

OCCURRENCE OF DEEP-WATER LEATHERJACKET FISH *Thamnaconus tessellatus*
(GUNTHER, 1880) (TETRAODONTIFORMES: MONACANTHIDAE)
FROM BITUNG, INDONESIA

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ABSTRACT

Occurrence of Deep-water Leatherjacket Fish *Thamnaconus tessellatus* (Günther, 1880) (Tetraodontiformes: Monacanthidae) From Bitung, Indonesia. One specimen of *Thamnaconus tessellatus* (CRDOA 6367; 204.00 mm SL) was collected from Winenet Fish Market, Bitung, North Sulawesi, Indonesia, on 11 February 2008. The specimen was collected from depths of about 20–30 m in association with other coral reef fishes catch. This genus is poorly known because of their generally deep-water habitats and normally on the trawling grounds. The deepest record for the genus is collected by trawl net at a depth of 360 m (Fiji), 270 m (Loyalty Island) and between (230-260) m (New Caledonian). Found in many locations in southern Japan southward through the Ogasawara Islands, Malaysia, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Philippines, Indonesia and Papua New Guinea to Australia and New Caledonia. Its morphological features and diagnostic characters are discussed and illustrated.

Key words: *Thamnaconus tessellatus*, Monacanthidae, Deep-water Leatherjacket, Indonesia.

INTRODUCTION

The fishes of the order Tetraodontiformes are diverse marine fishes group. They belong to the class Actinopterygii. Nelson (1934) divided this order into 8 families represented by 64 genera and 320 species. Matsuura (2001) divided into 10 families: Triacanthodidae, Triacanthidae, Balistidae, Monacanthidae, Ostraciidae, Aracnidae, Triodontidae, Diodontidae and Molidae.

The family Monacanthidae divided into 31 genera (e.g., *Alutera*, *Amanses*, *Cantherines*, *Chaetodermis*, *Monacanthus*, *Navodon*, *Oxymonacanthus*, *Paraluteres*, *Paramonacanthus*, *Pervagor*, *Pseudoluterius* and *Stephanolepis*) with 95 species (Nelson, 1984). In the Central West Pacific region, family Monacanthidae represent by 23 genera (*Acreichthys*, *Aluteres*, *Amanses*, *Anacanthus*, *Arotrolepis*, *Brachaluteres*, *Cantherhines*, *Cantheschenia*, *Chaetodermis*, *Colurodontis*, *Eubalichthys*, *Monacanthus*, *Nelusetta*, *Oxymonacanthus*, *Paraluteres*, *Paramonacanthus*, *Pervagor*, *Pseudaluteres*, *Pseudomonacanthus*, *Rudarius*, *Scobinichthys*, *Stephanolepis* and *Thamnaconus*) and 45 species (Hutchins, 2001c).

The family Monacanthidae belongs to the group of trigger-fishes, which the name of fishes

derives from the first spine of the first dorsal fin which may be locked in an erect position by small second spine placed behind the first dorsal spine. They are small to medium-sized marine fishes with high and deep, laterally compressed bodies. Scales are rough, rhomboid-shaped, often having small spines. Mouth has a long snout and with close set chisel-like teeth. The eyes are small and placed high on the head. The second dorsal and anal fin contains no spines, consist of simple soft rays. The pelvic fins are absent; instead they are replaced by the pelvic bone. The caudal peduncle is well defined with the form of the caudal fin varying greatly between species.

In the world this genus is represented by 10 species *T. hypargyreus* (Cope, 1871), *T. septentrionalis* (Günther, 1874), *T. modestus* (Günther, 1877), *T. tessellatus* (Günther, 1880), *T. degeni* (Regan, 1903), *T. modestoides* (Barnard, 1927), *T. arenaceus* (Barnard, 1927), *T. fajardoii* Smith, 1953, *T. fijiensis* (Hutchins & Matsuura, 1984) and *T. xanihopterus* (Xu & Zhan in Xu, 1988) (Eschmeyer, 1998), whereas in the West Central Pacific this genus represented by 5 species *T. fijiensis*, *T. hypargyreus*, *T. melanoproctes*, *T. modestoides* and *T. tessellates* (Hutchin, 2001).

The fishes of the genus *Thamnaconus* are poorly known because of their generally deep-water