

**Redescription of a Sanddiver, *Trichonotus blochii*
(Actinopterygii: Perciformes: Trichonotidae),
with Confirmation of Its Validity**

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A trichonotid sanddiver, *Trichonotus blochii* Castelnau, 1875, known only from its short original description, is redescribed on the basis of the holotype and 11 additional specimens from northern Australia. This species differs from its congeners by displaying the following combination of characters: dorsal fin soft rays 43–46; anal fin soft rays 39–41; lateral line scales 57–60; gill rakers 4–6+17–21; vertebrae 55; infraorbital and supraorbital canals separated anterior to eye; elongated dorsal fin spines 4–6 in males; caudal fin with 2 black stripes in males.

Key Words: Redescription, Trichonotidae, *Trichonotus blochii*, northern Australia.

Introduction

Sanddivers of the Indo-Pacific shore-fish genus *Trichonotus* Bloch and Schneider are characterized by an elongate and cylindrical body with long-based dorsal and anal fins, a pointed snout, and eyes with a dorsal iris flap, and they exhibit remarkable sexual dimorphism (Randall and Tarr 1994; Nelson 2001). Nine of 11 nominal species are considered valid (Bleeker 1854; Randall and Tarr 1994; Eschmeyer 1998): *T. setiger* Bloch and Schneider, 1801, *T. blochii* Castelnau, 1875, *T. filamentosus* (Steindachner, 1867), *T. cyclograptus* (Alcock, 1890), *T. nikii* Clark and von Schmidt, 1966, *T. marleyi* (Smith, 1936), *T. elegans* Shimada and Yoshino, 1984, *T. arabicus* Randall and Tarr, 1994, and *T. halstead* Clark and Pohle, 1996. *Trichonotus polyophthalmus* Bleeker, 1853 and *T. multistriatus* (Kotthaus, 1977) have been regarded as junior synonyms of *T. setiger* and *T. nikii*, respectively (Bleeker 1854; Randall and Tarr 1994). Although Bloch and Schneider (1801) used two different spellings of the name in their original description, viz., *T. setiger* in the text and *T. setigerus* in the figure, we follow Shimada (2002), who followed Bleeker (1854) in choosing *setiger* as the correct original spelling.

Trichonotus blochii was originally described based on a single specimen from the Gulf of Carpentaria in northern Australia, and no additional specimens have been reported. The original description of *T. blochii* is short, without an accompa-