



Department of
Primary Industries and
Regional Development

Protect
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Commonly caught flatheads of southern Western Australia

Identification guide



Western Australian waters are home to many different types of flatheads (family *Platycephalidae*), with at least 14 genera and 36 species occurring along our coast. This guide highlights identifying features and provides distribution maps for some of the key species. Often, differences in the caudal fin (tail fin) colour and pattern are the best distinguishing feature.

Rock flathead

Platycephalus laevigatus



Distribution



Dense dark spots over yellow caudal fin, upper spine on gill cover longer than lower spine. Maximum length 810 mm.

Bigtooth flathead

Platycephalus chauliodous



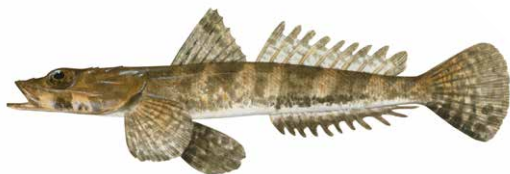
Distribution



Reddish brown on upper body including caudal fin. Maximum length 470 mm.

Fringe-eye flathead

Cymbacephalus nematophthalmus



Distribution



7 to 8 dusky bands across back and sides, mottled fins, 'fringes' over eyes. Maximum length 580 mm.

Longhead flathead

Leviprora inops



Distribution



Relatively long head, dark spots over caudal fin. Maximum length 655 mm.

Longspine flathead

Platycephalus grandispinis



Distribution



Caudal fin upper half yellow, blackish lower half but without distinct dark blotches. Lower gill cover spine much longer than upper. Maximum length 380 mm.

Western-Australian flathead

Platycephalus orbitalis



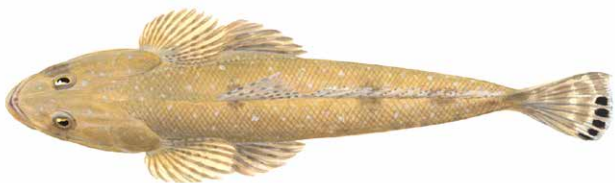
Distribution



Caudal fin blackish, with a white rear margin and many blackish short bars continuous with middle blackish area. Maximum length 610 mm.

Southern bluespotted flathead

Platycephalus speculator



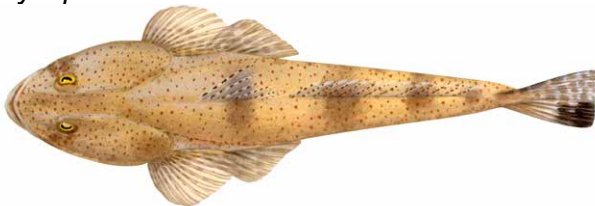
Distribution



Sparse blue spots on upper body, rear edge of caudal fin with 3 to 5 large, round, white-edged black spots, upper part of caudal fin with dusky brown blotches. Maximum length 900 mm.

Southern sand flathead

Platycephalus bassensis



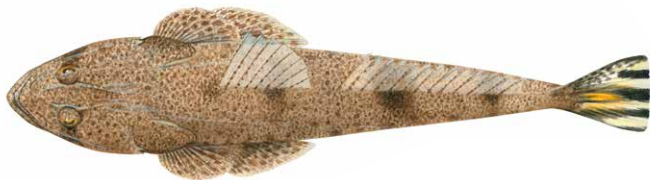
Distribution



Lower caudal fin has large, blackish blotches, upper with brownish blotches, lower spine on gill cover much larger than upper spine. Maximum length 550 mm.

Bartail flathead

Platycephalus australis



Distribution



2 or 3 horizontal blackish bars on caudal fin and a prominent yellow stripe in middle of fin; large dark blotch inside the gill cover. Maximum length 1,000 mm.

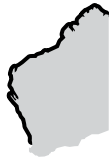
Note: Not to be confused with *Platycephalus westraliae* and *Platycephalus endrachtensis* which are also known as 'bartail flathead'.

Yellowtail flathead (Bartailed flathead)

Platycephalus westraliae



Distribution



Caudal fin whitish, with bright yellow stripe on upper edge and 3 or 4 horizontal dark bars below. Maximum length 760 mm.

Note: This species is commonly caught in the Swan-Canning Estuary and often referred to as 'bartail' or 'bartailed' flathead, but is not to be confused with *Platycephalus australis*.

Northern sand flathead

Platycephalus endrachtensis



Distribution



Body with brown spots, 4 or more dark horizontal bars on caudal fin. Maximum length 620 mm.

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