

Descriptions of Four New Damselishes (Pomacentridae) from Papua New Guinea and Eastern Australia

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Plates 1-5

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ABSTRACT

Four new species of damselfishes, *Abudefduf whitleyi*, *A. flavipinnis*, *Pomacentrus australis*, and *P. pseudochrysopoecilus* are described. *A. whitleyi* from Queensland differs from its closest relatives, *A. saxatilis* and *A. notatus*, on the basis of colour pattern and a suborbital which is mostly naked. *A. flavipinnis* from New Guinea and the Great Barrier Reef is related to *A. cyaneus* but is separable on the basis of colour pattern and the soft dorsal ray count. *P. australis* from Queensland and New South Wales is characterized by an elongate body, blue coloration, and 14 dorsal spines. *P. pseudochrysopoecilus* from the D'Entrecasteaux Islands, Solomon Sea, and Queensland resembles its namesake, *P. chrysopoecilus*, but can be differentiated on the basis of colour pattern, gill raker count, and habitat preference.

INTRODUCTION

The present taxonomic knowledge of the Pomacentridae of the Indo-Australian Archipelago is due largely to the comprehensive foundation laid down by Pieter Bleeker (1877a and b), the Dutch surgeon-naturalist who collected and studied the fishes of this region over 100 years ago. More recently, significant contributions have been made by Montalban (1927), Fowler and Bean (1928), Whitley (1929), De Beaufort (1940), Marshall (1964), and Munro (1967). De Beaufort's work is the most comprehensive, listing 85 species of damselfishes from the archipelago. Our knowledge of the pomacentrids of this great faunal region remains inadequate, in spite of these investigations. The senior author is currently preparing a monograph of the Pomacentridae of New Guinea and Queensland which includes 111 species, thus representing a substantial increase in the known fauna. The present paper contains descriptions of four new species, including two *Abudefduf* and two