

New Records of Damsel Fishes (Pomacentridae) from South Andaman

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Abstract

Six new records of the marine fishes, family pomacentridae observed around the coral reef areas from four different Islands inside Mahatma Gandhi Marine National Park, South Andaman are reported in this paper.

Keywords: Reef fishes, Pomacentridae, MGMNP, South Andaman.

Introduction

Pomacentridae, commonly known as damselfishes and anemonefishes are one of the most abundant, small and brightly coloured tropical reef fishes. They are very popular aquarium fish. Total 17 genera & 77 species of Pomacentrids are reported from Andaman and Nicobar Islands (Ramakrishna *et al.*, 2010, and Rajan *et al.*, 2013). Our studies around reef areas of Tarmugli, Hobday, Jolly Buoy and Chester Islands inside Mahatma Gandhi Marine National Park, South Andaman revealed the presence of unreported six more species of damselfishes. These species are reported here with their morphological features and distribution.

Materials and Methods

The undersea survey has been carried out by using SCUBA diving around Chester, Hobday, jolly buoy and Tarmugli islands inside MGMNP during 2011- 2012 to study the Ichthyofaunal diversity, the specimen observed at maximum depth of 15 to 20 meters. Underwater photography was taken by Sony cyber shot (DSC-T900) camera with housing facility. The fishes were identified based on the earlier & recent literature (Rao, 2004; Allen, 2010; Kamla Devi 2015) and recorded as new report from Andaman and Nicobar islands.

Results and Discussion

Systematic Account

Class Actinopterygii Klein, 1885

Order Perciformes Bleeker, 1859

Family Pomacentridae Bonaparte, 1831

1. *Amblyglyphidodon batunai* Allen, 1995 (Fig.1.A)

Common Name: Batuna Damsel

Material observed: Tarmugli Island (Lat: 11°34. 105 N Long: 092°33. 797 E), South Andaman, Depth 5-10 meters, dated. 25.11.2011

Morphological Features: D XIII, 11-12; A II, 12-14; P. 16-18; V. I, 5. Body whitish with greenish sheen and silvery reflections; tail base dark; upper pectoral base with black spot; ventral fins white.

Habitat: Found in coral reef mostly on *Acropora* branching solitary or in pair.

Distribution: Maldives and Indonesia.

2. *Chromis westaustralis* Allen, 1976 (Fig.1.B)

Common Name: west Australian chromis

Material Observed: Hobday Island (Lat: 11°32. 337 N Long: 092°36. 194 E), South Andaman, Depth: 18-20 meters, dated: 03.07.2012.

Morphological features: D.XIII, 11-12; A. II, 10-11; P. 16; V. I, 5. Body bluish green, dark borders on tail, axil of pectoral fin with black spot; blue margin on dorsal, anal and tail fins.

Habitat: found around rocky reef areas in large aggregations.

Distribution: Eastern Indian Ocean.

3. *Lepidozygus tapeinosoma* (Bleeker, 1856) (Fig.1.C)

Common Name: Fusilier Damsel

Material Observed: Jolly Buoy (Lat: 11°30. 921 N Long: 092°36. 864 E), South Andaman, Depth: 15-20 meters, Dated: 14.12.2012

Morphological features: D.XII, 14-15; A.II, 15-16; P. 17-18; V. I, 5. Body elongate; greenish brown to yellowish; dorsally and pinkish ventrally; A yellow spot at base of last dorsal fin rays.

Habitat: often found in areas of strong current and occasionally found around lagoon patch reefs. In large aggregations feed on Zooplankton. (Allen, 1991).

Distribution: Indo-Pacific; East Africa to Line Island, Marqueran and Tuamoto Islands, north to the Ryukyu Islands and South to New Caledonia.

4. *Neoglyphidodon carlsoni* (Allen, 1975) (Fig.1.D)

Common Name: Carlson's damsel

Material Observed: Tarmugli Island (Lat: 11°34. 175 N Long: 092°33. 474 E), South Andaman. Depth: 3-5 meters, Dated: 11.12.2012

Morphological Features: D. XIII, 13-15; A. II, 12-14; P. 15-19; V. I, 5. Head and body Charcoal gray with black scale outlines. Blue spots on head & Chin; dorsal margin blue.

Habitat: Inhabit Coral reefs usually around caves. Solitary or in pair.

Distribution: Western central pacific; Fiji.

5. *Neoglyphidodon thoracotaeniatus* (Fowler & Bean, 1928) (Fig.1.E)

Common Name: Barhead damsel

Material Observed: Tarmugli Island (Lat: 11°34. 175 N Long: 092°33. 474 E), South Andaman, Depth: 10-15 meters, Dated: 11.12.2012

Morphological Features: D. XIII, 12-14; A.II, 13-14; P. 15-18; V.I, 5. Body gray anterior; gradating to nearly dark posteriorly; three vertical dark brown head bars with white in between; dark spot on pectoral axil.

Habitat: Found in coral reef areas solitary or in loose groups.

Distribution: Indonesia, the Philippines, New Guinea and the Solomon Island.

6. *Pomacentrus reidi* Fowler & Bean, 1928 (Fig.1.F)

Common Name: Reid's damsel

Material Observed: Chester Island (Lat: 11°35. 194 N Long: 092°34. 708E), South Andaman, Depth: 5-10 meters, Dated: 04.07.2012

Morphological Features: D. XIII, 13-15; A.II, 15-16; P. 17-18; V I, 5. Body uniform light gray; blue streaks or spot present on cheek & gill cover; light blue streak on each body scale; pectoral fin axil with dark spot.

Habitat: Found in outer reef slopes, typically solitary.

Distribution: Indo- Australian; Philippines, Celebes, Australia and Solomon Islands.

During this taxonomic study of ichthyofauna the six new records of fishes recorded under one order, one family and five genera. This newly recorded fishes *Amblyglyphidodon batunai* Allen, 1995, *Chromis westaustralis* Allen, 1976, *Lepidozygus tapeinosoma* (Bleeker, 1856), *Neoglyphidodon carlsoni* (Allen, 1975) *Neoglyphidodon thoracotaeniatus* (Fowler & Bean, 1928) and *Pomacentrus reidi* Fowler & Bean, 1928 were observed from the coral reef habitat of MGMNP, South Andaman. In addition of this six records of fishes enhance

the number of one genera and six species of pomacentrids in the ichthyofaunal checklist of Andaman and Nicobar Islands and resulted a total 1634 species of the fish diversity of these islands.

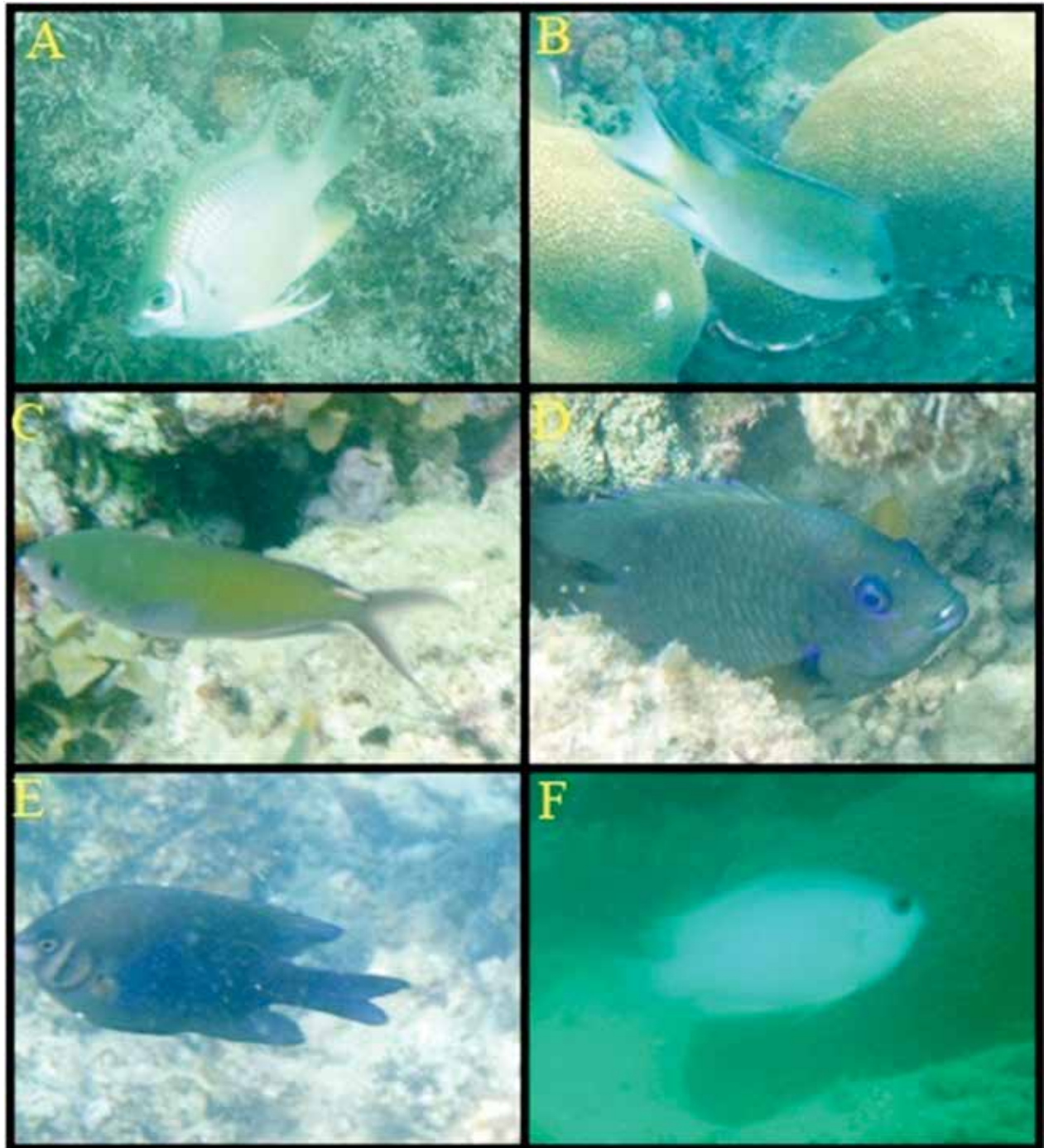


Fig. 1. Underwater photograph of Damselfish from South Andaman

A. *Amblyglyphidodon batunai* Allen, 1995, B. *Chromis westaustralis* Allen, 1976,

C. *Lepidozygus tapeinosoma* (Bleeker, 1856), D. *Neoglyphidodon carlsoni* (Allen, 1975),

E. *Neoglyphidodon thoracotaeniatus* (Fowler & Bean, 1928), F. *Pomacentrus reidi* Fowler & Bean, 1928

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