

***Urolophus kapalensis* sp. nov., a new stingaree (Myliobatiformes: Urolophidae) off eastern Australia**

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Abstract

A new stingaree, *Urolophus kapalensis* sp. nov., is described from material collected off eastern Australia. It differs from the partially sympatric *U. paucimaculatus*, the only other known *Urolophus* with a bell-shaped internasal flap, in having a dorsal fin (absent in *U. paucimaculatus*), in coloration (e.g. with a V-shaped band across the interorbit, which is absent in *U. paucimaculatus*), and in a number of morphometric and meristic characters including: a narrower disc (disc width 4.6–5.0 times distance between first gill slits vs 5.1 in *U. paucimaculatus*), a longer stinging spine (11.8–14.9 vs 9.3–11.5% TL), a shorter spiracle (0.8–1.0 vs 1.1–1.2 times orbit length), and more pre-spine vertebrae (86–95 vs 79–88). The two species are also distinguished by the cytochrome oxidase subunit 1 (CO1) gene with a divergence of 9%. The new *Urolophus* is medium-sized, and occurs from Cape Moreton (Qld) south to Disaster Bay (N.S.W.) in depths of 9–79 m.

Key words: Australia, new species, southwestern Pacific Ocean, stingaree, Tasman Sea, Urolophidae, *Urolophus*

Introduction

The batoid family Urolophidae, otherwise known as stingarees, is represented in Australia by two genera *Trygonoptera* Müller & Henle, 1841 and *Urolophus* Müller & Henle, 1837 (Last & Stevens 1994; Last & Compagno 1999). Members of *Trygonoptera* are readily identified by the presence of broad, flattened fleshy lobes on the mid-lateral margin of each nostril (lobes absent in *Urolophus*) (Last & Stevens 1994). Phylogenetically significant skeletal differences also distinguish the two genera and these are the subject of a forthcoming paper by Yearsley, Last & Gomon (in prep.).

Urolophus contains 22 valid nominal species, with 15 recorded from Australian seas (Last & Stevens 1994, Séret & Last 2003). Two new Australian *Urolophus* species were