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Dysomma alticorpus, a new species of cutthroat eel from the Gulf of Aqaba, Red Sea (Teleostei: Synaphobranchidae)☆

Dysomma alticorpus, *une nouvelle espèce d'anguille égorgée du golfe d'Aqaba, mer Rouge (Teleostei : synaphobranchidae)*

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ABSTRACT

The cutthroat eel *Dysomma alticorpus* n. sp. is described based on a single specimen collected in a trammel net at a depth of 350 m off Eilat, Israel, Gulf of Aqaba, Red Sea. The new species belongs to the *Dysomma anguillare* species complex, which comprises species possessing a well-developed pectoral fin, intermaxillary teeth, a uniserial row of 7–15 large compound teeth in the lower jaw (which may be followed by a few smaller teeth), and an anteriorly situated anus with the trunk shorter than the head length. It is characterised by a combination of the following characters: origin of the dorsal fin well anterior to the base of the pectoral fin, predorsal length 13.8% TL; preanal length 22.8% TL; three compound teeth on the vomer; head pores: IO 4, SO 3; M 6; POP 0; AD 1, F 0, ST 0; lateral-line pores: predorsal 4, prepectoral 8, preanal 14, total 57–58, the last at the posterior two-thirds of the total length; MVF 7–16–115; total vertebrae 115. *Dysomma alticorpus* n. sp. is compared with other species of the genus. A revised key to the species of the genera *Dysomma* and *Dysommina* is provided.

Mots clés :
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RÉSUMÉ

L'anguille égorgée *Dysomma alticorpus* sp. nov. est décrite à partir d'un seul échantillon pêché au moyen de filets emmêlants à une profondeur de 350 m près d'Eilat, dans le golfe d'Aqaba (mer Rouge, Israël). La nouvelle espèce appartient aux espèces complexes de *Dysomma anguillare*, qui incluent des espèces avec des nageoires pectorales bien développées, des dents intermaxillaires, 7 à 15 grandes dents composées réparties sur un seul rang dans la mâchoire inférieure (qui peuvent être suivies par quelques autres moins grandes) et un anus situé antérieurement, un tronc plus court que la longueur de la

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tête. Elle se caractérise par une combinaison des caractères suivants : l'origine de la nageoire dorsale est bien antérieure à la base de la nageoire pectorale, la longueur prédorsale est égale à 13,8 % de la longueur totale, la longueur préanale est de 22,8 % de la longueur totale ; on relève trois dents composées au vomer ; les pores de la tête sont répartis comme suit : interorbital, 4, suborbital, 3 ; mandibulaire, 6 ; préoperculaire, 0 ; supratemporal, 0 ; les pores de la ligne latérale sont disposés comme suit : prédorsal, 4 ; prépectoral, 8 ; préanal, 14 ; au total 57–58 ; le dernier se trouve aux deux tiers postérieurs de la longueur totale ; la formule moyenne de la vertèbre est 7–16–115 ; le nombre total de vertèbres est de 115. *Dysomma alticorpus* sp. nov. est comparée à des espèces voisines. Une clé actualisée des genres des *Dysomma* et *Dysommina* est présentée.

1. Introduction

The cutthroat eel family Synaphobranchidae is a group of anguilliform fishes found worldwide in tropical and temperate oceans [1]. Adults are usually benthic, found in deep water or deep-sea habitats, while larvae are pelagic, mainly at depths of 0–2.820 m, but most frequently at depths of 450–600 m [1,2]. Synaphobranchids are arranged in the three subfamilies Simenchelyinae, Ilyophinae, and Synaphobranchinae; with 27 valid ilyophine species (compared to 12 synaphobranchine species and one simenchelyine; [3]), the Ilyophinae is the most speciose subfamily, judging from the great variety of leptocephali that have been collected; most of these larvae cannot be referred to a known adult form. They are of little or no importance to fisheries, although they are sometimes taken in deep trawls [4,5].

The genus *Dysomma* was originally described by Alcock [6], based on *Dysomma bucephalus* Alcock 1889 as the type species. The genus is mainly characterised by an origin of the dorsal fin well in advance of the adpressed pectoral fin, the presence of enlarged, compound teeth on the dentary and the vomer, a mouth gap extending to below the rear edge of the eye or beyond, a very short trunk, and an entirely naked body [4]. The genus was revised by Robins & Robins [7] who recognized six species. Subsequently, the following species were described: *D. fuscoventralis* Karrer & Klausewitz [8], *D. dolichosomatum* and *D. polycatodon* Karrer [9], *D. tridens* Robins, Böhlke & Robins in Robins & Robins [10], *D. opisthoproctus* Chen & Mok [11], *D. longirostrum* Chen & Mok [12], and *D. taiwanensis* Ho et al. [13].

During fieldwork aiming at the collection of deep-water fishes of the Gulf of Aqaba, Red Sea, a specimen of the genus *Dysomma* was collected with a trammel net from a depth of 350 m off Eilat. The specimen is described in the present paper, bringing the total number of species of *Dysomma* to 14, and the number of congeners occurring in the Red Sea to two.

2. Methods and materials

Descriptive methods follow Ho et al. [13]. The classification follows Eschmeyer et al. [14], unless otherwise noted; reference citations follow Fricke [15]. The key is based on Robins & Robins [10] and Ho et al. [13], but modified according to subsequent findings and expanded to a worldwide scope. The museum abbreviations follow Fricke & Eschmeyer [16].

2.1. Comparative material

Dysomma anguillare: CAS 235128 (1, 557 mm TL), Philippines, Luzon, 146–203 m in depth; CAS 235465 (5, 525–540 mm TL), Philippines, Luzon, 146–203 m in depth; CAS 235129 (2, 517–575 mm TL), Philippines, Luzon, 240–262 m in depth; CAS 235465 (2, 525–540 mm TL), Philippines, Luzon, 355–368 m in depth.

Dysomma brevirostre: BPBM 21068 (1, 123 mm TL), central Pacific Ocean, Hawaiian Islands, north of Maui; HUJ 15679 (1, 145 mm SL), Mediterranean Sea, Cyprus; HUJ 15683 (1, 113 mm SL), Mediterranean Sea, Israel, Rubin-Tel Aviv; HUJ 15722 (1, ca. 100 mm SL), Mediterranean Sea, Israel; HUJ 17694 (1, 164 mm SL), Mediterranean Sea, Israel, Hadera-Atlit, 320 m in depth.

Dysomma dolichosomatum: MNHN 1979–0004 (holotype, 325 mm SL), southwestern Indian Ocean, off southwestern Madagascar; MNHN 1978–0770 (1 paratype, 268 mm SL), western Pacific Ocean, Philippines, southwest of Luzon.

Dysomma fuscoventralis: HUJ 17142 (1, 231 mm TL), Red Sea, Egypt, Strait of Tiran, 1450 m in depth; HUJ 17541 (1, 264 mm TL), Red Sea, Israel, off Eilat, 172 m in depth; SMF 15660 (holotype, 174 mm TL), central Red Sea.

Dysomma goslinei: ANSP 133805 (holotype, 119 mm TL), northeastern Indian Ocean, Myanmar, off the Gulf of Martaban.

Dysomma longirostrum: MNHN 2003–1515 (1, 285 mm SL), southwestern Pacific, Norfolk Ridge.

Dysomma melanurum: USNM 398473 (1, 165 mm SL), western Pacific, Taiwan; USNM 398474 (1, 178 mm SL), western Pacific, Taiwan.

Dysomma muciparus: BPBM 22879 (2, 164–16 mm TL), central Pacific, northeast of Hawaiian Islands.

Dysomma polycatodon: MNHN 1979–0003 (holotype, 523 mm SL), southwestern Indian Ocean, off northwestern Madagascar.

Dysomma taiwanensis: USNM 427172 (2 paratypes, 192–248 mm TL), southwestern Taiwan.

3. Results

3.1. *Dysomma alticorpus* new species (Figs. 1–2)

Pale cutthroat eel

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