

The Permit Debate.

Seems there is no debate after all. After taking one of each of the Permit we catch in tropical Australian waters (for positive identification in case one was not described) and making some enquires I received an email from the Curator of Fishes, Queensland Museum on the 26-10-07. An excerpt of same below.

.....there are two species of this group known from northern Australia, *Trachinotus blochii* and the lesser known, *Trachinotus anak*. These species vary in body shape considerably with age (the juveniles are relatively shorter and deeper than the adults). In fish of the same size *T. blochii* has higher dorsal and anal fin lobes than *T. anak*, and the lobes of these fins are dull yellowish with prominent black edges in *T. blochii*, whereas they are generally plain dark orange to yellow (no prominent black edge) in large specimens of *anak*. There are also clear differences in the shape of the bony growths at the rear of the skull between these two species, but you would need to look internally to see those. I have attached a photo (background and below G.B.) of a smallish *T. anak* (about 2 to 3kg) – note the entirely yellow anal fin lobe and dusky yellow dorsal fin lobe, both lacking prominent black edges. If your fish turns out to be neither of these two species it would be very interesting indeed.... we are keen to get any interesting specimens, as well as muscle tissue samples for analysis.....end.

I had a hunch the ones we catch and see in the Barrier Reef waters was *T. blochii* and the ones on the west coast of the cape that we've been referring to as *T. blochii* was the other, which is in fact, *T. anak*. We are forwarding the two species we have to the museum for absolute confirmation and their continued research.

Scientific names are the only way to *technically* refer to or argue fish specie names. Colloquial names of the same species often changes with geographic location and any serious argument using such names is a nonsense.



← *Trachinotus blochii*. (left) caught on a northern Great Barrier Reef sand cay.

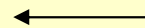
Trachinotus anak (below left) caught on the west coast of Cape York and referred to using the common name Indo Pacific Permit.

If *T. falcatus* is commonly called Atlantic Permit, and *T. anak* commonly called Indo Pacific Permit, would it not be prudent in sports fishing circles to commonly call (for argument sake) *T. blochii*, something Permit also?



Small west coast
T. anak

T. falcatus



Museum photo *T. anak*