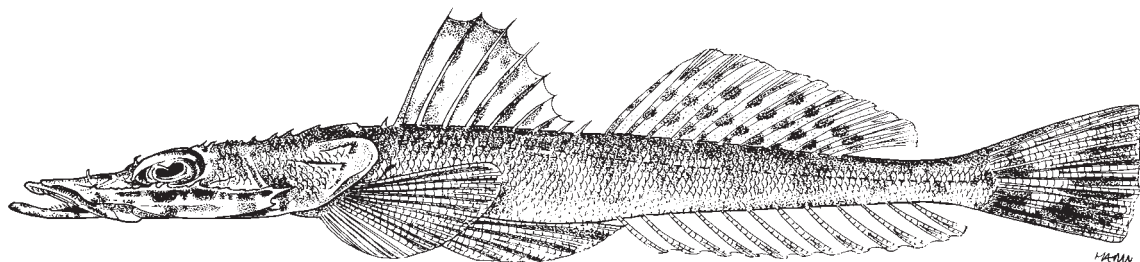


***Ratabulus diversidans*** (McCulloch, 1914)

**Frequent synonyms / misidentifications:** *Ratabulus megacephalus* (Tanaka, 1917) / None.

**FAO names:** En - Freespine flathead.



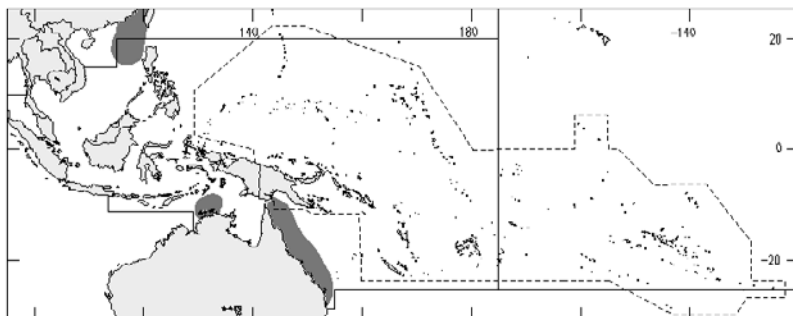
(after McCulloch, 1914)

**Diagnostic characters:** Body elongate, head moderately depressed. Rear edge of maxilla about even with front margin of eye. Preopercular spines 2 or 3, uppermost longest, accessory spine present on base; third spine minute, when present. Supraorbital ridge smooth over anterior half of eye, with stout serrations posteriorly. Preorbital spine present; a single preocular spine; suborbital ridge bearing numerous spines and serrations, the 2 largest under the eye. **Some caniniform teeth on jaws and palate are depressible;** teeth on vomer in 2 separate patches. Lower side of head bicarinate. Iris lappet a small simple lobe. Interopercular flap absent. Total gill rakers on first gill arch 7 to 9 (usually 7 or 8). **Dorsal-fin spines IX,I or I,VIII,I;** dorsal-fin rays 11; anal-fin rays 11 or 12 (usually 12); pectoral-fin rays 18 to 20 (usually 19 or 20). Diagonal scale rows slanting backward above lateral line 64 to 79. Lateral-line scales 52 to 55 (usually 53 or 54), anterior 2 to 8 scales bearing a small spine. Scale pores of lateral line with a single opening to the exterior. **Colour:** body grey to light tan above, whitish below; back crossed by 7 or 8 indistinct dark bands; a series of purplish blotches along midsides; orange or brown spots on head, larger specimens may have orange or green spots on upper body; spinous dorsal fin with a dark submarginal band, anterior basal area clear, with scattered dark spots; soft dorsal and pectoral fins with fine brown flecks; anal fin whitish; pelvic fins with scattered dark spots; caudal fin with submarginal dark band, basal area whitish with scattered dark spots above.

**Size:** Maximum total length about 35 cm, commonly to 30 cm.

**Habitat, biology, and fisheries:** Taken by trawls at depths of 79 to 261 m. Recorded at Galathea Station number 539 as being dredged over gravel.

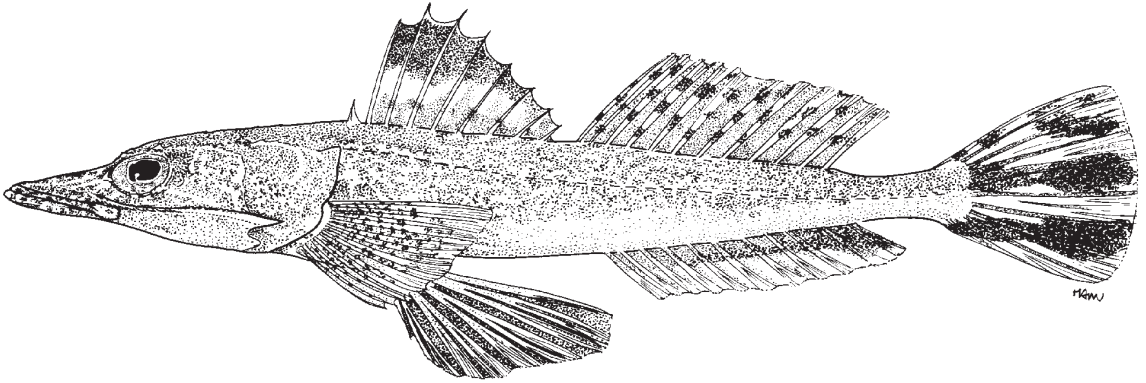
**Distribution:** From East China Sea, South China Sea, and northern Philippines to northwestern shelf of Australia, Timor Sea, Coral Sea, and Botany Bay (New South Wales).



***Rogadius patriciae* Knapp, 1987**

**Frequent synonyms / misidentifications:** *Suggrundus* sp. 2 [Sainsbury, Kailola, and Leyland, 1985] / None.

**FAO names:** En - Blackbanded flathead.



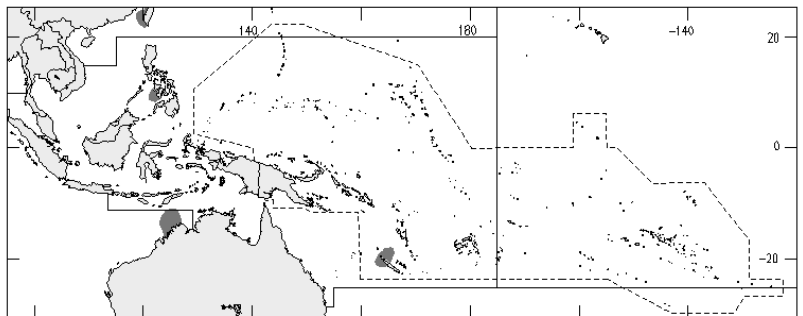
(after Sainsbury, Kailola, and Leyland, 1985)

**Diagnostic characters:** Body elongate, head moderately depressed. Rear edge of maxilla reaches to below front edge of eye. Preopercular spines 2 to 5 (usually 3 or 4), uppermost longest, with an accessory spine on its base; **antrorse spine lacking. Supraorbital ridge bearing many fine serrations.** Preorbital spine lacking, several small serrations present; preocular spine 1. Teeth on vomer in 2 separate patches. **Lower side of head uncarinate. Iris lappet bilobed.** Interopercular flap absent. Total gill rakers on first gill arch 5 to 8 (usually 7). Dorsal-fin spines IX or I,VIII; **dorsal-fin rays 11 or 12 (usually 12), anal-fin rays 11 or 12 (usually 11);** pectoral-fin rays 20 to 23 (frequently 22). **Number of scale rows between soft dorsal-fin origin and lateral line 6 to 11 (usually 7 or 8).** Oblique scale rows slanting backward above lateral line are about equal to number of lateral-line scales. Lateral-line scales 49 to 55 (frequently 52 or 53), anterior 4 to 11 bearing a spine or ridge. Scale pores of lateral line with 2 openings to the outside. **Colour:** body light tan or orange above, pale below; a brown band crossing nape to preopercular spines; suborbital dark bar present; spinous dorsal fin with marginal dark band; soft dorsal fin with small black spots on rays; anal fin white, with dusky basal band becoming black posteriorly; pectoral-fin rays bearing numerous small brown spots on upper fin, lower part black with white lower edge; pelvic fins black with outer edge and ray tips white; **caudal fin white with several dark blotches along upper edge and 2 or 3 elongate horizontal black bars below.**

**Size:** Maximum total length about 27 cm, commonly to 20 cm.

**Habitat, biology, and fisheries:** Taken by trawls on coastal shelves at depths of 14 to 100 m.

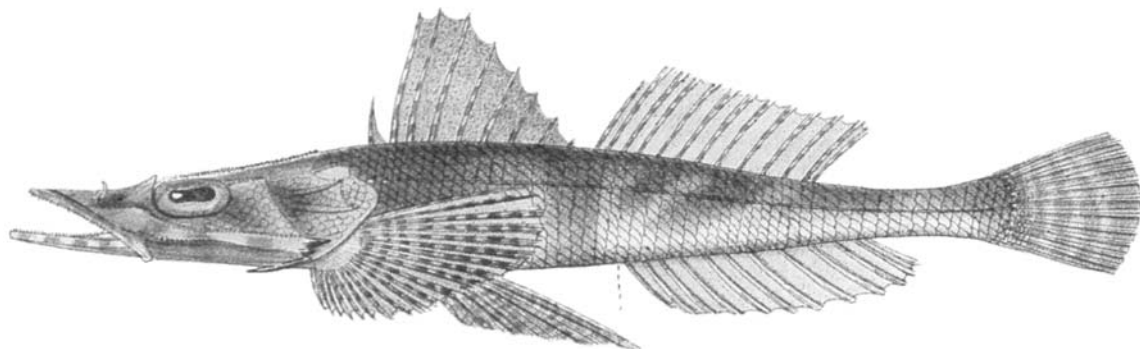
**Distribution:** Northwestern shelf of Australia, northern Queensland off Cairns, New Caledonia, Philippines, Taiwan Province of China, and Ryukyu Islands.



***Rogadius pristiger*** (Cuvier in Cuvier and Valenciennes, 1829)

**Frequent synonyms / misidentifications:** None / *Rogadius asper* (Cuvier, 1829).

**FAO names:** En - Thorny flathead.



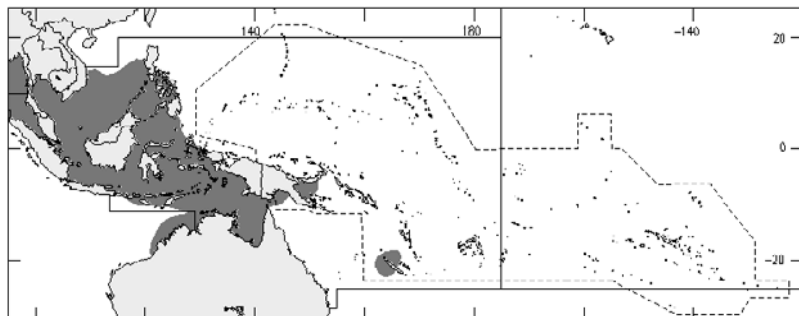
(from Bleeker, 1877-78)

**Diagnostic characters:** Body elongate, head moderately depressed. Rear edge of maxilla reaches behind front edge of eye. Preopercular spines 3 to 6 (**usually 4 or 5**), upper longest, with an accessory spine on base; **lower edge of preopercle projecting downward as a strong antrorse spine. Supraorbital and suborbital ridges bearing many fine serrations.** Preorbital spine lacking, several small serrations present; preocular spine 1. Teeth on vomer in 2 separate patches. **Lower side of head unicarinate. Iris lappet bilobed.** Interopercular flap absent. Total gill rakers on first gill arch 5 to 8 (frequently 7). Dorsal-fin spines IX or I,VIII; **dorsal-fin rays 10 to 12 (usually 11)**; anal-fin rays 10 to 12 (usually 11); pectoral-fin rays 20 to 24 (usually 22 or 23). **Number of scale rows between soft dorsal-fin origin and lateral line 5 to 7 (usually 6 or 7).** Oblique scale rows slanting backward above lateral line about equal to number of lateral-line scales. Lateral-line scales 49 to 55 (usually 52 or 53), anterior 4 to 14 scales bearing a small spine or ridge. Scale pores of lateral line with 2 openings to the outside. **Colour:** body brown above, pale below, 3 or 4 dusky bands crossing back; lower lip dusky, with 4 to 6 dark bands; spinous dorsal fin with a black marginal band and a triangular light basal area towards front; soft dorsal fin with brown spots on rays; pectoral fins with base and lower edge white, upper rays with brown dash marks, middle of fin dusky; pelvic fins with black blotches; **caudal fin with a white basal band, a broad dusky submarginal band and a narrow white edge.**

**Size:** Maximum total length about 21 cm, commonly to 15 cm.

**Habitat, biology, and fisheries:** Taken by trawls over mud and sand bottoms at depths to about 80 m.

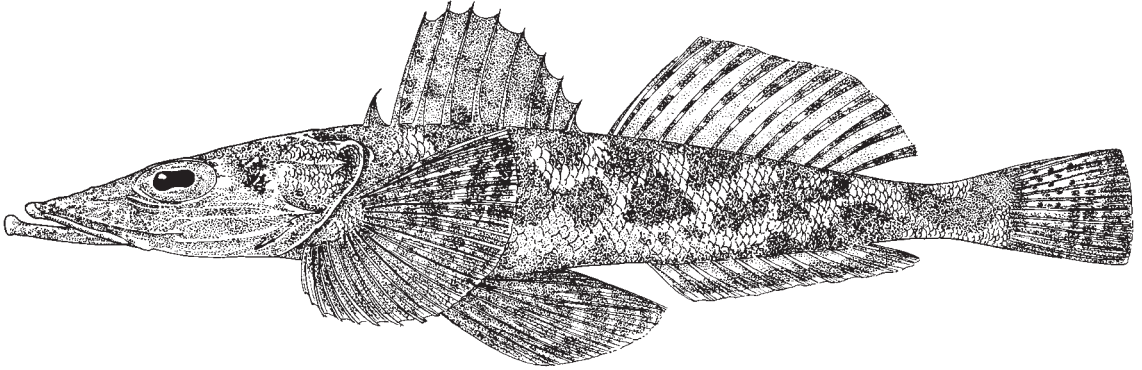
**Distribution:** Widespread, New Caledonia, Papua New Guinea, northwestern shelf of Australia, Indonesia, Philippines, Gulf of Thailand, and northern Indian Ocean to Gulf of Oman, Red Sea, and Madagascar.



***Rogadius serratus*** (Cuvier in Cuvier and Valenciennes, 1829)

**Frequent synonyms / misidentifications:** None / None.

**FAO names:** En - Serrated flathead.



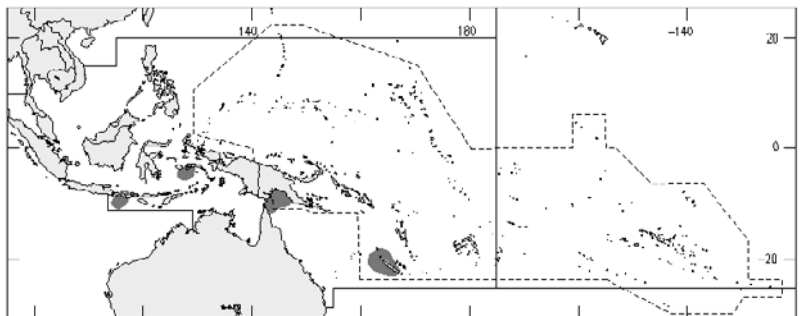
(after Günther, 1887)

**Diagnostic characters:** Body elongate, head moderately depressed. Rear edge of maxilla reaches behind front edge of eye. Preopercular spines 4 or 5 (**usually 4**), uppermost longest, with an accessory spine on base; tip of antrorse spine sometimes difficult to see. **Supraorbital and suborbital ridges bearing many fine serrations.** Preorbital spine absent, several small serrations present; **preocular spine 1, with an accessory spine on anterior base.** Teeth on vomer in 2 separate patches. **Lower side of head unicarinate. Iris lappet bilobed.** Interopercular flap absent. Total gill rakers on first gill arch 6 to 8 (usually 7). Dorsal-fin spines IX or I,VIII; dorsal-fin rays 11 (rarely 12); anal-fin rays 11; pectoral-fin rays 20 to 23 (usually 21 or 22). **Number of scale rows between soft dorsal-fin origin and lateral line usually 9 (8 to 10).** Oblique scale rows slanting backward above lateral line about equal to number of lateral-line scales. Lateral-line scales usually 51 to 54 (rarely 50), anterior 1 to 9 scales bearing a small spine. Scale pores of lateral line with 2 openings to the outside. **Colour:** body light tan above, pale below, back crossed by about 7 or 8 dark bands, side with a series of dark blotches; a broad suborbital dark bar; spinous dorsal dusky; soft dorsal fin with dark spots on rays; anal fin whitish, with submarginal dark band; pectoral fins dark below with whitish edge, pale above with dark spots; pelvic fins with white base, black distally; **caudal fin with dark basal band, whitish central band, blackish submarginal band becoming paler above, upper area usually with a few distinct dark spots.**

**Size:** Maximum total length about 24 cm, commonly to 15 cm.

**Habitat, biology, and fisheries:** Taken over sand around coral reefs to a depth of 11 m; a single specimen taken by trawls at 45 m.

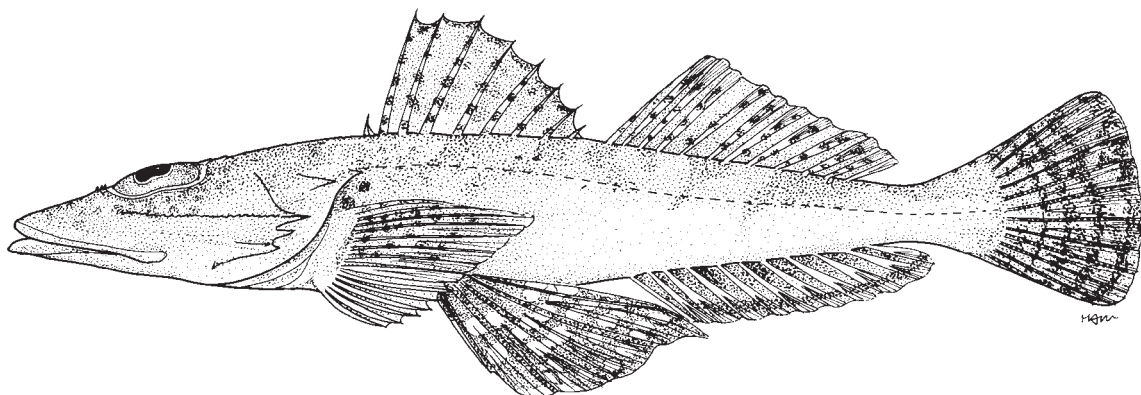
**Distribution:** Mauritius, Seychelles, Somalia, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Maldives, Chagos Archipelago, Indonesia, Philippines, Port Moresby, northern Queensland, and New Caledonia.



***Rogadius welanderi*** (Schultz, 1966)

**Frequent synonyms / misidentifications:** None / None.

**FAO names:** En - Welander's flathead.



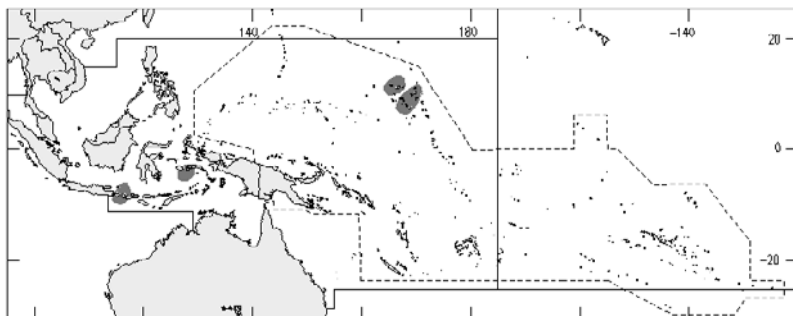
(after Gloerfelt-Tarp and Kailola, 1984)

**Diagnostic characters:** Body elongate, head moderately depressed. Rear edge of maxilla reaches behind front edge of eye. **Preopercular spines 4 or 5**, uppermost longest, with an accessory spine on base; **small antrorse spine present**. **Supraorbital and suborbital ridges bearing many fine serrations**. Several small preorbital serrations present; **preocular spines 2 or 3**. Teeth on vomer in 2 patches. **Lower side of head uncarinate**. **Iris lappet slightly bilobed**. Interopercular flap absent. Total gill rakers on first gill arch 7 or 8. Dorsal-fin spines IX; dorsal-fin rays 11; anal-fin rays 11; pectoral-fin rays 21 or 22. **Number of scale rows between soft dorsal-fin origin and lateral line usually 6 or 7**. Oblique scale rows slanting backward above lateral line about equal to number of lateral-line scales. Lateral-line scales 52 or 53, anterior 5 to 9 scales bearing a small spine. Scale pores of lateral line with 2 openings to the outside. **Colour:** body light brown above, pale below; several indistinct dark bands crossing back; dorsal and pelvic fins dusky; anal fin pale, with a narrow submarginal dark band; pectoral fins with vague dark spots above, dusky below; caudal fin pale, with about 4 narrow vertical dark bands.

**Size:** Maximum total length about 13 cm, commonly to 8 cm.

**Habitat, biology, and fisheries:** Taken over sand near coral reefs to a depth of 40 m.

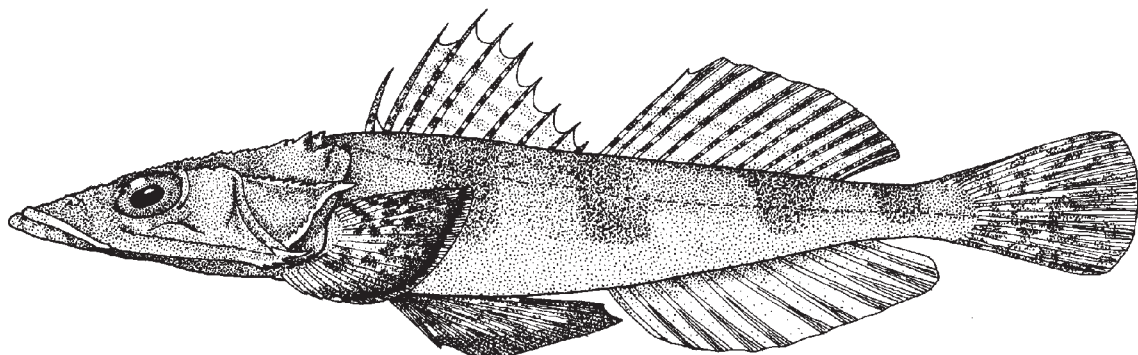
**Distribution:** American Samoa, Marshall Islands, and Moluccas; to Réunion Island (Western Indian Ocean).



***Sorsogona tuberculata*** (Cuvier in Cuvier and Valenciennes, 1829)

**Frequent synonyms / misidentifications:** None / None.

**FAO names:** En - Tuberculated flathead; Fr - Platycephale poignard; Sp - Chato puñalero.

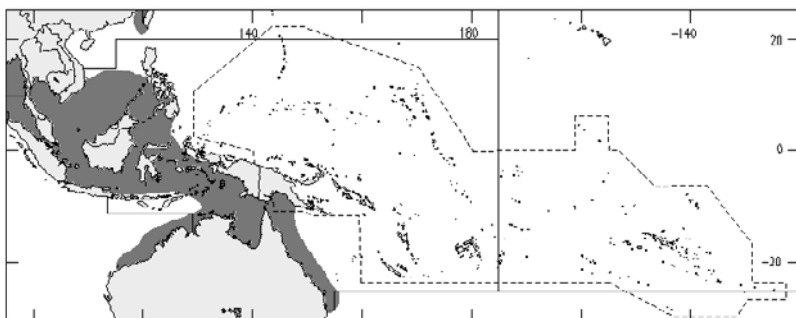


**Diagnostic characters:** Body elongate, head moderately depressed. **Posterior edge of breast scales elongated to a point.** Rear end of maxilla reaches to below front margin of eye. **Preopercular spines 4 to 9**, decreasing in size ventrally, accessory spine on base of upper. **Supraorbital and suborbital ridges bearing small spines or serrae (some bicuspid).** Preorbital spine absent, several small serrations present; **preocular spines 2 to 6.** Teeth on vomer in 2 separate patches. Lower side of head bicarinate. **Iris lappet crenate.** Interopercular flap absent. **Total gill rakers** on first gill arch 7 to 9, **frequently 8.** Dorsal-fin spines IX or I,VIII; dorsal-fin rays 10 to 12 (mostly 11); anal-fin rays 10 to 12 (mostly 11); pectoral-fin rays 19 to 22 (frequently 21). **Scales in rows above anterior lateral line sometimes bearing a hook or tubercle.** Oblique scale rows slanting backward above lateral line about equal to number of lateral-line scales. Lateral-line scales 47 to 54 (usually 51 or 52), **anterior 12 to 28 bearing a small spine or ridge.** Pores of lateral-line scales with 2 openings to the outside. **Colour:** body light olive or tan above, whitish below, with 3 or 4 dark bands crossing back; spinous dorsal fin with a submarginal brown band; soft dorsal fin with small brown spots on rays; anal fin white, with a few dark streaks on posterior rays; pectoral and pelvic fins with several black bands, margins whitish; caudal fin whitish with faint brown spots on rays and several vague vertical brown bands.

**Size:** Maximum total length about 14 cm, commonly to 12 cm.

**Habitat, biology, and fisheries:** Taken by trawls over mud and sand to a depth of about 80 m.

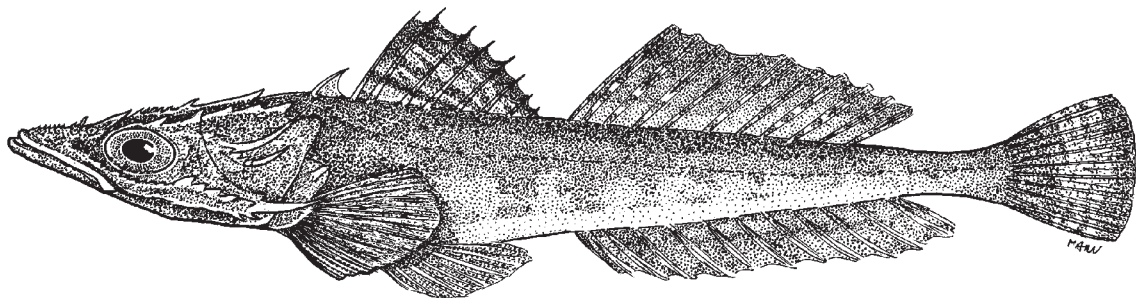
**Distribution:** From Persian Gulf, northern Indian Ocean, Malaysia, Gulf of Thailand, Indonesia, Philippines, north-western shelf of Australia to Gulf of Carpentaria, Coral Sea, and Platypus Bay (Queensland).



*Suggrundus macracanthus* (Bleeker, 1869)

**Frequent synonyms / misidentifications:** *Suggrundus sundaicus* (Bleeker, 1878) / None.

**FAO names:** En - Largespined flathead.



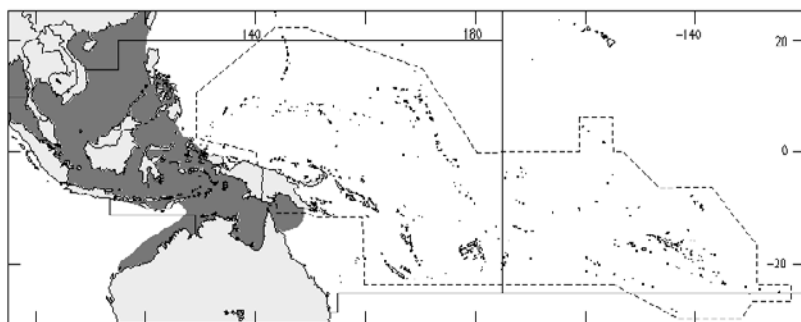
(after Day, 1878)

**Diagnostic characters:** Body elongate, head moderately depressed. Rear edge of maxilla reaches behind front edge of eye. **Preopercular spines 3, upper long, bayonet-like, reaching to or past opercular margin**, with an accessory spine on base. Supraorbital ridge smooth over anterior third of eye, with stout spines posteriorly. Preorbital spine present; a single preocular spine. Teeth on vomer in 2 separate patches. Lower side of head bicarinate. **Iris lappet bilobed in adults, crenate in juveniles. Finger-like interopercular flap present. Total gill rakers on first gill arch 7 to 9 (usually 8).** Dorsal-fin spines IX or I,VIII; dorsal-fin rays 11 or 12 (usually 12); anal-fin rays 12 or 13 (usually 12); pectoral-fin rays 20 to 23 (usually 21 or 22). Oblique scale rows slanting downward above lateral line about equal to number of lateral-line scales. Lateral-line scales 50 to 55 (usually 52 or 53), **anterior 13 to 33 scales bearing a small spine or ridge.** Scale pores of lateral line with 2 openings to the outside. **Colour:** brown above, whitish below, with about 7 vague dark bands crossing back in some; spinous dorsal fin dusky, with black blotches; soft dorsal fin clear with small brown spots on rays; anal fin pale, a few dark streaks on posterior rays; pectoral fins greyish below, with dark spots above; pelvic fins greyish; caudal fin brownish.

**Size:** Maximum total length about 26 cm, commonly to 18 cm.

**Habitat, biology, and fisheries:** Taken by trawls over mud and sand at depths to 132 m.

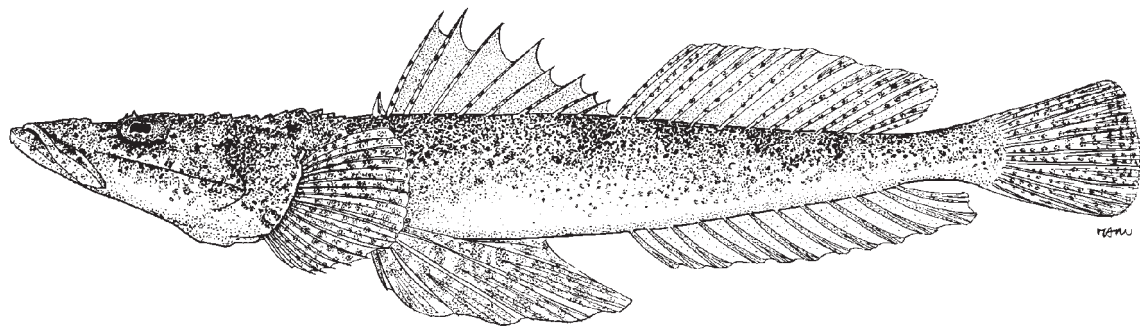
**Distribution:** Southern India and Sri Lanka to Malaysia, Gulf of Thailand, Hong Kong, Taiwan Province of China, Indonesia, Philippines, north-western shelf of Australia to Coral Sea.



***Thysanophrys arenicola*** Schultz, 1966

**Frequent synonyms / misidentifications:** None / None.

**FAO names:** En - Broadhead flathead.



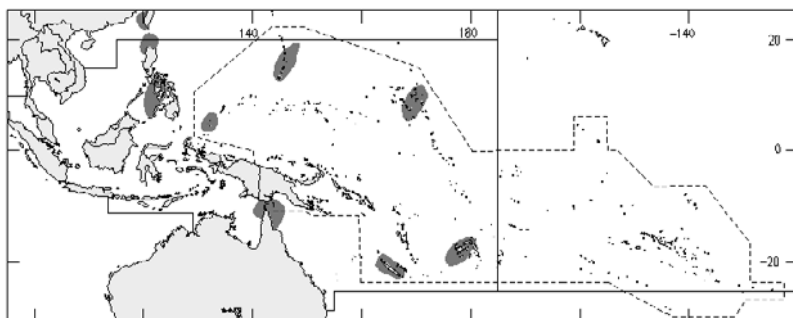
(after Masuda et al., 1984)

**Diagnostic characters:** Body elongate, head moderately depressed. **Rear edge of maxilla reaches to below front edge of eye. Lips smooth, lacking papillae on edges. Least interorbital width usually 3.5 times or less in greatest diameter of orbit.** Preopercular spines 2 or 3 (usually 3), upper spine longest, usually reaching less than half-way to opercular margin, accessory spine lacking. Supraorbital ridge smooth over anterior half of eye, with about 4 or 5 spines posteriorly. Suborbital ridge smooth anteriorly, with about 4 or 5 spines posteriorly. Preorbital spine rarely present; preocular spine 1. Teeth on vomer in 2 separate patches. Lower side of head bicarinate. **Base of lower opercular spine concealed by scales. Iris lappet bearing short branches with bifurcate tips.** Interopercular flap absent. Total gill rakers on first gill arch 5 to 7 (usually 6). Dorsal-fin spines IX or I, VIII; **dorsal-fin rays 11 to 13 (usually 12); anal-fin rays 11 to 13 (usually 12);** pectoral-fin rays 19 to 22 (usually 21). Oblique scale rows slanting backward above lateral line about equal to number of lateral-line scales. Lateral-line scales 50 to 55 (usually 52 or 53), **anterior 1 to 3 scales (usually 1 or 2), bearing a small spine.** Scale pores of lateral line with 2 openings to the outside. **Colour:** body tan or greyish, back often covered with small dark flecks and 4 or 5 vague cross bands, some specimens with a marbled pattern of small dark and light blotches on dorsum, undersides whitish; fins flecked with small brown spots.

**Size:** Maximum total length about 37 cm, commonly to 25 cm.

**Habitat, biology, and fisheries:** Taken over sand associated with rocks and coral reefs to a depth of about 30 m.

**Distribution:** Mozambique, Mauritius, Seychelles, Aden, Chagos Archipelago, Indonesia, Taiwan Province of China, Ryukyu Islands, Mariana and Marshall islands, Philippines, Torres Strait, and northern Queensland to New Caledonia and Fiji.

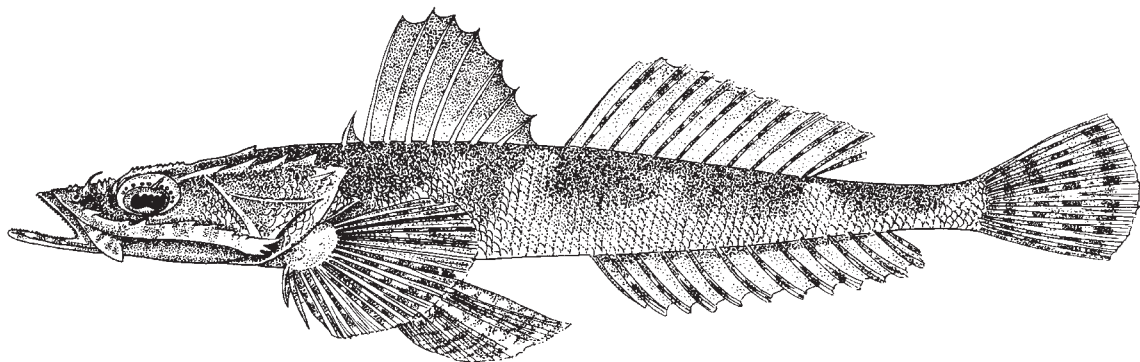




*Thysanophrys carbunculus* (Valenciennes in Cuvier and Valenciennes, 1833)

**Frequent synonyms / misidentifications:** None / None.

**FAO names:** En - Papillose flathead.



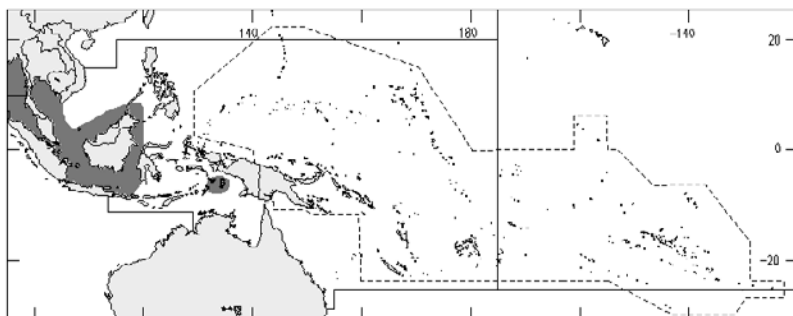
(after Bleeker, 1877-78)

**Diagnostic characters:** Body elongate, head moderately depressed. Rear edge of maxilla reaches to below front edge of eye. **Single row of papillae, often 7 to 9, on upper surface of eye, middle one elongate.** Preopercular spines 2 or 3 (usually 3), upper longest, not reaching to opercular margin, accessory spine present in most. Supraorbital ridge bearing spines throughout its length; suborbital ridge with 4 to 6 stout spines. Preorbital spine present, preocular spine 1. Teeth on vomer in 2 separate patches. Lower side of head bicarinate. **Base of lower opercular spine concealed by scales. Iris lappet crenate.** Interopercular flap absent. Total gill rakers of first gill arch 6. Dorsal-fin spines IX, I, VIII, or I, VII; dorsal-fin rays 10 to 12 (**usually 11**); anal-fin rays 11 to 13 (**usually 12**); pectoral-fin rays 18 or 19 (frequently 19). Oblique scale rows slanting backward above lateral line about equal to number of lateral-line scales. Lateral-line scales 50 to 54 (usually 52 or 53), **anterior 2 to 21 lateral-line scales bearing a small spine.** Scale pores of lateral line with 2 openings to the outside. **Colour:** body greenish above, whitish below, back crossed by 4 or 5 dark bands, a series of small dark blotches along lower side; spinous dorsal-fin with a broad submarginal dark band; soft dorsal, pectoral, and pelvic fins with numerous dark spots or blotches; anal fin white with a faint dark submarginal band; caudal fin pale with rows of dark spots forming several vertical bands.

**Size:** Maximum total length about 18 cm, commonly to 15 cm.

**Habitat, biology, and fisheries:** May be associated with aquatic vegetation at shallow depths.

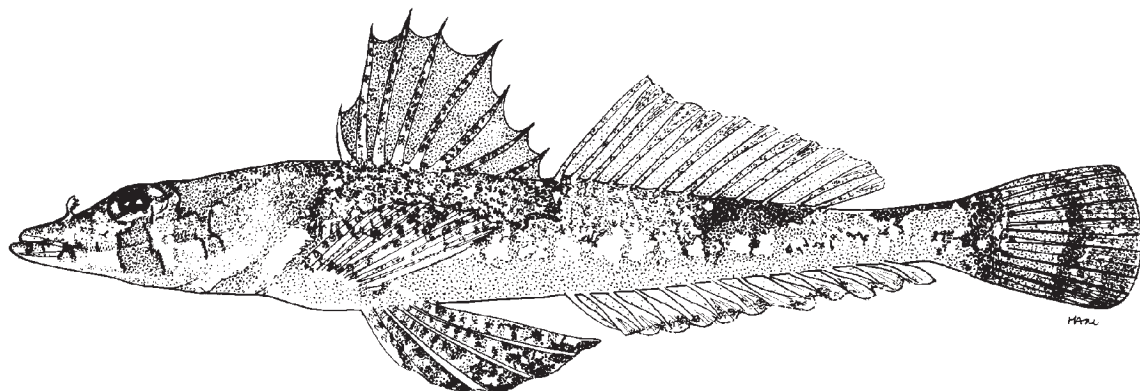
**Distribution:** From Bombay (India) to Singapore, Gulf of Thailand, North Borneo, and Indonesia.



***Thysanophrys celebicus*** (Bleeker, 1854)

**Frequent synonyms / misidentifications:** None / None.

**FAO names:** En - Celebes flathead.

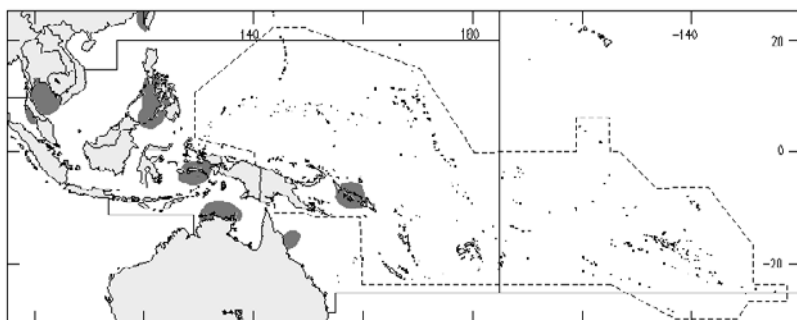


**Diagnostic characters:** Body elongate, head moderately depressed. Rear edge of maxilla reaches to below front edge of eye. **A single small unbranched papilla on posterior half of upper surface of eye.** Preopercular spines 3, upper longest, not reaching half-way to opercular margin, accessory spine present on base. Supraorbital ridge with spines throughout; suborbital ridge with 8 to 10 spines. Preorbital spines 2 or 3; preocular spine I. Teeth on vomer in 2 separate patches. Lower side of head bicarinate. **Base of lower opercular spine concealed by scales. Iris lappet with very short branches.** Interopercular flap absent. Total gill rakers on first gill arch 5 to 7 (usually 5 or 6). Dorsal-fin spines IX, VIII, or I,VII (usually I,VII); **dorsal-fin rays 12; anal-fin rays 12 or 13 (usually 13);** pectoral-fin rays 18 to 20 (usually 19). Oblique scale rows slanting downward above lateral line about equal to number of lateral-line scales. Lateral-line scales 50 to 53 (usually 51 or 52), **anterior 2 to 6 lateral-line scales bearing a small spine.** Scale pores of lateral line with 2 openings to the outside. **Colour:** body brownish or greenish above, whitish below, back crossed by 4 or 5 dark bands; spinous dorsal-fin with a broad submarginal dark band; soft dorsal, pectoral, and pelvic fins with numerous dark spots; caudal fin with a basal dark band followed by a clear band and 4 dark narrow bands on distal part of fin; rear of head with a narrow dark band, a bold dark bar under eye.

**Size:** Maximum total length about 15 cm, commonly to 10 cm.

**Habitat, biology, and fisheries:** Inhabits shallow coastal areas and appears to be taken over sandy bottom with aquatic vegetation. Taken by trawls to a depth of 43 m, but usually taken during scuba diving at 20 m or less. Frequently taken near coral rubble and rock.

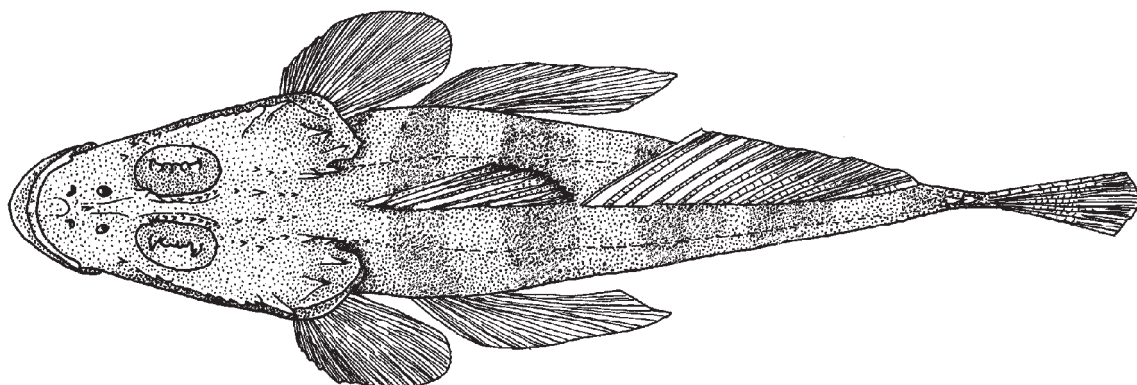
**Distribution:** From South Africa to Persian Gulf, Sri Lanka, southern India, Gulf of Thailand, Hong Kong, Taiwan Province of China, Philippines, Celebes, Irian Barat, Arafura Sea, northern Queensland, and the Solomon Islands.



***Thysanophrys chiltonae*** (Schultz, 1966)

**Frequent synonyms / misidentifications:** None / None.

**FAO names:** En - Longsnout flathead; Fr - Platycéphale clin d'oeil; Sp - Chato guiñón.

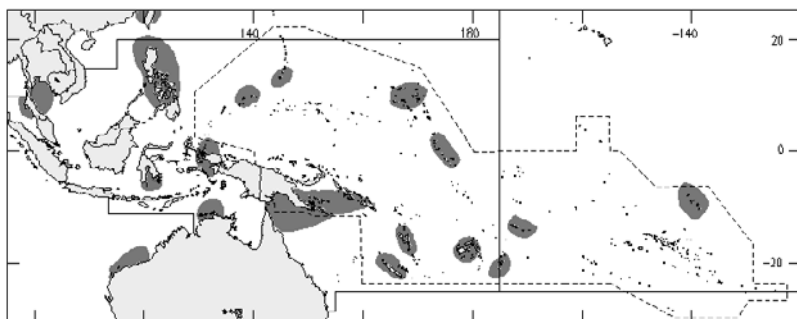


**Diagnostic characters:** Body elongate, head moderately depressed. Rear edge of maxilla is in front of anterior margin of eye. Preopercular spines 3, upper longest, accessory spine usually absent. Supraorbital ridge smooth over anterior half of eye, with serrations posteriorly; suborbital ridge with about 6 or 7 spines. **Least interorbital width 3.8 to 7.2 times in greatest eye diameter.** Preorbital spines 1 to 3; preocular spine 1. Teeth on vomer in 2 separate patches. Lower side of head bicarinate. **Base of lower opercular spine concealed by scales. Iris lappet bearing short branches with bifurcate tips.** Interopercular margin incised, forming a broad lobe. Total gill rakers on first gill arch 5 to 7 (usually 6). Dorsal-fin spines IX, I, VIII, or I, VII; dorsal-fin rays 11 to 12 (usually 11); anal-fin rays 12; pectoral-fin rays 19 to 22 (usually 20 or 21). Oblique scale rows slanting downward above lateral line about equal to number of lateral-line scales. Lateral-line scales 50 to 54 (usually 52 or 53), **anterior 1 to 3 (usually 3) lateral-line scales, bearing a small spine.** Scale pores of lateral line with 2 openings to the outside. **Colour:** body light tan mottled with numerous white spots, white below, with about 5 to 7 brown bands crossing back; lips with alternating white and brown bands; a broad brown suborbital bar present; spinous dorsal fin with a large black submarginal blotch, a series of small white and brown spots on spines; soft dorsal fin with alternating white and brown spots on rays; anal fin pale; pectoral fins white below, with several small brown blotches in middle and a series of blackish blotches above; pelvic fins whitish, with a prominent blackish blotch near base and several small black blotches distally; caudal fin with rows of small white spots on rays separating 2 or 3 vertical dark bands.

**Size:** Maximum total length about 22 cm, commonly to 16 cm.

**Habitat, biology, and fisheries:** Inhabits sand areas adjacent to coral reefs to a depth of about 38 m, usually found at 18 m or less.

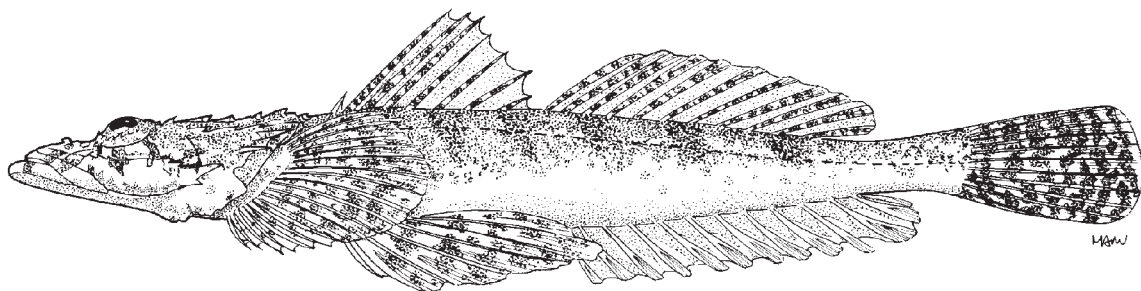
**Distribution:** Red Sea, Indian Ocean, Malaysia, Indonesia, northern Australia; Ryukyu Islands, Philippines, and from the Mariana and Marshall islands to the Marquesa Islands.



***Thysanophrys otaitensis*** (Parkinson, in Cuvier and Valenciennes, 1829)

**Frequent synonyms / misidentifications:** None / None.

**FAO names:** En - Fringelip flathead.



**Diagnostic characters:** Body elongate, head moderately depressed. **Rear edge of maxilla reaches past front edge of eye. Lips with a row of small fleshy papillae.** Preopercular spines 2 or 3, upper longest, extending about half-way to opercular margin, accessory spine absent. Supraorbital ridge smooth anteriorly, with stout serrations posteriorly; suborbital ridge bearing about 5 stout spines. Preorbital spine rarely present; preocular spine 1. Teeth on vomer in 2 separate patches. Lower side of head bicarinate. **Base of lower opercular spine concealed by scales. Iris lappet bearing short branches with bifurcate tips.** Interopercular flap absent. Total gill rakers on first gill arch 5 to 7 (usually 6). Dorsal-fin spines IX, I,VIII, or I,VII,I; **dorsal-fin rays 11 or 12 (usually 11);** anal-fin rays 11 or 12 (usually 12); pectoral-fin rays 19 to 22 (usually 20 or 21). Oblique scale rows slanting backward above lateral line about equal to number of lateral-line scales. Lateral-line scales 50 to 54 (usually 52 or 53), anterior 1 to 3 with a small spine. Scale pores of lateral line with 2 openings to the outside. **Colour:** back tan, mottled with white flecks or spots, 4 or 5 vague cross bands crossing back, undersides whitish; fins flecked with small brown spots, larger blotches frequently present on pectoral, pelvic, and caudal fins.

**Size:** Maximum total length about 25 cm, commonly to 19 cm.

**Habitat, biology, and fisheries:** Commonly taken over sand around coral reefs at depths of 10 m or less; maximum depth to about 40 m.

**Distribution:** Widespread from northern Natal, Madagascar, Comoros, Chagos Archipelago, Indonesia, Taiwan Province of China, southern Japan, Philippines, Timor Sea, Great Barrier Reef, Marshall and Caroline islands to the Marquesa and Tuamotu islands.

