



Pseudochromine and pseudoplesiopine dottyback fishes from the Socotra Archipelago, Indian Ocean, with descriptions of two new species of *Pseudochromis* Rüppell (Perciformes: Pseudochromidae)

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Abstract

Species of pseudoplesiopine and pseudochromine fishes from the Socotra Archipelago are reported based mainly on collections made in 1999 and 2000. Two species of the pseudoplesiopine genus *Chlidichthys* Smith are recorded: *C. bibulus* (Smith) and *C. cacatuoides* Gill and Edwards. Seven species of the pseudochromine genus *Pseudochromis* Rüppell are recorded: *P. chrysoopilus* **sp. nov.**, *P. leucorhynchus* Lubbock, *P. linda* Randall and Stanaland, *P. nigrovittatus* Boulenger, *P. sankeyi* Lubbock, *P. socotraensis* **sp. nov.** and an undetermined species (allied to *P. punctatus* Kotthaus). *Pseudochromis chrysoopilus* belongs to a newly diagnosed *P. caudalis*-complex; it differs from other members of the complex in various meristic and coloration details. *Pseudochromis socotraensis* belongs to a newly diagnosed *P. dutoiti*-complex; it differs from other members of the complex in adult size, various meristic characters and live coloration. Based on both the collection records and additional visual records made in 1999 and 2000 the archipelagic distribution ranges of each species and the biotopes inhabited by them are described. Two additional species are tentatively reported from the Socotra Archipelago on the basis of sight records: *P. dixurus* Lubbock and *P. omanensis* Gill and Mee.

Key words: Indian Ocean, Socotra Archipelago, *Chlidichthys*, *Pseudochromis*, new species, Pseudochrominae, Pseudoplesiopinae

Introduction

In 1999 and 2000, under the auspices of the Environmental Protection Council of Yemen, the Senckenberg Research Institute, Frankfurt, conducted the Marine Habitat, Biodiversity and Fisheries Surveys in the framework of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Global Environment Facility funded project "Conservation and Sustainable Use of Biodiversity of Socotra Archipelago." As part of the expedition the second author collected and recorded fishes at tidal and subtidal stations around the archipelago, which lies at the entrance to the Gulf of Aden, east of the Horn of Africa (Figure 1). The collections included 11 species of the Indo-Pacific fish family Pseudochromidae: two species of the subfamily Congrogadinae, which were reported on by Gill and Zajonz (2003); two species of the pseudoplesiopine genus *Chlidichthys* Smith, which were briefly discussed by Gill and Edwards (2004); seven species of the pseudochromine genus *Pseudochromis* Rüppell, two of which represent new species. We herein provide a key to the pseudoplesiopine and pseudochromine species of Socotra, collection and other details for each species and descriptions of the two new *Pseudochromis* species. The latter descriptions are based partly on additional specimens collected subsequently from the Archipelago in 2009 and 2010. Two additional species of *Pseudochromis* are tentatively reported that were visually recorded but lack voucher specimens.