

STUDIES IN ICHTHYOLOGY. No. 13.*

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(Figures 1-11.)

Family LEPTOCEPHALIDAE.

Genus *Fimbriceps* Whitley, 1946.

Orthotype, *F. umbrellabia* Whitley.

A remarkable genus of conger eels with skinny filaments protruding from the snout and over the eyes. Top of snout not swollen. Lips not turned upwards into a flange, but overhanging and with well developed labial bones. Anterior patch of teeth of upper jaw exposed when mouth is closed. Fine teeth on jaws and vomer, none much enlarged. Caudal pointed. Colour plain, brownish.

This combination of characters distinguishes *Fimbriceps* from all the fifty or so nominal genera of congers.

Fimbriceps umbrellabia Whitley, 1946.

Fimbriceps umbrellabia Whitley, Austr. Mus. Mag., ix, 2, 1946, p. 62, fig.

Head (17 mm.) 6.5, depth (7) 16. preanal length (39) nearly 3 in total length (112). Eye (4.4) 3.8, snout (5) 3.4, pectoral (6) 2.8 in head. Head conic, rather bulbous posteriorly. Eyes large, rounded pyriform. Interorbital very narrow.

About 9 or 10 branchiostegal rays each side. No jugostegalia. Opercular elements discernible through skin. Some mucus canals from eye to near gill-opening and down front of operculum. Gill-slits moderate openings before pectoral fins, directed downwards and backwards, and sealed below across a broad isthmus. Mouth reaching below posterior half of eye. Upper jaw the longer. Two keels along chin. Bands of fine pointed teeth on jaws, smaller bluntly conic ones cross roof of mouth, this vomerine patch apparently not extending backward to eye but tapering to cease before the free, well-developed tongue. The anterior teeth in upper jaw are slightly enlarged and form a group exterior to the mouth-opening. Anterior teeth of lower jaw deflected slightly outwards; a couple of posterior teeth in upper jaw are antrorse.

I am unable to distinguish the nostrils, but they are probably before the eye and over the lip anteriorly as usual in congers. The upper lip is not turned upwards into a flange. There are two overhanging flaps of skin over upper jaw, the uppermost simple, the second scalloped and lying over the lips, which are supported by well-developed labial bones.

The snout is not swollen, but pointed, and bears several forwardly directed filamentous processes about one millimetre long. Two similar processes over eye, and some small ones below sides of lower jaw.

Body elongate, tapering, compressed, naked. Tail attenuated, nearly twice as long as rest of fish. Doubtless through abrasion during trawling, much of the skin is missing and the lateral line structure cannot be made out, but there are no white-spotted pores as in some congers.

* For No. 12 see RECORDS OF THE AUSTRALIAN MUSEUM, Vol. xx, Part 4, March, 1939, pp. 264-277, figs. 1-3.

The author is indebted to the Council of the Royal Zoological Society of New South Wales for the loan of blocks from his forthcoming "Fishes of Australia" used in Figures 2, 4, 5, 7 and 9 of the present paper. All figures have been drawn by the author and, unless otherwise stated, the line accompanying each represents one inch.