

The Australian Sinistral Flounder *Arnoglossus aspilos praeteritus* (Actinopterygii: Pleuronectiformes: Bothidae) Reassigned as a Valid Species of *Engyprosopon*

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Nine specimens of a flatfish collected from Western Australia were tentatively identified as *Arnoglossus aspilos praeteritus* Whitley, 1950. The original description of this subspecies is brief and the validity of the taxon had not been investigated, despite its inclusion in subsequent short notes and lists. Our examination of the new material and the type series of *A. aspilos praeteritus* reveals that this taxon clearly differs from the members of the genus *Arnoglossus* in having a well-defined interorbital space and split hypurals. It differs subtly from *A. aspilos* (Bleeker, 1851) in appearance, although both taxa closely resemble each other in most counts and proportional measurements. *Arnoglossus aspilos praeteritus* is herein redescribed and reassigned as a valid species of the genus *Engyprosopon*, viz., *E. praeteritus*. This species differs from other species of *Engyprosopon* in having a series of dark blotches on the dorsal and anal fins and a pair of small black blotches on the caudal fin, and by lacking sexual differences in morphology and coloration.

Key Words: *Arnoglossus aspilos praeteritus*, *Engyprosopon praeteritus*, Bothidae, redescription, valid species, northwestern Australia.

Introduction

The bothid subspecies *Arnoglossus aspilos praeteritus* Whitley, 1950 was briefly described (Whitley 1950) based on four specimens collected between Cape Jaubert and Wal-lal off Western Australia, and off Darwin, Northern Territory (Fig. 1). Subsequently, it was described briefly in a handbook of Australian fishes (Munro 1957), included in a checklist of fishes of Darwin Bay (Larson and Williams 1997), and regarded as an Australian variant of *Arnoglossus aspilos* (Bleeker, 1851) in an identification guide to the living marine resources of the Western Central Pacific (Hensley and Amaoka 2001). It is currently considered a junior synonym of *A. aspilos* (Hoese and Bray 2006; Polack 2014; Eschmeyer 2014).

Recently, we found nine preserved bothid specimens (60.0–88.2 mm SL) identified as *A. aspilos praeteritus* in the Australian National Fish Collections (CSIRO). They had been collected from Shark Bay and Exmouth Gulf, Western Australia (Fig. 1). Comparisons of these specimens with the types of *A. aspilos praeteritus* showed they are conspecific. Further comparisons with *A. aspilos* showed that these nominal taxa have similar meristic and morphometric features, but differ greatly with respect to the width of the interorbital space and aspects of their caudal skeleton, both considered to be diagnostic generic characters. During the

preparation of this manuscript, we also found an image of a fresh specimen of *A. aspilos praeteritus* photographed by Sue Morrison and deposited in the Western Australian Museum (WAM P. 32685-001, Fig. 3). In this paper, *A. aspilos praeteritus* is redescribed as a valid species of *Engyprosopon*, and the evidence for its generic reassignment is discussed.

Materials and methods

Counts and proportional measurements follow Amaoka *et al.* (1993). Vertebral counts were taken from radiographs. Measurements were made with dial calipers to the nearest 0.1 mm. Institutional abbreviations follow Leviton *et al.* (1985).

Engyprosopon praeteritus (Whitley, 1950)
(Figs 1, 2A, C, D, 3–5, 6A, B; Table 1)

Arnoglossus aspilos praeteritus Whitley, 1950: 32, fig. 1 (original description); Munro 1957: 16, fig. 463 (short description, figure from original description); Larson and Williams 1997: 373 (list); Hensley and Amaoka 2001: 3825 (note).

Arnoglossus aspilos (not of Bleeker, 1851): Hoese and Bray 2006: 1812 (note); Eschmeyer 2014 (note).