NOMENCLATURE OF THE SPOTTED TRIGGERFISH, BALISTES PUNCTATUS, OF THE EASTERN ATLANTIC.—In reviewing the systematics of Balistidae in the western Atlantic, I discovered that the earliest name applicable to the spotted triggerfish of the eastern Atlantic is Balistes punctatus Gmelin 1788. I also determined that Balistes forcipatus Gmelin 1788 is synonymous with B. capriscus Gmelin 1788. The name B. forcipatus has been used for the spotted triggerfish of the eastern Atlantic, and on several occasions has been applied to specimens from the western Atlantic.

Apparently B. punctatus is confined to the eastern Atlantic. Records of its occurrence in the western Atlantic are based either on the type descriptions of B. spilotopterygius
Walbaum, _B. powelli_ Cope, or _B. moribundus_ Cope which Jordan and Evermann (1898:1702) listed as junior synonyms of _B. forcipatus_, or on the belief that the type specimen of _B. punctatus_ was taken in the West Indies. I have not been able to determine the type locality of _B. punctatus_.

_Balistes punctatus_ Gmelin, 1788  
Spotted triggerfish


_Balistes guttatus_ Walbaum, 1792:467 (locality not given).

_Balistes ciliaris_ Bloch and Schneider, 1801: 471 (locality not given).

_Balistes radiata_ Bowdich in: Bowdich, 1825: 233, fig. 45 (St. Jago Island).

_Balistes dicrostigma_ (Guichenot) Dumeril, 1861:261 (Gorée) _nomen nudum_.

_Balistes liberiensis_ Steindachner, 1867:9–11, fig. 3 (Monrovia).

_B. punctatus_ Gmelin is the first available name given to the eastern Atlantic _Balistes_ that has many dark round spots on the body and several filamentous rays in the second dorsal fin. The description of stipvisch (misprinted stipvis) in: Nieuhof (1682:274) resembles the eastern Atlantic spotted _Balistes_ that has been incorrectly called _B. forcipatus_ by many authors. The illustration given by Willughby (1686:pl. I22, see Fig. 1), to which Gmelin (1788:1472) referred in describing _B. forcipatus_, is of _B. capriscus_. Stipvisch (_= B. punctatus_) was described again and illustrated by Nieuhof in: Willughby (1686:append. p. 7, pl. 9, fig. 4, see Fig. 2).

The description of _B. ciliaris_ Bloch and Schneider, is a composite that refers to _Guapervia_ etc. of Lister in: Willughby (1686: append. p. 21) and Willughby (1686:pl. 122) as well as to stipvisch in: Nieuhof (1682:274). However, the pectoral fin ray counts (13/13) given for _B. ciliaris_ are referable to _B. punctatus_, not _B. capriscus_. _B. radiata_ Bowdich and _B. liberiensis_ Steindachner both have descriptions and illustrations referable to _B. punctatus_. LeDanois (1961:515) iden-
ified the specimen of *B. dicrostigma* Guichenot as *B. forcipatus* (= *B. punctatus*). *Nematobalistes* Fraser-Brunner (1955:661) was supposedly distinguished from *Balistes* by the elongated second dorsal rays. I follow most subsequent authors in regarding it as a junior synonym of *Balistes*.

*Balistes punctatus* has a generally gray body with rounded dark or blue spots covering most of the body posterior to the eye (Fig. 3). On fresh adult specimens (Fig. 3), dark or light smaller spots may be found on the cheeks and snout (see also Poll, 1959: fig. 81, pl. 7). About five light lines radiate antero-ventrally from the eye, and two curved light lines extend backward and downward across the snout just back of the mouth. An area posterior to the gill slit lacks spots or lines. The area anterior and ventral to the pectoral base, that also lacks spots or lines on the specimen illustrated in Fig. 3, had about eight vertical light lines on a fresh specimen illustrated by Poll (1959:pl. 7, figs. 1, 2). The vertical wavy lines immediately above the anal fin base on Fig. 3 are more pronounced on Poll’s illustrations. A large dark saddle is often present over the dorsal portion of the caudal base. Dark spots are present on the dorsal and anal fins, and the dorsal and ventral margins of the caudal fin, but are absent from the pectoral. The caudal has a vertical light band near its distal end. In smaller juveniles the radiating and curved lines on the head are present, but the dark spots on the side are less numerous.

The anterior end of the second dorsal fin is elevated and in adult specimens the second through the sixth fin rays are elongated—three or four are filamentous and separated (Fig. 3). The anterior part of the anal fin is not elevated. This combination of adult characters is diagnostic of this species. In small juveniles, the anterior rays of the second dorsal fin are slightly produced, but none is elongated or separated. The number of pectoral rays is consistently lower (13/13 or 12/13) than in other *Balistes* species studied in the western Atlantic [a few *Balistes capriscus* have 13/14 pectoral rays] (Moore, in press).

The known range of *B. punctatus* is the eastern Atlantic, the Madeira, Canary, and Cape Verde islands, and along the coast of West Africa from Spanish Sahara to Angola.

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