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***Trachythyone flaccida*, a new sea cucumber species from southern Angola  
(Echinodermata: Holothuroidea: Dendrochirotida: Cucumariidae)  
with key to the genus**

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**Abstract**

A new species of a cucumariid holothuroid, *Trachythyone flaccida*, is described from shallow water off the southern coast of Angola. This increases to 20 the number of species in the genus *Trachythyone*. The new species is characterized by a soft, barrel-shaped body, scattered non-retractile tube feet, and body wall ossicles comprising a superficial layer of cup-like baskets and a deeper layer of simple, smooth, multilocular plates; cross-shaped deposits may also occur. The new species appears most closely related to the subantarctic *T. bouvatensis* (Ludwig & Heding, 1935) and to the Brazilian *T. crassipeda* Cherbonnier, 1965. A key is provided to all species currently classified in this genus.

**Key words:** *Trachythyone*, Colochirinae, new species, Angola, southern Africa, south-west Africa

**Introduction**

Panning (1949) in his revision of the known cucumariid holothuroids classified 21 species in the genus *Trachythyone* Studer, 1876 within the subfamily Colochirinae. However, in his 1971 revision of the genus, he restricted the genus by transferring several species to *Leptopentacta* H.L. Clark, 1938 or other genera. Since then some other species have been synonymised or transferred to other genera and several new species described. The genus now contains 19 nominal species, all recognized by the World Register of Marine Species (WoRMS). In addition to these, a new species with all the characters of a typical *Trachythyone* is herein described as *T. flaccida*. It is based on several shallow-water specimens collected off the southern Angolan coast and brings to four the number of species in this genus from the West African coast. The other species recorded from this region are *T. corbicula* Cherbonnier, 1964; *T. fallax* Cherbonnier, 1958 and *T. rigidapeda* (Cherbonnier, 1952). A dichotomous key is provided to distinguish all species correctly assigned to this genus.

The new species appears closely related to *T. bouvetensis* (Ludwig & Heding, 1935) from the Antarctic-Subantarctic region and *T. crassipeda* Cherbonnier, 1965 from Brazil. It also shows some resemblance to *T. corbicula* Cherbonnier, 1965 and *T. fallax* Cherbonnier, 1958 from the West African coast.

All specimens are deposited in the Iziko South African Museum with SAM-A catalogue numbers.

**Taxonomy**

**Order Dendrochirotida Grube, 1840**

**Family Cucumariidae Ludwig, 1894**

**Subfamily Colochirinae Panning, 1949**