

NEW AUSTRALIAN FISHES. PART 16.  
A NEW SPECIES OF *CRAPATALUS* (LEPTOSCOPIDAE)

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**Abstract**

Last, P.R. and Edgar, G.J. 1987. New Australian fishes. Part 16. A new species of *Crapatalus* (Leptoscopidae). *Mem. Mus. Vict.* 48: 73-74.

A sandfish, *Crapatalus munroi*, is described from southern Australia. It can be distinguished from other Australian species by its deeper body form and by the presence of scales on the lower half of the pectoral fin.

**Introduction**

Three members of the trachinoid family Leptoscopidae, have been recorded from Australian waters. *Lesueurina platycephala* Fowler, which may be a senior synonym of *Crapatalus arenarius* McCulloch, is found commonly in exposed beach habitats of southeastern Australia.

The type locality of *Leptoscopus macropygus* (Richardson) is recorded as Port Jackson, New South Wales but no Australian specimens have been seen since. This species occurs commonly off New Zealand and it is likely that Richardson's material became mixed at some stage.

The third, an undescribed species of *Crapatalus*, has been documented (Last, Scott and Talbot, 1983) and is formally described herein. The authors are presently revising the family.

Type specimens are deposited in the CSIRO Division of Fisheries, Hobart (CSIRO) and the Museum of Victoria, Melbourne (NMV)

***Crapatalus* Günther**

*Crapatalus* Günther, 1861: 86.

*Type species. Crapatalus arenarius* McCulloch (monotypy).

***Crapatalus munroi* sp. nov.**

**Figure 1**

*Crapatalus* sp. Last, Scott & Talbot, 1983: 425, fig. 30.95.

*Material examined.* Holotype. Tasmania. Verona Sands, D'En-

trecasteaux Channel (43°17'S, 147°09'E), 1 m, beach seined, P.R. Last, 1978, CSIRO H636 (101 mm S.L.).

Paratypes. Tasmania. Chinamans Bay, Maria Island (43°39'S, 148°02'E), 1 m, beach seined, P.R. Last, 10 Apr 1977, CSIRO H640-01 (2 specimens, 41-52 mm S.L.). Flinders Island, dredged, J. Grant, 11 May 1977, CSIRO H638 (1 specimen, 58 mm S.L.). Hopetoun Beach, Dover, D'Entrecasteaux Channel (43°19'S, 147°01'E), 1 m, beach seined, P.R. Last and R. Green, 19 Jun 1977, CSIRO H639-01 (1 specimen, 63 mm S.L.).

Victoria. Portsea, Port Phillip Bay, 2 m, handnet, R. H. Kuiter, 13 Jun 1981, NMV A3320 (3 specimens, 79-98 mm S.L.). Portsea Wharf, Port Phillip Bay, 3 m, by hand, R.H. Kuiter, Dec 1981, CSIRO H637-01 (4 specimens, 41-82 mm S.L.). Mordialloc, G. Mason, 4 July 1902, NMV R11958 (1 specimen, 93 mm S.L.).

**Diagnosis.** Dorsal-fin rays 36-38; anal-fin rays 36-37; ventral-fin rays 1.5; pectoral fin rays 21-23; lateral line scales 46-49.

Body elongate, compressed, tapering to caudal fin; maximum depth 4.0-5.2 in S.L.; head bulbous, rounded or slightly compressed, about 4 times wider than the body. Fimbriae simple on jaws, sometimes bifurcated on operculum, not papillated, 34-42 on lower jaw; 23-31 on upper jaw; 13-19 on operculum. Eyes dorsal, situated close to snout; interorbital distance short, less than three quarters transverse eye diameter. Mouth almost vertical; maxilla extending to below anterior margin of eye. Teeth small, caniniform; in narrow bands in jaws and on palatines; two separate patches present on vomer. Scales cycloid, large, covering trunk, and pectoral and caudal fin



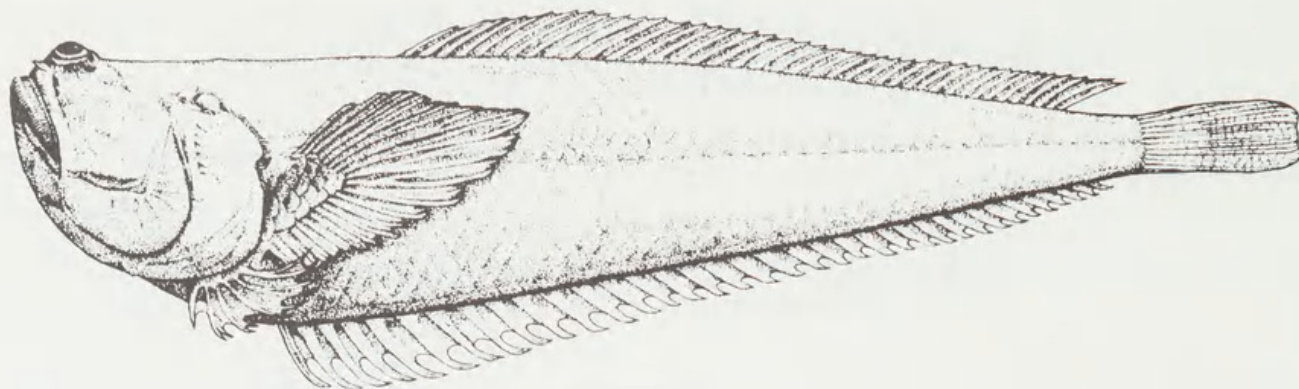


Figure 1. *Craptalus munroi* sp. nov.

bases; head naked except for small scaly patches on upper preoperculum and operculum; prepelvic area scaled. Dorsal and anal fin bases elongate, former shorter; rays short, simple. Pectoral fin large (21.7-24.4% S.L.), pointed; rays 8-9 generally longest, decreasing in length ventrally; upper part only slightly incised, rays mostly bifurcated; lower part moderately incised, rays divided into 4-6 portions. Pelvic fins jugular; inserted close to pectoral fin bases, shortest distance between them less than half interpelvic distance; extending posteriorly well behind anus. Caudal fin short, truncate. Isthmus without lapets. Reaches a total length of at least 115 mm.

Body white; upper half densely covered with numerous small, irregular brownish to golden markings which extend onto upper pectoral, dorsal and caudal fins. Preserved specimens yellowish or pink with peppery markings, mostly faint; some specimens immaculate.

*Distribution.* Off Victoria and Tasmania where, as a burying species, it lives mainly in soft sediments near the coast.

*Etymology.* In honour of Mr I.S. Munro, an eminent student of ichthyology, who discovered the species.

*Comparisons.* This species can be distinguished from *Lesueurina platycephala* by its deeper body form and the presence of scales on the lower part of the pectoral fin. A New Zealand species, *Crapatalus novaezelandiae* Günther, is similar in form but has prominent cutaneous flaps on the isthmus and papillated oral fimbriae.

#### Acknowledgments

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#### Reference

- Last, P.R., Scott, E.O.G. and Talbot, F.H., 1983. *Fishes of Tasmania*. Tasmanian Fisheries Development Authority: Hobart.



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