

FISHES COLLECTED BY THE AUSTRALIAN MUSEUM EXPEDITION, 1952.

By GILBERT P. WHITLEY, F.R.Z.S.

Curator of Fishes, The Australian Museum, Sydney.

(Figures 1-4.)

The fifty-four specimens of fishes brought back by the Australian Museum Expedition belong to eight families or ten species of shore-inhabiting kinds such as are found in tropical mangrove-swamps or else in freshwater rivers. There are no coral-reef or open marine forms because the main activities of the expedition were concerned with geology and terrestrial fauna. The Palmer or "Barramundi", *Lates calcarifer* (Bloch, 1790), was photographed at the Forrest River (Keast, Austr. Mus. Mag., xi, 1953, pp. 4, 9-10, fig.) but no specimen was preserved.

In the interior of Australia, drought conditions were encountered, so specimens could only be obtained from three localities: Wilson River and Forrest River in the Kimberley Division of Western Australia and at Port Keats in the Northern Territory. Previously the Australian Museum had no fishes from any of these places, so they are of zoogeographical interest. The range of several freshwater fishes (chanda perch, and gudgeon) and of two estuarine mudskippers can be extended into Western Australia for the first time as a result of this expedition's work. The freshwater fishes all belong to the Leichhardtian fluvifauna which embraces the rivers of southern New Guinea and Papua, north-western Queensland, the Northern Territory and north-western Australia, which seem to share the same species of fishes and other aquatic animals.

Some difficulty has been experienced in identifying the specimens because types of so many Australian species are in overseas museums. The enterprise of early French, Scandinavian and other naturalists in collecting specimens in remote Australian areas many years ago was most praiseworthy, but it remains for possibly easier and quicker global travel in the future to enable the critical modern taxonomist to compare all the specimens he would like to see, unless television can some day be utilized for that purpose. In this collection of only ten species, it is noteworthy that the typical specimens of seven, if they still exist, are probably in Paris, London, Oslo, Leyden and Berlin; the types of only two of the species are in Australia, and those of two others desirable for comparison are in Amsterdam and Vienna. Reliance has therefore been placed on descriptions in the scattered literature quoted under each species. Illustrations are supplied of all hitherto unfigured kinds. One species collected appears to be new, and the opportunity is taken to describe another not encountered by the expedition.

Family MUGILIDAE.

Genus **Ellochelon** Whitley, 1930.

Ellochelon Whitley, Austr. Zool. vi, 1930, 251. Orthotype, *Mugil vaigiensis* Quoy and Gaimard.

Ellochelon vaigiensis (Quoy and Gaimard).

Mugil vaigiensis Quoy and Gaimard, Voy. Uranie Physic., Zool., 1825, 337, Pl. lix, fig. 2. Waigiou, New Guinea.

Austr. Mus. Exped. material.—One immature specimen 149 mm. in standard length or nearly 7½ inches overall. Austr. Mus. Regd. No. IB. 2841.: Field No. 599.

Locality.—West Headland, Port Keats, Northern Territory, 23 June, 1952.