

Genypterus tigerinus Klunzinger, 1872

Synonyms: None.

FAO names: En - Rock ling.

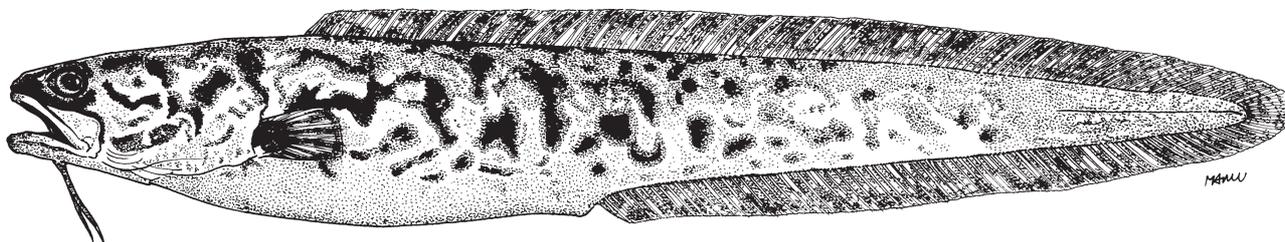


Fig. 36 *Genypterus tigerinus* (after Last et al., 1983)

Diagnosis: Head and body grey or whitish with large irregular dark blotches; large adults darker, almost black; dorsal-fin rays 144 to 157; anal-fin rays 107 to 117; pyloric caeca 8 (3+5).

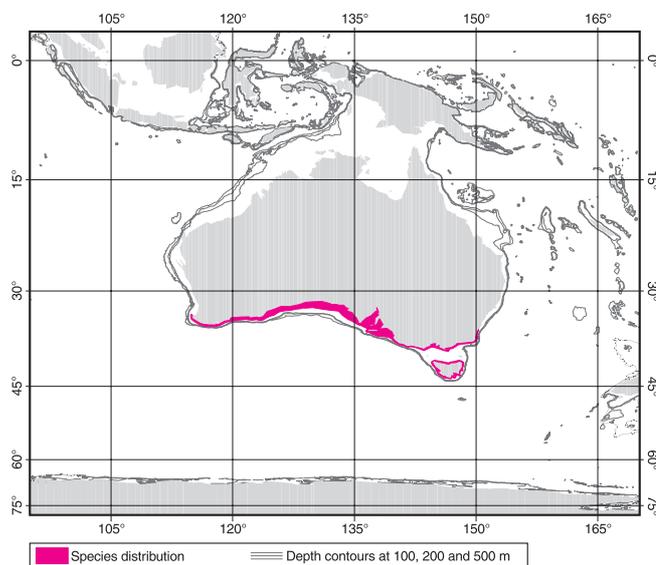
Geographical distribution: Southern coast of Australia from New South Wales to Western Australia.

Habitat and biology: Benthic in rocky habitat from shallows to 60 m, juveniles more common in shallow water in grass beds. Uncommon.

Interest to fisheries: Less common in the commercial trade than other species but of equal value.

Local names: AUSTRALIA: Rock ling.

Size: At least 1.2 m.

*Lepophidium* Gill, 1895

Type species: *Leptophidium profundorum* Gill, 1863b, preoccupied by *Leptophidium* Hallowell, 1860 (in snakes); *Lepophidium* Gill, 1895 (replacement name for *Leptophidium* preoccupied).

Synonyms: None.

Number of recognized species: 15.

Diagnosis and description: Rostral spine long and curved, reaching tip of snout, without vertical basal component; peritoneum pale; no median basibrachial tooth patch; head extensively covered with imbricate rows of cycloid scales except for snout and throat; body tapering to point, dagger-shaped.

Revisions: Robins (1962), Robins and Lea (1978) both dealing with Pacific species.

Geographical distribution: Western Atlantic from southeastern Canada to southern Brazil, eastern Pacific from Baja California to Peru.

Habitat and biology: From shallow coastal waters to the upper slope.

Interest to fisheries: Little. *Lepophidium brevibarbe* enters the shrimp bycatch fishery in Colombia as “perla”. *L. negropinna*, the largest species, is sufficiently large to be of commercial value but is currently not harvested, except, perhaps locally.

Size: 150 to about 500 mm.

Key to species (only available for Pacific species)

- 1a. Body with numerous large dark brown blotches; esophagus dark; gill chamber pale; pharynx dusky; mouth pale *L. pardale*
- 1b. Body rather uniformly pigmented, slightly paler below or with only a series of dark dashes along lateral line or markings confined to vertical fins; esophagus, gill chamber, oral cavity variously pigmented but not as above → 2
- 2a. Esophagus, gill chamber (sometimes with scattered melanophores dorsally) and oral cavity pale → 3
- 2b. Esophagus or gill chamber dark (almost black), oral cavity pale. → 4
- 3a. Lateral line with dark dash between each pore anteriorly; vertical fins with dark margins (particularly anal fin), basal section of dorsal fin not spotted. *L. prorates*
- 3b. Lateral line unmarked; vertical fins dark, the margins especially so; basal section of dorsal fin spotted or mottled (sometimes difficult to see in heavily pigmented individuals) *L. negropinna*
- 4a. Gill chamber black; esophagus dusky; dorsal fin with dark spot between rays no. 4 to 14; pectoral-fin rays 19 to 21 *L. stigmatistium*
- 4b. Gill chamber pale; esophagus black; dorsal fin unspotted; pectoral-fin rays 23 or 24 *L. microlepis*

List of nominal species

Note: for convenience the species are divided between western Atlantic and eastern Pacific.

Western Atlantic species

Lepophidium aporrhox Robins, 1961. From Honduras to Suriname. Benthic from 50 to 125 m. Uncommon.

L. brevibarbe (Cuvier, 1829). See species account.

L. cervinum (Goode and Bean, 1885a) (junior synonym of *L. profundorum*).

L. graellsii (Poey, 1861) (junior synonym of *L. brevibarbe*).

L. jeannae Fowler, 1941. From southeastern United States to southern Florida and the Gulf of Mexico. Benthic from 25 to 100 m. Uncommon.

L. kallion Robins, 1959b. From Bahamas and Greater Antilles to Barbados. Benthic from 350 to 520 m. Uncommon.

L. marmoratum (Goode and Bean, 1885a). From Bahamas, Cuba, and Yucatan to Nicaragua and the Virgin Islands. Benthic from 155 to 525 m. Uncommon.

L. pheromystax Robins, 1960. From Puerto Rico and Colombia to northeastern Brazil. Benthic from 50 to 125 m. Common.

L. profundorum (Gill, 1863b). From Georges Bank, Canada to northern Florida and Gulf of Mexico. Benthic from 55 to 365 m. A report of this species from the Tyrennian Sea (Nielsen and Bini, 1972) is based on a specimen from a fish-monger and is regarded as spurious. It was most likely included in a shipment of cod from the western Atlantic. Uncommon.

L. staurophor Robins, 1959a. From southern Gulf of Mexico (off Yucatan) to western Caribbean Sea. Benthic from 180 to 485 m. Rare.

Remarks: In addition there are 8 undescribed species from the western Atlantic. Their descriptions are being prepared by C. Richard Robins.

Eastern Pacific species

Lepophidium microlepis (Gilbert, 1890). From western coast of Baja California and Gulf of California to Peru. Divided into 3 north to south subspecies from Robins and Lea (1978): *L. microlepis microlepis* (Gilbert, 1890), *L. m. hubbsi* Robins and Lea, 1978, and *L. m. inca* Robins and Lea, 1978. Benthic from 70 to 320 m (shallower records from off Peru are based on composite collection over a wide range of depths and are likely in error). Uncommon.

L. negropinna Hildebrand and Barton, 1949. See species account.

L. pardale (Gilbert, 1890). From Gulf of California to Peru. Benthic in 6 to 90 m. Uncommon.

L. prorates (Jordan and Bollman, 1890). From northern Gulf of California to southern Colombia. Benthic from 7 to 90 m. Common.

L. stigmatistium (Gilbert, 1890). From Gulf of California and outer coast of Baja California. Benthic from 55 to 205 m. Rare.

Lepophidium brevibarbe (Cuvier, 1829)

Synonyms: *Lepophidium graellsii* (Poey, 1861).

FAO names: **En** - Shortbeard cusk-eel; **Fr** - Brotule barbiche; **Sp** - Perla barbarcorta.

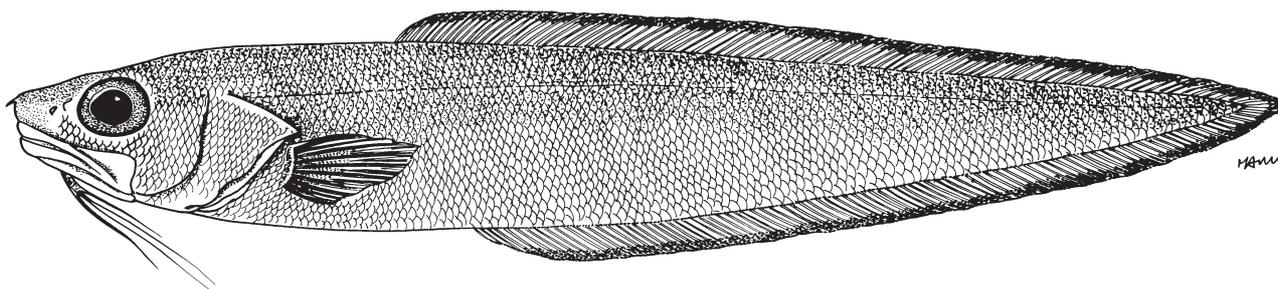


Fig. 37 *Lepophidium brevibarbe* (from Cervigón, 1991)

Diagnosis and description: Head and body tan, unmarked except for dark margin to dorsal fin and, to a lesser extent, anal fin; dorsal-fin rays 124 to 134; anal-fin rays 99 to 110; precaudal vertebrae 15 (occasionally 14), caudal vertebrae 54 to 56 (57), total vertebrae 69 to 72(73); gill rakers usually 3 (2 to 4) rudiments on upper limb of first arch, 4 (very rarely 5) developed rakers on lower limb.

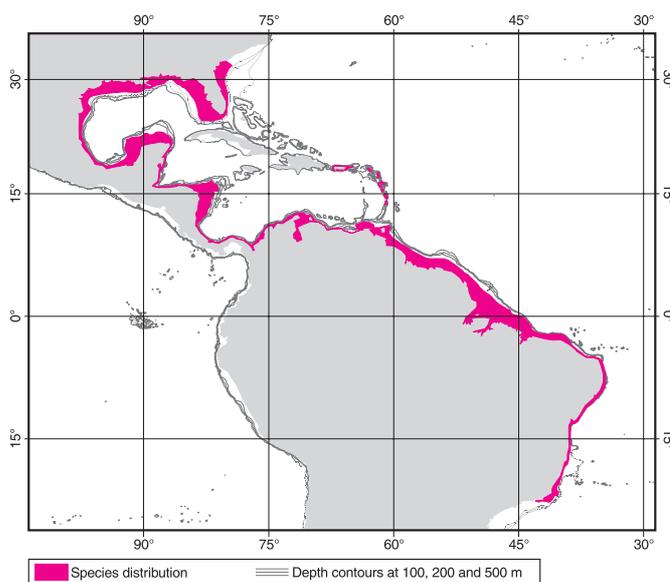
Geographical distribution: Southeastern United States and northern Gulf of Mexico to southern Brazil.

Habitat and biology: Benthic from waters edge to 75 m. Common.

Interest to fisheries: Of minor economic importance. Sometimes harvested as by-catch of the shrimp trawling fishery. In Colombia it is marketed under the local name of "perla". Landings by the Cuban fleet are less than 100 t/year.

Local names: Blackedge cusk-eel.

Size: At least 260 mm.



Lepophidium negropinna Hildebrand and Barton, 1949

Synonyms: None.

FAO names: **En** - Specklefin cusk-eel; **Fr** - Congriperle tacheté; **Sp** - Congriperla pintada.

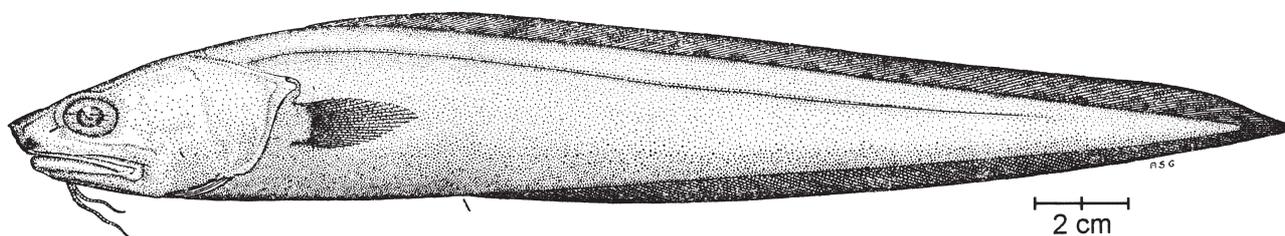


Fig. 38 *Lepophidium negropinna* (from Hildebrand and Barton, 1949)

Diagnosis and description: Dorsal fin with dark margin and dark mottling or spots throughout the fin; dorsal-fin rays 134 to 148; anal-fin rays 111 to 123; precaudal vertebrae 16 (15 to 17), caudal vertebrae 60 to 63 (59 to 64), total vertebrae 75 to 77.