

Two new species of the genus *Chlopsis* (Teleostei: Anguilliformes: Chlopsidae) from the Southwestern Pacific

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Abstract

Chlopsis slusserorum, from Fiji and the Solomon Islands, and *Chlopsis bidentatus*, from Fiji and New Caledonia, two new deepwater species of false moray eels belonging to the family Chlopsidae, are described and illustrated. *Chlopsis slusserorum* is distinguished from all other chlopsids by its combination of high vertebral count and distinctive pigmentation. *Chlopsis bidentatus* is distinguished by the combination of bicolored pigmentation, dorsal origin slightly behind gill opening and anteriorly biserial vomerine dentition.

Key words: Eels, *Chlopsis slusserorum*, *Chlopsis bidentatus*, new species, Fiji, Solomon Islands

Introduction

The most recent reviews of the genus *Chlopsis* were those of Lavenberg (1988) and Smith (1989). Lavenberg (1988) recognized four species from the eastern Pacific: *C. apterus* (Beebe and Tee Van, 1938), *C. bicollaris* (Myers and Wade, 1941), *C. kazuko* Lavenberg, 1988 and *C. longidens* (Garman, 1899). Although *C. longidens* is based on a leptocephalus and is probably the larva of one of the other species, Lavenberg (1988) did not conclusively identify this species with an adult. However, he did indicate that it was likely that it was the larva of *C. bicollaris*. Smith (1989) recognized six species: *C. apterus*, *C. bicollaris* and *C. kazuko* from the eastern tropical Pacific, *C. olokun* (Robins and Robins, 1966) from the eastern tropical Atlantic, *C. bicolor* Rafinesque, 1810 from the Mediterranean and Atlantic and *C. dentatus* (Seale, 1917) from the tropical western Atlantic, western Indian and western Pacific Oceans.