

Family NEMICHTHYIDAE

L. *Nemichthys scolopaceus* Richardson, 1848

1848. *Nemichthys scolopaceus* Richardson. *Voy. "Samarang", 1843-1846*, p. 25.
 1929. *L. Nemichthys scolopaceus* Richardson. Roule & Bertin, *Dana Rep.*, 1 (4): 61-100 (description, development).
 1937. *L. Nemichthys scolopaceus* Richardson. Beebe & Crane, *Zoologica, N.Y.*, 22: 357-366 (description, development).

MATERIAL EXAMINED. Five specimens: 167.0mm (damaged) and 208.3mm total lengths, *Tui* Station AUZ 008, 32° 27' S, 174° 10' E, 5/7/62, IKMT (10ft), 91m wire out; 175.9mm total length, *Tui* Station AUZ 052, 33° 59' S, 172° 03' E, 15/7/62, IKMT (10ft), 803m wire out; 165.9mm total length, *Tui* Station AUZ 057, 35° 36' S, 176° 20' E, 21/7/62, IKMT (10ft), 1,100m wire out; 190.5mm total length, *Tui* station AUZ 067, 35° 36' S, 176° 20' E, 22/7/62, IKMT (10ft), 1,280m wire out.

REMARKS. Larvae of *Nemichthys scolopaceus* are easily recognisable by their extremely attenuated form, the high number of myomeres, the beak-like snout, pigmentation restricted to the kidney ducts, the spinal cord and conspicuous stellate chromatophores at the level of myomeres 19, 41, 79 and 116. Myomeres in the present five specimens number about 365-470 and the specimens are in all respects similar to those described by Beebe & Crane (1937, pp. 357-366).

Leptocephalus attenuatus n.sp. (Text-fig. 1, H-I).

MATERIAL EXAMINED. Type specimen: 144.3mm total length (caudal tip broken), *Tui* Station AUZ 084, 32° 00' S, 177° 35' E, 24/7/62, IKMT (10ft), 1,830m wire out; Dominion Museum No. 3385.

DESCRIPTION. Measurements in mm: head 5.8, snout 2.3, eye 1.0, cleft of mouth 2.8, postorbital 2.4, depth just before eye 2.4, at pectoral 2.8, at midpoint between pectoral and caudal tip 6.0, maximum depth 7.4. Teeth $\frac{1 + IV + 5}{1 + X + 1}$. Myomeres ca. 229. Last vertical blood vessel at myomere 65.

Body attenuated, almost filiform, compressed, its depth about 20 in total length, tapering more gradually behind the mid-point. Head short, about 25 in total, not clearly differentiated from trunk; snout sharply pointed, its dorsal profile slightly concave and contained 2.5 times in head; nasal organ large but as yet poorly differentiated; eye oval, anteroposteriorly compressed, its horizontal diameter three times in postorbital, its vertical diameter 1.5 in postorbital; cleft of mouth slightly oblique, reaching to below anterior margin of pupil; teeth in both jaws acute. Pectoral fin a minute triangular flap; dorsal and anal fins not yet developed.

Pigmentation in the form of a regular, paired series of rounded, somatic chromatophores along the ventral midline, about two spots on each myomere. This series begins at the 11th myomere and continues to the vent, the more posterior chromatophores being more widely spaced. Pigment in the chorioid. Vertical blood vessels and gall bladder difficult to determine; liver very long, reaching as far back as myomere 104. (*L. attenuare* = to make thin.)

REMARKS. The compressed eye is the most unusual feature of this larva, and as far as I can determine from the literature no other leptocephalus has this character. The larva superficially resembles that of *Nemichthys scolopaceus* in its attenuated form but has fewer segments and pigment spots in the ventral series, compared with a series on the kidney ducts in the former. In having a regular ventral series of chromatophores the present larva resembles larvae of the Congridae but the minute pectoral, the shape of the snout, and the filiform nature of the body more strongly suggests that *Leptocephalus attenuatus* is the larva of a snipe-eel.