



Notes on the congrid eel genus *Parabathymyrus* from the western Pacific Ocean, with the description of a new species (Pisces: Anguilliformes: Congridae)

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Abstract

The congrid eel genus *Parabathymyrus* from the western Pacific Ocean is reviewed and three species are recognized: *Parabathymyrus macrophthalmus* from Japan, Taiwan, Vietnam and Australia, *P. brachyrhynchus* from Taiwan, Vietnam, the Philippines, Vanuatu and Solomon Islands, and a new species, *P. philippinensis* sp. nov., is described based on two specimens collected from the Philippines. These three species can be distinguished from each other by the number of total vertebrae (128–137 in *P. macrophthalmus*, 162–173 in *P. brachyrhynchus* and 140–141 in *P. philippinensis* sp. nov.), preanal vertebrae (39–46, 49–58, and 42), preanal lateral-line pores (36–44, 46–54, and 40–42), total lateral-line pores (121–131, 159–169, and 140–141) and supraorbital pores (4, 4 and 3).

Key words: Pisces, Teleostei, taxonomy, *Parabathymyrus philippinensis* sp. nov.

Introduction

The congrid eel genus *Parabathymyrus* is a group of stout eels inhabiting the continental shelf and slope at depths around 100–500 m. It is characterized by a relatively short snout, usually smaller than eye diameter; eye wide and over the mouth rictus; teeth relatively small and villiform; gill opening relatively small; posterior nostril low on head near lip, covered by a flap dorsally.

Kamohara (1938) established the genus *Parabathymyrus* and its type species *Parabathymyrus macrophthalmus*. Smith & Kanazawa (1977) placed *Ariosoma brachyrhynchus* Fowler, 1934 in *Parabathymyrus* and described a new species, *P. oregoni*, from the western Atlantic. Since then, two species have been added to the genus, *P. karrerae* Karmovskaya, 1991 from the Western Indian Ocean and *P. fijiensis* Karmovskaya, 2004 from Fiji.

In the western Pacific region, only *P. macrophthalmus* was commonly recorded from Japan, Taiwan and South China Sea (Chen & Weng, 1967; Masuda *et al.*, 1984; Shen, 1984; Mok in Shen *et al.*, 1993; Smith, 2000; Nakabo, 2013). The other species, *P. brachyrhynchus*, was rarely mentioned (Smith, 1999; Iwamoto & McCosker, 2014).

Chen & Weng (1967) recorded three specimens of *P. macrophthalmus* collected from southern Taiwan. However, their specimens all have more vertebrae and lateral-line pores and are not identical to *P. macrophthalmus*, but rather to *P. brachyrhynchus*. Examination of specimens collected from the western Pacific Ocean have revealed that three nominal species are present: *Parabathymyrus macrophthalmus* from Taiwan, Vietnam, the Philippines, Australia and India; *P. brachyrhynchus* from Taiwan, Vietnam, Vanuatu and Solomon Islands; and *P. fijiensis* from Fiji.

A new species was found in the ASIZ collection represented by two specimens collected from the Philippines. It differs from the congeners in having different meristic features and is formally described and named herein.