

Three New Species of Australian Fishes of the Genus *Plectranthias* (Perciformes: Serranidae: Anthiinae)

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Abstract. Three new species of anthiine fishes of the genus *Plectranthias* are described from Australian waters: *P. robertsi* from 220–400 m off Queensland at 18–23°S is distinctive in having 15 dorsal soft rays, 16 pectoral rays, 32–35 lateral-line scales, filamentous upper caudal rays (easily broken) and extremely prolonged second dorsal and second pelvic rays in the male; *P. pallidus*, represented by a single specimen taken in 220 m off Townsville, is characterised by 16 dorsal soft rays, 13 pectoral rays, 28 lateral-line scales, 2 retrorse spines on the ventral margin of the preopercle, and the third dorsal spine longest, 2.0 in head length; and *P. lasti* from a specimen off Marion Reef, Queensland in 365–370 m and one from the Northwest Shelf in 202 m, is distinguished by having 14 dorsal soft rays, 15 pectoral rays, 30 lateral-line scales, no serrae on the preopercular margin, and a body depth 3.05 in SL.

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The anthiine fish genus *Plectranthias* is represented mainly by species that occur at greater depths than normally explored by SCUBA divers. Because of the small size of most of these fishes, they have little or no commercial value. As a result, few specimens have found their way to museums.

Randall (1980) revised the genus; he placed *Sayonara*, *Isobuna*, *Xenanthias*, *Pteranthias*, *Zalanthias*, *Serranops*, *Pelontrus*, and *Zacallanthias* in the synonymy of *Plectranthias*. He recognised 30 species, of which 13 were described as new. He noted that 18 of the 30 species

are known from only one or two collections, and eight of these are represented by single specimens. He remarked that his revision must be considered as preliminary because the lack of material of many species precluded the detailed study of internal anatomy and because he expected more undescribed species to be discovered.

Since Randall's revision, the following eleven species have been described as new: *P. randalli* Fourmanoir & Rivaton, 1980; *P. altipinnatus* Katayama & Masuda, 1980; *P. maculatus* Fourmanoir, 1982; *P. barroi* Fourmanoir, 1982; *P. rubromaculatus* (Borets, 1982), a