

Notes on a Collection of Syngnathid Fishes from Malaya

By G. PALMER

Department of Zoology, British Museum (Nat. Hist.)

(Received August, 1952)

THE SMALL collection of Syngnathid fishes listed below was collected mainly in the region around Singapore and sent to the British Museum by Mr. M. W. F. Tweedie for identification.

There are 103 specimens representing eight genera and thirteen species. One of these, *Ichthyocampus belcheri*, appears to be a new record for the Indo-Australian Archipelago. The opportunity has been taken of recording notes on *Nannocampus subosseus* Günther, a species not represented in this collection.

Syngnathidae

Syngnathoides biaculeatus (Bloch)

Thirteen examples of this common species, 104–186 mm. in length, from Siglap, Singapore.

Doryichthys deokhatoides (Bleeker)

Three specimens, 69–117 mm. in length, taken at Kota Tinggi, Johore. The caudal rings in the largest example are 27 in number.

Doryichthys martensi (Peters)

Eight specimens, 90–114 mm. in length, from Mawai District, Johore. This constitutes the second record of the species from this locality.

Choeroichthys sculptus (Günther)

The single example, 47 mm. in length, constitutes a new record for Christmas Island, Indian Ocean.

The tail rings in this specimen are low in number and an examination of this area suggests that during life the last few rings were lost and that a new caudal fin was subsequently regenerated. Duncker (1905 and 1907) describes and figures specimens of Syngnathids showing regeneration of the caudal fin.

Choeroichthys brachysoma (Bleeker)

Three specimens, 50–53 mm. in length from Blakang, Singapore and one of 57 mm. length from Pulau Pawai, Singapore. In the two larger examples the inferior cristae of the trunk are continuous with the inferior cristae of the tail. This condition is at variance with the general description, but it is assumed that these two specimens are aberrant in this respect as they agree in all other characters with typical specimens of *C. brachysoma*. Chabanaud (1929) describes and figures a specimen of *Syngnathus (Parasyngnathus) spicifer*, which exhibits an abnormal arrangement of the cristae.

Although Weber and de Beaufort (1922) state that the keels on the snout are smooth, the four specimens examined by me have these ridges minutely serrated.

Micrognathus brevirostris (Rüppell)

Three specimens, 46–47 mm. in length from Pulau Pawai, Singapore.

Syngnathus (Parasyngnathus) argyrostictus Kaup.

Two specimens, 96 and 105 mm. in length, from Singapore and North Selangor.

These two examples differ from typical specimens in having a slightly longer snout and fewer dorsal fin-rays, 23–24 instead of 25–29.

Syngnathus (Parasyngnathus) cyanospilus Bleeker

Nine examples, 78–122 mm. in length, from Singapore. One of these specimens has only 29 tail rings and the caudal fin, which appears to have been regenerated, is set at an angle of about 30° to the longitudinal axis of the body.

Ichthyocampus belcheri Kaup

Three specimens, 42–66 mm. in length, from Aor Island, 50 miles east of Mersing, Johore.

Rings 16–17 + 30–31; D.21–22; A.3; P.12.

The superior cristae of the trunk and tail are continuous; the median trunk cristae are rectilinear, ending on the 2nd–4th caudal ring; the inferior cristae of the trunk and tail are continuous. Sub-dorsal rings 2+4. The opercular keel is incomplete.

Weber and de Beaufort (1922) state that this species is not known from the Indo-Australian Archipelago and as no subsequent record has been discovered, these three examples constitute a new record for this area.

SYNGNATHID FISHES FROM MALAYA

Nannocampus weberi Duncker

Habitat: Sumba Island.

Weber and de Beaufort indicate a doubt as to whether this species is distinct from *N. subosseus* Günther from West Australia, as owing to the state of the type of the latter species, a dried specimen, it was not found possible to determine the number of dorsal rays or to see the position of the median cristae of the trunk. I have re-examined this specimen, which is now relaxed and preserved in spirit, and find that the number of dorsal rays is 14 and that the median cristae of the trunk are rectilinear, ending on the last trunk-ring.

The differences between these two species are shown below.

	<i>N. subosseus</i>	<i>N. weberi</i>
Number of trunk rings ..	15	16
Number of caudal rings ..	35	32
Number of dorsal rays ..	14	16—17
Subdorsal rings ..	1+3	1+4

Neither of these species is represented in this collection.

Trachyrhamphus serratus (Schlegel)

Three specimens, 139–178 mm. in length, from Siglap, Singapore.

Hippocampus histrix Kaup.

Seventeen specimens, 49–125 mm. in length, from Siglap, Singapore.

Hippocampus kuda Bleeker

Thirty examples, 54–142 mm. in length, from Siglap, Singapore.

Hippocampus trimaculatus Leach

Seven specimens, 62–113 mm. in length, from Singapore and Pisang Island, Malacca Strait.

References

- BLEEKER, P., 1855. *Nat. Tijdschr. Ned. Ind.* 8: 327.
 CANTOR, T., 1850. *J. Asiat. Soc. Bengal*, 18: 1368–1372.
 CHABANAUD, P., 1929. *Bull. Soc. Zool. France*, 54: 165–172.
 DUNCKER, G., 1904. *Mitt. Naturh. Mus.* 21: 188–189.
 ———, 1905. *Arch. Entw. Org. Leipzig*. 20: 30–37.
 ———, 1907. *Arch. Entw. Org. Leipzig*, 24: 656–662.
 ———, 1915. *Mitt. Naturh. (Zool.) Mus.* 32: 9–120.

G. PALMER

- FOWLER, H. W., 1934. *Proc. Acad. Nat. Sci. Philad.* 86: 145-146.
———, 1940. *Proc. U.S. Nat. Mus.* 85: 41-44.
- GÜNTHER, A., 1870. *Cat. Fish. Brit. Mus.* 8: 153-206.
- HERRE, A. W. C. T., 1940. *Bull. Raffles Mus. Singapore*, No. 16: 39.
- HERRE, A. W. C. T. & MYERS, G. S., 1937. *Bull. Raffles Mus. Singapore*, No. 13: 18-19.
- JORDAN, D. S. & SEALE, A., 1907. *Bull. U.S. Bur. Fish.* 26: 10.
- KAUP, J., 1856. *Cat. Loph. Fish. Brit. Mus.*
- PALMER, G., 1950. *Bull. Raffles Mus. Singapore*, No. 23: 200-205.
- SCHIULTZ, L. P., 1943. *Bull. U.S. Nat. Mus.* 180: 71-76.
- WEBER, M. & DE BEAUFORT, L. F., 1922. *Fishes Indo-Austr. Arch.* 4: 30-114