

**OXYURICHTHYS DASI, A NEW GOBIOID (PISCES : GOBIIDAE)
FROM THE ANDAMAN ISLANDS**

By

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(With 1 Text-figure)

INTRODUCTION

Eight species of the genus *Oxyurichthys* Bleeker have generally been recognized (Menon & Govindan, 1977) from the thirty-one nominal species known only from the tropical Indo-Pacific: *O. tentacularis* (Valenciennes, 1837), *O. papuensis* (Valenciennes, 1837), *O. microlepis* (Bleeker, 1849), *O. auchenolepis* Bleeker, 1876, *O. longimanus* (Weber, 1909), *O. jaarmani* Weber, 1913, *O. lemayi* Smith, 1947, and *O. nijsseni* Menon & Govindan, 1977. Recently two specimens of an undescribed species were collected in the Andaman Sea by the junior author (MKD).

This paper describes the new species of *Oxyurichthys* and presents some remarks on the taxonomic status of *O. nijsseni* Menon & Govindan. The new species is named after Dr. A. K. Das.

***Oxyurichthys dasi* sp. nov.**

(Text-fig. 1 a, b)

Material.—Holotype : 50 mm in standard length, Sippighat, South Andaman Is. ; 26 July, 1978 ; Coll. *M. K. Dev Roy* ; Zoological Survey of India. Regd. No. F 7610/2.

Paratype : 44 mm in standard length ; Kada Kachang, South Andaman Is. ; 29 July 1978 ; Coll. *M. K. Dev Roy* ; ZSI Regd. No. F 7611/2.

Meristic counts and measurements.—Meristic counts and morphometric measurements (in mm) of the paratype are given in parentheses.

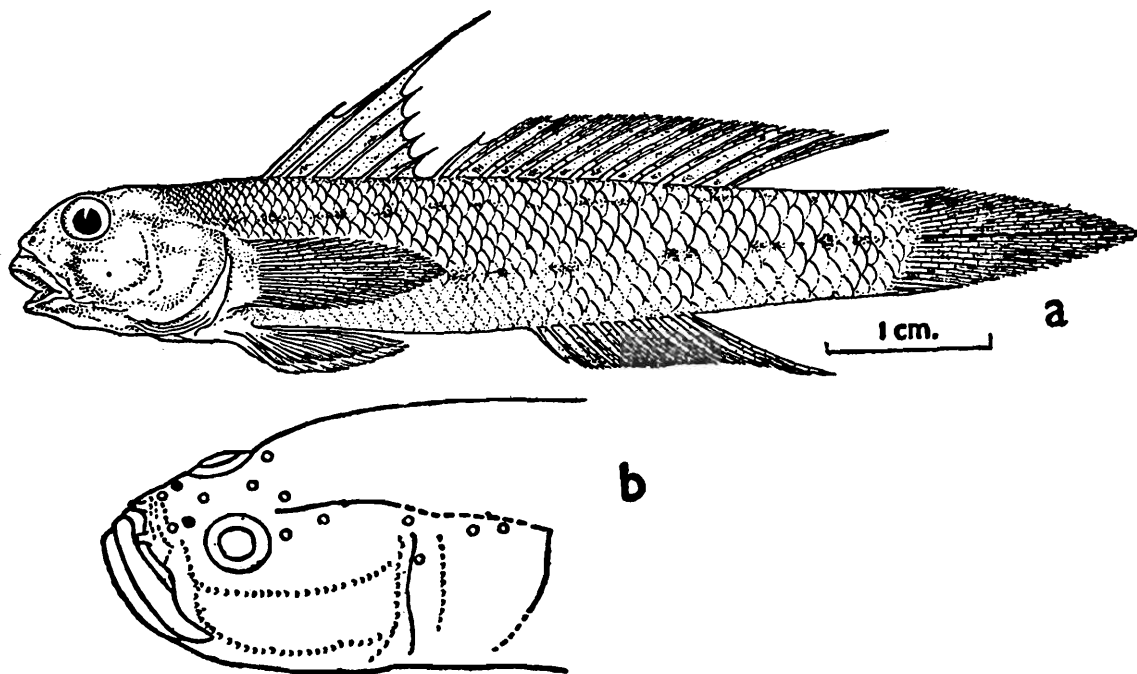
D₁ VI, D₂ I, 10 (VI ; I, 10) ; A I, 10 (I, 10) ; P 16 (16) ; segmented caudal fin rays 16 (15) ; L e scales 39 (40) ; L tr. scales 12 (11) ; predorsal scales 17 (17).

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Length of head 13.0 (11.5) ; body depth at dorsal fin origin \pm 9.0 (9.0), at anal fin origin 9.0 (8.5). Eye-diameter 3.25 (3.0), interorbital width 1.5 (1.5), snout length 3.25 (3.0), length of maxillary 4.0 (3.5). Length of longest (2nd) dorsal fin spine 16.0 (15.0), length of pelvic fin 10.0 (10.0), of pectoral fin 12.0 (11.0), of caudal fin 18.5 (c. 14.0, broken at tip) ; least depth of caudal peduncle 6.5 (5.5).

Description.—Based on holotype and paratype.

Body elongate, somewhat compressed. Head compressed ; gape of mouth moderate, oblique, posterior tip of maxillary below anterior third of eye. Snout obtuse, its length equals eye-diameter. Interorbital narrow, about half eye-diameter. Anterior nostril in a short tube, posterior nostril non-tubular. Tongue weakly emarginate. Cephalic



Text-fig. 1. a. Lateral view of *Oxyurichthys dasi* sp. nov., holotype (ZSI F 7610/2) ; b. diagrammatic dorsolateral view of head showing cephalic sensory pores and canals.

sensory pores and canals as shown in Text-fig. 1 b. Gill openings moderate, extending ventrally slightly beyond lower base of pectoral fin. No ocular tentacles.

Teeth : in upper jaw, in one row of caninoid teeth ; about 25 one each side of jaw, followed by 2 rows of minute teeth (visible only under high magnification) ; lower jaw teeth in 4 rows.

Scales : cycloid on anterior part of body, posteriorly ctenoid. Head naked ; nape, breast and belly scaled.

Dorsal fins prominent, 2nd spine of 1st dorsal fin prolonged and filamentous. Pelvic fins united, basal membrane well developed,

TABLE I— Comparison of Indo-Pacific species of *Oxyurichthys* Bleeker

Character	<i>O. tentacularis</i>	<i>O. papuensis</i>	<i>O. microlepis</i>	<i>O. auchenolepis</i>	<i>O. longimanus</i>	<i>O. jaarmani</i>	<i>O. lemayi</i>	<i>O. nijsseni</i> (= <i>O. jormo-</i> <i>sanus</i>)	<i>O. dasi</i>
Tentacle at upper margin of eye	(+)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)
Scale rows in lateral series	52-65	75-80	50-55	± 80	35	30	100-110	26-28	39-40
Scales on nape	Mid-line naked	Mid-line naked	Mid-line naked	Scaled in the median line	Naked posteriorly	?Naked	Mid-line naked	Naked	Scaled
Vertical black band below eye	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(+)	(+)

Pectoral fin pointed, as long as head. Caudal fin pointed, much longer than head.

Colour : in alcohol, light brown ; lateral sides of the trunk with violet spots arranged in two distinct longitudinal rows ; head with many violet spots and streaks and a conspicuous dark vertical band below eye. Dorsal fins with minute spots, intermixed with some bigger ones ; 2nd dorsal fin, additionally, with about ten bigger spots in a longitudinal row near its base. Pectoral fin base with irregular markings. Pelvic and anal fin with blackish margins. Caudal fin with several violet spots arranged in about four vertical rows.

REMARKS

The salient diagnostic characters of the eight valid species of the genus *Oxyurichthys* of the Indo-west-Pacific are given in Table I to facilitate their comparison with the new species. The new species differs from all the species of *Oxyurichthys* but *O. formosanus* Nichols in having a most striking dark vertical band below eye. It closely resembles *O. formosanus* but may be distinguished readily by the greater number of scales (39-40 vs 26-28) in the lateral series. Further, the pectoral fin is as long as the head length (vs considerably longer) in the new species.

Koumans (1941) reported two species of *Oxyurichthys* from Indian waters namely, *O. microlepis* (Bleeker) and *O. tentacularis* (Valenciennes). To this was added *O. jaarmani* Weber by Talwar (1969) and *O. papuensis* (Valenciennes) by Natarajan & Subrahmanyam (1975), both recorded from the east coast of India. Menon & Govindan (1977) presented a key to the Indo-Pacific species of *Oxyurichthys* and described a new species *O. nijsseni* also from the east coast of India, relegating Talwar's (nec Weber) *O. jaarmani* to its synonymy.

Oxyurichthys nijsseni which has a diagnostic dark vertical black band below eye, is clearly conspecific with *O. formosanus* Nichols from Taiwan (Nichols, 1959), a species inadvertently overlooked by Menon & Govindan (1977). The holotype and paratypes of *O. nijsseni* were examined by one of us (PKT).

SUMMARY

A new species of the Indo-Pacific genus *Oxyurichthys* Bleeker is described, *O. dusi* from South Andaman Island. The systematic status of *O. nijsseni* Menon & Govindan is discussed.

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