

FAO SPECIES IDENTIFICATION SHEETS

FISHING AREA 51
(W. Indian Ocean)

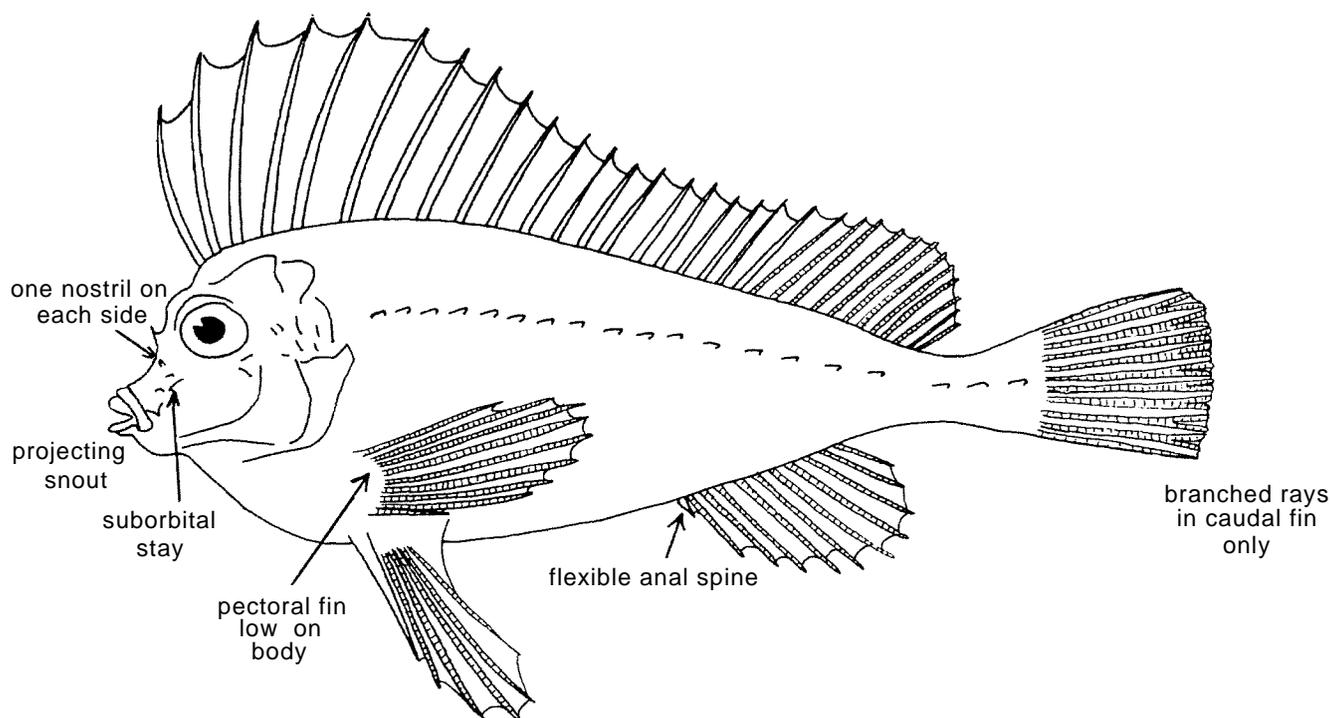
CONGIOPODIDAE*

Horsefishes

Bottom fishes, with large heads and strongly compressed bodies. Snout notably produced; a single nostril on each side of head; a short ridge of bone (suborbital stay) extends back under eye to preopercle; preopercle platelike, its margin without spines; lacrimal bone not movable; mouth terminal, toothless (or nearly so); gill openings reduced to a slit on sides of head behind last gill arch; pseudobranch with 11 to 18 filaments. Segmented rays in dorsal, anal, pectoral, and pelvic fins unbranched; segmented rays in caudal fin branched (except in young); dorsal fin continuous, originating over or before eye, with 19 to 21 spines and 11 to 15 segmented rays; spinous part of dorsal fin strongly elevated anteriorly; dorsal fin membrane not connected to caudal peduncle posteriorly; anal fin without strong spines (one weak spine often present in young), and with 7 to 10 segmented rays; pectoral fins with 9 rays; their bases relatively narrow, low on body; pelvic fins with 1 spine and 5 segmented rays; caudal fin truncate (slightly emarginate in larger adults). Body scaleless or covered with scales that form spinous points.

Colour: usually brown with irregular darker brown markings or spots.

Bottom living fishes found on the continental shelf at depths between 55 and 146 m including about 10 species in 4 genera of which 1 genus and 2 species occur in the area. Confined to cool waters of the Southern Hemisphere, Taken mainly as bycatch in trawling operations, but not of significant commercial interest.



* Family diagnosis does not apply to one southern Australian genus

LIST OF SPECIES OCCURRING IN THE AREA:

Code numbers are given for those species for which Identification Sheets are included

Congiopodus spinifer (Smith, 1839) CONGI Cong 1

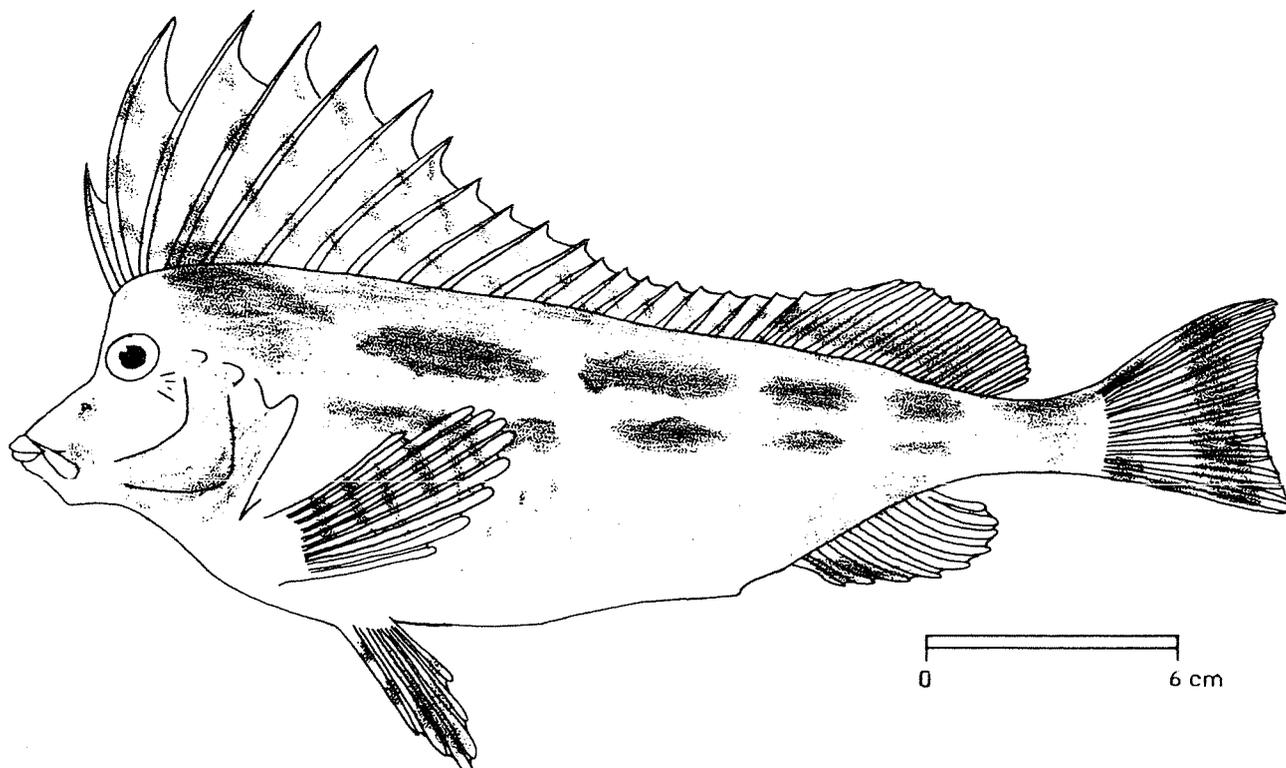
Congiopodus torvus (Gronovius, 1772) CONGI Cong 2

FAO SPECIES IDENTIFICATION SHEETS

FAMILY: CONGIOPODIDAE

FISHING AREA 51
(W. Indian Ocean)Congiopodus torvus (Gronovius, 1772)

OTHER SCIENTIFIC NAMES STILL IN USE: None



VERNACULAR NAMES:

FAO : En - Smooth horsefish
 Fr - Cacique lisse
 Sp - Cacique liso

NATIONAL:

DISTINCTIVE CHARACTERS:

A strongly compressed fish, with a conspicuously protruding snout and platelike head bones. Snout without spines, lacrimal bone, immediately posterodorsal to maxilla, without spines; gill openings restricted to a slit that begins at level of uppermost pectoral fin ray. Anal fin with 9 or 10 segmented rays. Skin papillose in young, usually smooth in adults, never with scales that form spinous points.

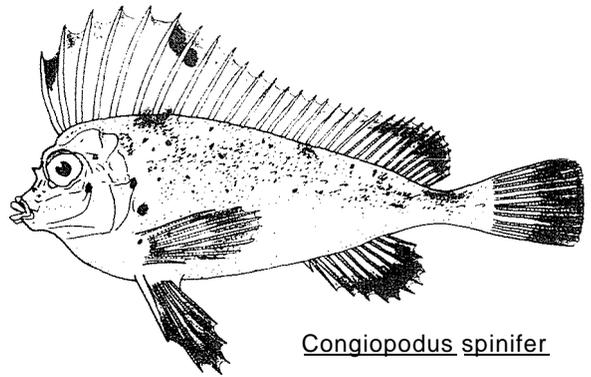
Colour: head and body brown (lighter in young); body with dark brown markings that are often arranged as two interrupted horizontal lines, one above and the other below the lateral line; markings less pronounced and regular elsewhere on body. Fins each with numerous, more or less uniformly scattered brownish-black spots and blotches.

DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERS SIMILAR SPECIES OCCURRING IN THE AREA :

Congiopodus spinifer: head and body covered with scales that form spinous points; snout with 2 strong spines (one on each nasal bone); 3 spines on lacrimal bone above mouth; 9 or 10 segmented anal fin rays.

SIZE :

Maximum: 76 cm; common to 30 cm.



Congiopodus spinifer

GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION AND BEHAVIOUR :

Within the area, known only from the southern coast of Natal; elsewhere, southward from Natal to Cape of Good Hope.

Found on soft bottoms of the continental shelf, from near shore to a depth of 146 m.

PRESENT FISHING GROUNDS :

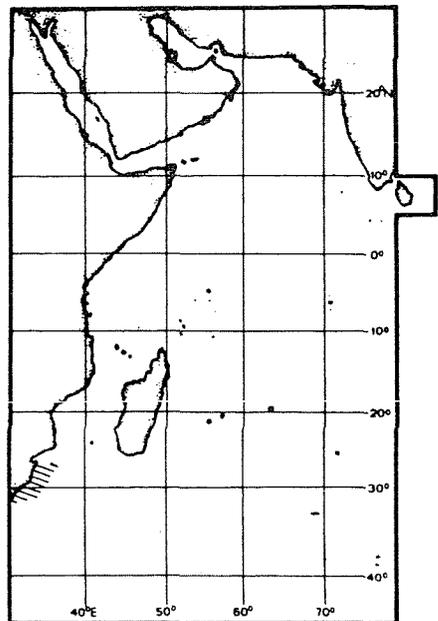
Caught incidentally throughout its range.

CATCHES, FISHING GEAR AND FORMS OF UTILIZATION :

Separate statistics are not reported for this species.

Caught as bycatch in bottom trawls.

Flesh edible, but not utilized commercially.

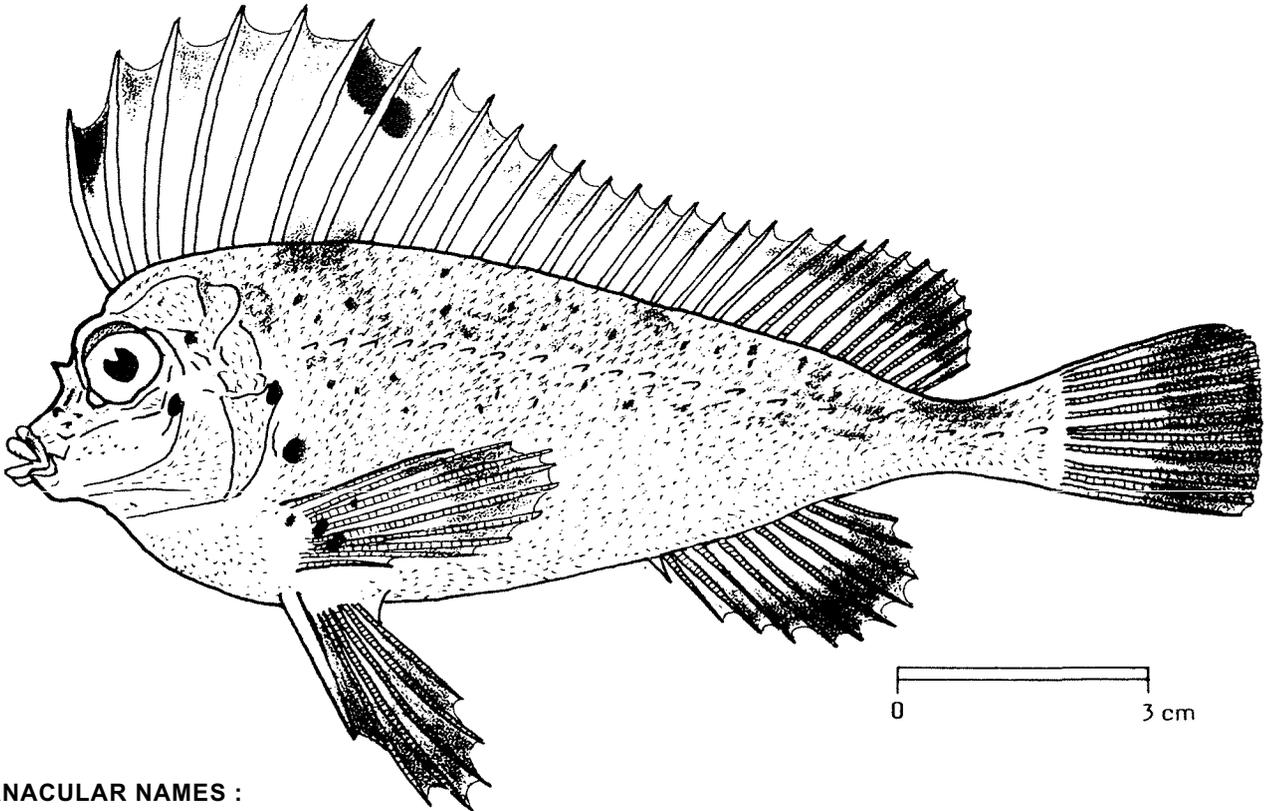


FAO SPECIES IDENTIFICATION SHEETS

FAMILY: CONGIOPODIDAE

FISHING AREA 51
(W. Indian Ocean)*Congiopodus spinifer* (Smith, 1839)

OTHER SCIENTIFIC NAMES STILL IN USE: None



VERNACULAR NAMES :

FAO : En - Spinenose horsefish
 Fr - Cacique hérisson
 Sp - Cacique erizado

NATIONAL :

DISTINCTIVE CHARACTERS :

A strongly compressed fish, with a conspicuously protruding snout and platelike head bones; snout with a spine on each nasal bone; lacrimal bone, immediately posterodorsal to maxilla, with 3 spines; gill openings restricted to a small slit that begins well above uppermost pectoral fin ray. Anal fin with 1 weak, flexible spine and 8 segmented rays. Skin rough, covered with modified scales that form strong spinous points.

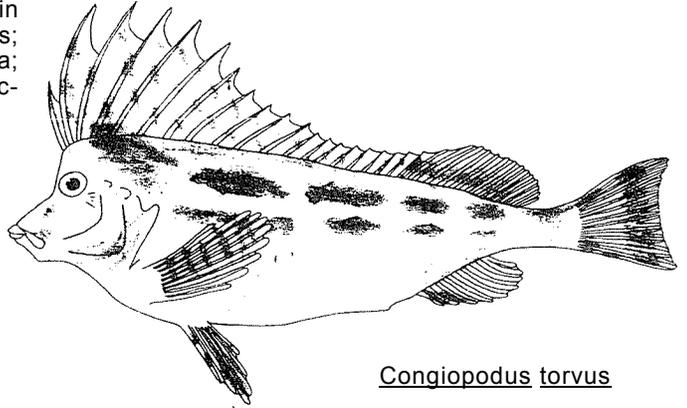
Colour: brown with scattered dark brown spots and patches. Dorsal fin pale proximally, except at base of spines 6 to 8 and nearly black distally; 2 conspicuous black blotches on dorsal fin mambrane, one between first 2 spines, another large blotch between spines 6 to 8. Other fins dark brown, nearly black distally.

DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERS SIMILAR SPECIES OCCURRING IN THE AREA :

Congiopodus torvus: snout without spines on nasal bones; skin papillose in young and usually smooth in adults, never covered with well-developed spinous scales; no spines on lacrimal bone dorsoventral to maxilla; restricted gill opening begins at level of uppermost pectoral fin ray.

SIZE :

Maximum: 20 cm; common to 17 cm.



Congiopodus torvus

GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION AND BEHAVIOUR :

Within the area, known only from South Africa; elsewhere southward and westward to Namibia.

Found on soft bottoms at depths of 55 to 146 m. This species periodically sheds the outer keratinous layer of its skin.

PRESENT FISHING GROUNDS :

Caught incidentally throughout its range.

CATCHES, FISHING GEAR AND FORMS OF UTILIZATION :

Separate statistics are not reported for this species.

Taken, often in large numbers, as bycatch in trawl fisheries.

Flesh edible but not utilized commercially.

