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A New Species of Eel of the Genus *Moringua* (Pisces) from
Manihiki Atoll, Northern Cook Islands

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Abstract

A NEW species of *Moringua* is described from Manihiki. It differs from *M. abbreviata* in the dental pattern and from *M. javanica* in having the posterior nostril smaller than the eye, and from both in the green colour.

INTRODUCTION

WHILE sorting the material collected at Manihiki Atoll, in the late summer of 1960, I came upon a curious little greenish eel belonging to the genus *Moringua*. In *Moringua* the anus is closer to the end of the tail; this distinguishes the genus from the closely allied *Uropterygius* in which the anus is nearer to the centre of the body.

Genus MORINGUA Gray

1831. *Moringua* Gray, Illus. Ind. Zool., 1(5), pl. 95.

1831. *Rataboura* Gray, Zool. Misc., pt. 1, p. 9 (February).

DISTRIBUTION: Widely distributed in the Indo-Pacific region.

Moringua semperviridens sp. nov.

DESCRIPTION: Head and body elongate, vermiform, 82mm in total length by 2mm in diameter at the level of the gill openings. Head, snout to gill-openings 8mm; snout subacute in dorsal view; mandible projecting slightly beyond snout; anterior nasals tubular, posterior, shallow depressions anterior to eyes; eyes small, protected beneath a layer of transparent adipose tissue; a shallow median groove extends along the dorsum from behind the head to the tail fin; a similar groove, passing through the anus, is present along the venter; pectoral fin minute, rayed; caudal fin short, one-third to a quarter of the distance between the anus and its extremity; anus 60mm from snout or 22mm from caudal extremity; gill-openings minute, smaller than diameter of eye; lateral line commencing above eye and continuing posteriorly along the midlateral line; lateral line pores 98 (possibly 99 or 100); lips without cirri; teeth conical, in single rows of 9-11 (?) in upper and lower jaws, one median; three median teeth on the vomer.

COLOUR: The entire specimen is a very pale translucent bottle green throughout, with the contents of the viscera showing through; the eyes are black. This colouration still persists after five years in formalin.

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