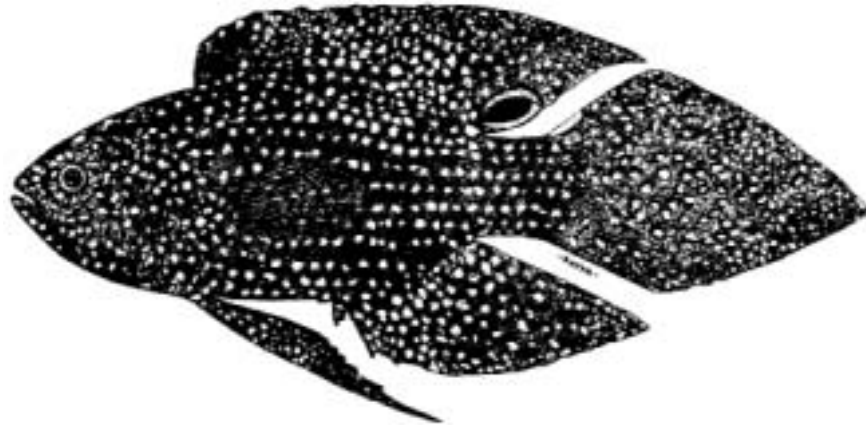


Callopleysiops altivelis (Steindachner, 1903)



English Name: Comet
Local Name: Dhunthari mas
Size: Max. 16 cm

Family: PLESIOPIDAE
Order: Perciformes
Specimen: MRS/0283/88

Distinctive Characters: Dorsal fin with 11 spines and 8-9 rays. Anal fin with 3 spines and 9 rays. Pectoral rays 18-19. Body depth 2.5-2.7 in standard length. Spinous membranes of dorsal fin not incised. Dorsal and anal fin somewhat elevated. Caudal fin long and pointed.

Colour: Black with small round bluish-white spots on head and body (one per scale), and scaled basal parts of fins. A prominent ocellus at the base of last dorsal rays.

Habitat and Biology: A secretive species, living in caves and crevices on the reef slope.

Distribution: Indo-Pacific.

Remarks: *Calloplesiops altivelis* is fairly common on protected coral reefs in the Maldives. However, it is rarely seen by divers because of its secretive habits. When threatened it may present its tail to the intruder displaying the prominent posterior eyespot. This is thought by some to be mimicry of the Spotted moray eel.

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