

DESCRIPTIONS OF TWO NEW SPECIES OF FISHES FROM KEY WEST, FLA., WITH NOTES ON NINE OTHER SPECIES COLLECTED IN THE SAME LOCALITY



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Contribution from the United States Fisheries Biological Station, Key West, Fla.



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INTRODUCTION

At various times the authors (Hildebrand, 1919-20, and Ginsburg, 1922-24) were stationed at the United States Bureau of Fisheries Biological Station at Key West, Fla., where they gave attention to the collection and study of fishes. The present short paper sets forth the data obtained from some of the collections.

Myrophis punctatus Lütken

Lütken, Vidensk. Meddel., Nat. Foren. Kjøbenhavn, 1851, 1.

One specimen, 150 millimeters long, was taken in a muddy pond. This appears to be the first record of this species for Key West.

Fundulus ocellaris Jordan and Gilbert

Jordan and Gilbert, Proc., U. S. Nat. Mus. 1882, 255.

This fish was quite abundant on April 11, 1919, in a brackish swamp, nearly dry, in which many fish were dying. The ocellus is lacking on the dorsal fin of one female. Three specimens were measured with the following results: D. 11 to 12; A. 9 to 10; scales 34 to 35; depth 4.35 to 4.5; head 3.1 to 3.35; eye 3.3 to 3.4; snout 3.3 to 3.5; maxillary 3.4 to 4.4; pectorals 1.80 to 1.97. This species apparently has not previously been recorded from Key West.

Menidia conchorum n. sp.

Diagnosis.—Anal soft rays 11 to 14, the modal frequency being 12; 33 to 35 vertical rows of scales; origin of spinous dorsal nearer to base of caudal than tip of snout; eye larger than length of snout; base of anal distinctly shorter than head; size small, the smallest known Menidia.

Description of type.—Dorsal profile gradually ascending to spinous dorsal, slightly curved behind head; ventral profile nearly horizontal from articulation of mandible to origin of anal; body not slender, depth at origin of ventrals 4.61 in length; head 3.39; eye large, 2.65 in head; snout shorter than eye, 3.35 in head, upper profile nearly straight, the lower one very oblique; jaws subequal; distal tip of maxillary distinctly projecting beyond the broad premaxillary; distance from tip of upper jaw to tip of maxillary 2.85 in head; interorbital flat, 4.56 in head; caudal peduncle not slender, its depth 2.85 and length 1.37 in head; spinous dorsal with 5 flexible, approximate spines, last spine slightly more separated from the preceding, origin of fin nearer to the base of caudal than tip of snout, the predorsal distance being 0.56 of the length; soft dorsal I, 8, its origin over base of fifth soft anal ray, insertion of last ray over base of eleventh anal ray, length of its base 2.43 in head, last ray made up of two separate rays united at base; anal I, 12, first ray simple, last divided to base, distance of its origin from tip of snout 0.62 of length; ventral 1.97 in head, its tip terminating at a distance from origin of anal about equal to interorbital, not quite reaching vent; pectoral extending beyond origin of ventral, 1.44 in head; scales entire, not lacinate, 35 oblique rows over the silvery band, between upper angle of gill opening and base of caudal; 8 scales in a row, counting obliquely downward and backward from origin of soft dorsal to base of anal; 13 scales on mid line of back in front of spinous dorsal (not including enlarged scales on top of head); row of scales at base of anal partly extending on fin; fins otherwise scaleless; teeth small, in narrow bands in jaws, some of outer series slightly enlarged, none on vomer and palatines; width of silvery band 8.75 in head.

Color in alcohol.—Walnut brown; belly and underside of head lighter; some metallic silvery reflections, especially on cheeks and opercles; pupil white; iris silvery with a golden wash; upper part of head and body and underside of snout rather diffusely peppered with bluish silvery and minute dark dots.

Variability.—The specimens at hand, when like sizes are compared, show a rather high degree of uniformity of the various proportional measurements. The following table gives the individual variations of this species as to measurements and scale and fin ray counts. The depth was measured at the base of the ventrals, the head to the posterior margin of the bony part of opercle, and both are compared with the standard length, while the other measurements are compared with the head. The predorsal distance is expressed as a percentage of the length. The first seven specimens given in the table include the type and six paratypes, all obtained on the same date.

Stand- ard length	Depth	Head	Eye	Snout	Maxil- lary	Inter- orbital	Pectoral	Ventral	Base of anal	Predor- sal dis- tance, per cent	Dorsal	Anal	Scales	Scales before dorsal
38.7	4.61	3.39	2.65	3.35	2.85	4.56	1.44	1.97	1.37	50	V-I, 8	I, 12	35	13
39.1	4.54	3.40	2.56	3.29	2.88	4.26	1.44	2.09	1.44	55	V-I, 8	I, 14	35	13
38	4.58	3.42	2.71	3.17	3.00	4.63	1.35	1.98	1.48	57	V-I, 8	I, 12	35	13½
35.6	4.45	3.36	2.62	3.66	2.94	4.61	1.38	2.00	1.35	53	V-I, 8	I, 13	35	12½
35.6	4.51	3.30	2.57	3.60	3.00	4.70	1.35	1.96	1.61	55	IV-I, 7	I, 12	34	13
33.1	4.14	3.31	2.50	3.13	2.78	4.17	1.20	1.87	1.47	58	V-I, 8	I, 14	35	12
35.2	4.40	3.42	2.58	3.68	3.12	4.48	1.29	1.91	1.43	56	V-I, 7	I, 13	35	14
31.9	5.23	3.36	2.57	3.65	3.28	4.75	1.36	2.07	1.58	57	IV-I, 7	I, 13	33	12
19.8	5.21	3.25	2.54	3.05	3.81	5.08	1.53	2.10	1.65	53	V-I, 7	I, 13	34	12
20.1	4.69	3.38	2.61	3.31	3.19	4.30	1.34	1.91	1.69	57	V-I, 7	I, 12	36	12
26.1	4.58	3.22	2.45	3.52	3.12	4.26	1.39	1.98	1.62	55	IV-I, 7	I, 12	34	12

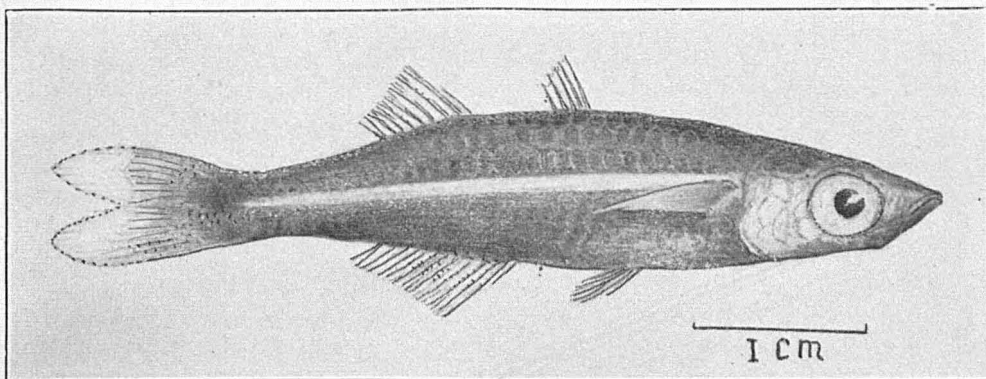


FIG. 1.—*Menidia conchorum*. (Enlarged $2\frac{1}{3}$ times)

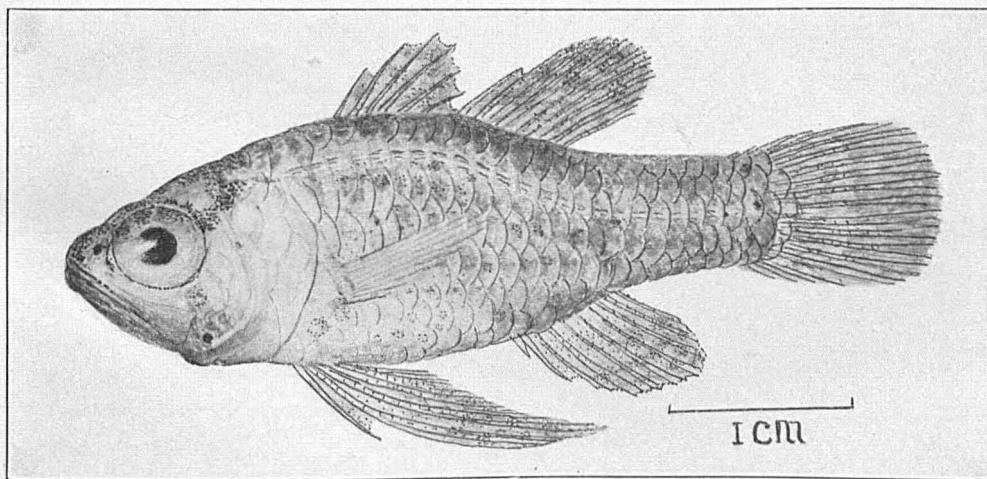


FIG. 2.—*Apogonichthys stellatus*. (Enlarged $2\frac{1}{3}$ times)

In 51 specimens, including those given in the preceding table, the following number of soft anal rays were counted:

Number of soft anal rays.....	11	12	13	14
Number of specimens examined.....	3	25	17	6

The last ray usually is made up of two rays connected at the base; sometimes it is a single ray like the preceding one. In either case it was counted as one ray.

Holotype.—No. 87535, United States National Museum, 48 millimeters long.

Type locality.—Key West (Boca Chica), May 16, 1919.

Paratypes.—All from Key West; 6 specimens, 43 to 48 millimeters, obtained with the type; 12 specimens, November 13, 1922, 14 to 37 millimeters; 1 specimen, November 25, 1922, 26 millimeters; 22 specimens, December 7, 1922, 19 to 40 millimeters; 9 specimens, February 8, 1919, 26 to 37 millimeters.

Etymology.—*Conchorum*, of the conchs, referring to the local name by which the natives of Key West are known.

This species is well distinguished from all other species of *Menidia* known to the writers by the small number of anal rays. It probably does not grow to a large size, as no specimens larger than the type were observed. It is not uncommon in shallow water around Key West, and most probably forms a part of the diet of shore-feeding fishes, such as the gray snapper, which is quite an important food fish at Key West.

***Hynniscubensis* Poey**

Poey, *Memorias*, II, 1860, 235.

A specimen of this rather uncommon species was obtained in the Key West fish market, weight 11 pounds, total length 875 millimeters, standard length 737, head 200, depth 275, maxillary 80, eye 43, pectoral 202, depth of caudal peduncle 22.5, longest dorsal ray 100, longest anal ray 110, D. 18, A. 16; gill rakers rather short, coarse, 12 and 1 rudiment; pseudobranchiæ small; pharyngeal teeth in moderate patches, partly blunt or paved and partly villiform.

This fish is considered more or less of a curiosity by the fishermen of Key West, who say that it is seen only occasionally. The species originally was described from Cuba, and it has only comparatively recently been recorded from the coast of Florida.

***Apogonichthys stellatus* Cope**

Apogonichthys stellatus Cope; *Trans., Amer. Philos. Soc.*, 1869 (n. ser.), vol. 13, p. 400.

Apogonichthys stellatus Fowler; *Proc., Ac. Nat. Sci., Philadelphia*, 1907 (1906), vol. 58, p. 527, fig. 10.

Apogonichthys strombi Plate; *Zool. Anz.*, 1908, bd. 33, p. 393.

Seven specimens of this fish, 36 to 50 millimeters in total length, were measured and studied, the measurements varying as follows: Depth, 2.76 to 2.93; head, 2.49 to 2.59; predorsal distance, 2.18 to 2.36; ventrals, 2.38 to 2.71 in standard length; eye, 2.57 to 2.78; snout, 2.83 to 4.57; maxillary, 1.7 to 1.8; interorbital, 4.45 to 5.4; pectorals, 1.53 to 1.84 in head. The dorsal spines are constantly 6. One specimen has 8 soft rays in the dorsal and 7 in the anal; all the others have 9 and 8 soft rays in addition to 1 and 2 spines, in the second dorsal and anal, respectively. The tip of the ventral reaches backward to the base of the third to the seventh anal rays. Scales in lateral line, 22 to 24 to base of caudal and one or two more on caudal fin. The color is light brown, somewhat coppery (in life the fish is of a bright, shining, copper color). The lower half of the postorbital part of head, the chest, and the region around the base of the pectorals is usually lighter, more or less silvery. The

head and body with brown, somewhat stellate spots, many of which have silvery centers. The distribution of the stellate spots varies; they may be confined to the head and anterior part of the body or they may be uniformly scattered over the head and entire body. The body is sometimes diffusely peppered with minute bluish silvery dots (some of which may have been stellate in life). One specimen is quite dark, the head and body being suffused with black, and the fins, except the pectorals, are jet black.

In two very small specimens, 16 and 17 millimeters long, the appearance, form, and coloration are very similar to those of larger examples. The tip of the ventral does not reach beyond the base of the first soft ray of anal. The specimens, however, are not in very good condition and the tips of the fins may have been frayed. The counts of the dorsal and anal are the same as in the majority of larger specimens.

Four specimens were obtained in the shells of living conchs as follows: Forty-three millimeters long, December 8, 1922; 50 millimeters, January 1, 1923; 43 millimeters, February 1, 1923; 42 millimeters, April 27, 1923. Three were found in sponges, as follows: Two specimens, 37 and 40 millimeters, June 7, 1918; 36 millimeters, August 29, 1919. The two young specimens of 16 and 17 millimeters were obtained by means of a seine on the beach of Boca Chica, November 4, 1922.

On account of Cope's erroneous description, we were at first inclined to regard this as an undescribed species. The *Apogonichthys strombi* described by Plate seems to be the same species, this author apparently also having been misled by Cope's description of his *A. stellatus*. Fowler, in figuring this species, has corrected the statement in the original description as to the number of spines in the first dorsal. Another character by which Plate separates *strombi* from *stellatus* is the lack of small silvery spots on the center of the scales of the former. The specimens at hand show that this is a variable character. The small silvery spots, when present, usually form the center of small brown stellate spots. Three individuals show the silvery spots very distinctly when examined with the naked eye. One specimen in particular appears to the naked eye almost a replica of Fowler's figure. When examined with a lens it becomes evident that two or more silvery spots of various sizes may be present on a scale. One specimen does not show any silvery spots when examined with the naked eye, but such small spots may be seen under a lens. Two specimens that were originally preserved in formalin do not show any traces of silvery spots when examined with a lens, showing that the presence of such spots on preserved specimens depends also on the preservative used.

The posterior margin of the caudal is shown by Fowler as well as by Plate to be slightly emarginate. In our specimens it seems to be convex, but the caudal fins of all our specimens are shrunk, which makes it hard to determine this character with certainty.

This fish is very interesting biologically on account of its curious association with the conch. The conch is quite common around Key West. It is in good demand as an article of food and is also frequently used for bait in line fishing. The exact relationship between the conch and little fish remains to be learned. Plate found the stomachs of his specimens to be filled with Crustacea of various kinds. Some of our specimens were collected also in sponges. This would seem to indicate that the fish is a sort of facultative inquiline. What benefit, if any, the conch derives from this association is not clear. The two very young specimens that were obtained by means of a drag seine along the shore are of interest in connection with the question of the spawning habit of this fish.

Eleotris pisonis (Gmelin)

Gobius pisonis, Gmelin; Syst. Nat., 1788, 1206.

The color of live specimens are as follows: Body dark, dirty brown, stippled with lighter dots; back and head lighter than rest of body, the lighter portion of the back being abruptly and rather sharply separated from the darker sides; a dark horizontal streak from snout to eye, continued back of eye to gill opening; two shorter somewhat diffuse streaks radiating backward from eye and situated below the larger streak; belly washed with golden shades and stippled with dark dots; dorsal and anal light with dark streaks; pectoral light, stippled with dark dots and with a black blotch at its base; caudal dark with lighter streaks.

The foregoing color notes were taken from two specimens 83 and 85 millimeters long. The soft dorsal and anal each had nine rays in both fish. The smaller specimen had 55 rows of scales, counting from the base of the pectoral to the base of the anal while the larger had 49 rows on one side and 54 on the other. Four more specimens from Key West have 53 to 62 rows of scales.

Erotelis smaragdus (Cuvier and Valenciennes)

Eleotris smaragdus, Cuvier and Valenciennes; Hist. Nat. Poiss., XII, 1837, 231.

This species has the peculiar habit of burrowing in the bottom mud, where it may be taken. It is quite probable that this fish is more common than it is generally supposed to be, but is not taken more often because of its unusual habitat. Our material from Key West include the following: Two specimens, 46 and 59 millimeters, February 7, 1919; 2 specimens, 45 and 63 millimeters, February 15, 1919; 1 specimen, 60 millimeters, June 4, 1919; and 1, 85 millimeters, August 7, 1919. The first five were taken in mud, while the last was taken in a muddy pond. Color greenish above, pale below, and everywhere with dusky punctulations; caudal bluish; dorsal and anal with dark spots; other fins pale.

Brannerella ocellata (Steindachner)

Clinus ocellatus, Steindachner; Ichth. Beit., V, 1876, 182, Pl. 12, fig. 5. D. XXI, 8-9; A. I-I, 10; lateral line 37-38.

Upper profile strongly ascending to origin of dorsal, thence descending gradually to base of tail; lower profile much less curved than upper, nearly straight from articulation of mandible to anal fin, thence making a gradual curve to tail; body robust, not very slender, greatest depth a little behind insertion of pectoral, 4.29 to 4.71; head (measured to margin of bony part of opercle) 3.23 to 3.29; mouth terminal, rather large, oblique, lower jaw slightly protruding; maxillary 2.04 to 2.1, reaching a vertical through posterior margin of eye; snout rather blunt, 4.37 to 5.1; eye large, 3.32 to 3.57; interorbital quite narrow, 10.4 to 10.7; anterior nostril with a short, slender, simple tentacle; a similar but longer tentacle on eye; a single slender nuchal tentacle placed near mid line of back, about an eye's diameter in front of dorsal; origin of dorsal over insertion of ventrals, slightly behind posterior margin of preopercle; predorsal distance 3.5 to 3.69 in length; spinous dorsal with a deep emargination posteriorly, first spine 4.28 to 4.36 in head, spines gradually increasing in length from first to tenth (second spine sometimes slightly shorter than first), tenth spines 2.43 to 2.59 in head, tenth to sixteenth spines subequal, then rapidly decreasing in length to nineteenth, latter slightly shorter than first spine, twentieth slightly longer than eighteenth, last subequal to longest spines; soft part of dorsal rounded, higher than spinous part, third or fourth ray longest, 1.57 to 1.68 in head; membrane

from last ray not quite reaching caudal; origin of anal under eighth or ninth dorsal spine; first spine entirely separated, enveloped in thick skin that projects beyond its tip, its length about 3 in head; second spine normally pungent and connected with the following rays; pectorals with 13 to 14 rays, 1.32 in head, the tip reaching slightly behind a vertical through origin of anal; insertion of ventrals very slightly behind margin of preopercle, fin 1.4 in head, not reaching origin of anal; scales of medium size, cycloid, entirely covering body; head, nape to origin of dorsal, base of pectoral, chest, and part of abdomen (about two-thirds of distance from insertion of ventrals to origin of anal) naked; 17 scales in arched portion of lateral line, 20 to 21 in posterior straight part to base of caudal, 1 or 2 more rather large imperforate scales on caudal, 2 rows between highest part of arch and spinous dorsal, 7 between origin of anal and straight part of lateral line; teeth in jaws consisting of an outer enlarged series and an inner band of villiform teeth; a series of rather large teeth on vomer continued posteriorly on palatines; head and nape with large pores.

Color in alcohol.—Body light brown, marbled with lighter and darker shades, darker marblings forming three indistinct longitudinal rows of blotches, reticulate lines sometimes setting off a few of the blotches somewhat more distinctly; fins rather light, somewhat clouded with darker, a row of light spots at base of dorsal separating off darker areas; a rather diffuse dark spot on membrane between first two dorsal spines; head brownish, a diffuse dark blotch behind eye, some dark irregular lines on cheek; cheek, opercle and base of pectoral with very small brownish rings against a lighter background, the rings being formed by a strong concentration of pigment about the margins of rounded pigmentless areas. Color of a freshly preserved specimen has been described as follows: Grayish olivaceous, paler below; a row of 10 large dark spots on back, extending on dorsal fin; another row below this and a third indistinct row below lateral line; about 12 small yellow spots arranged in a semicircle extending halfway around and underneath orbit; about 10 small yellow spots, surrounded by dark, on cheek; 2 similar spots on opercle and 2 on base of pectoral; top of head marbled with dark and light; ventrals pale, pectoral, anal and caudal marked with dark.

Three specimens of this species are at hand. All are from Key West and all were collected in sponges on the following dates: Thirty-four millimeters, August 27, 1919; 42 millimeters, August 29, 1919; and 38 millimeters, September 4, 1919.

These specimens, in the main, agree well with Steindachner's description and figure and seem to belong to that species. The dark rings on the side of the head seem to be a good color mark, which, apparently, does not disappear in alcohol. The centers of these rings, however, in our specimens are not blue, as stated in the original description of the species, but are yellowish, pigmentless areas. The counts of scales and fin rays and the proportional measurements agree closely with the original description. Steindachner does not state in his description the peculiar structure of the first anal spine, the main character on which the genus *Brannerella* was based, but his figure plainly shows that character. Also, no mention is made of the presence of a nuchal tentacle, which was probably overlooked by the author inasmuch as all our specimens have a single, slender tentacle in front of the dorsal. The arrangement of the teeth in our specimens also does not agree with the original description. The specimens at hand have a narrow band of minute villiform teeth behind the outer enlarged row, and the row of rather enlarged teeth on the vomer is continued backward on the palatines.

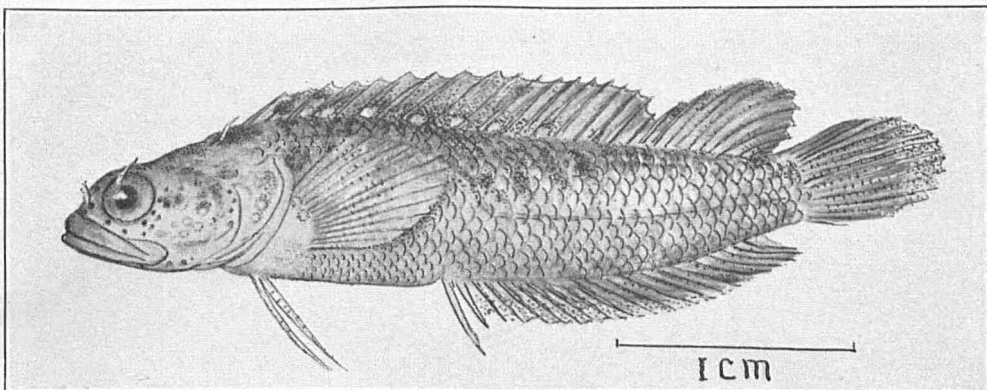


FIG. 3.—*Brannerella ocellata*. (Enlarged 3 times)

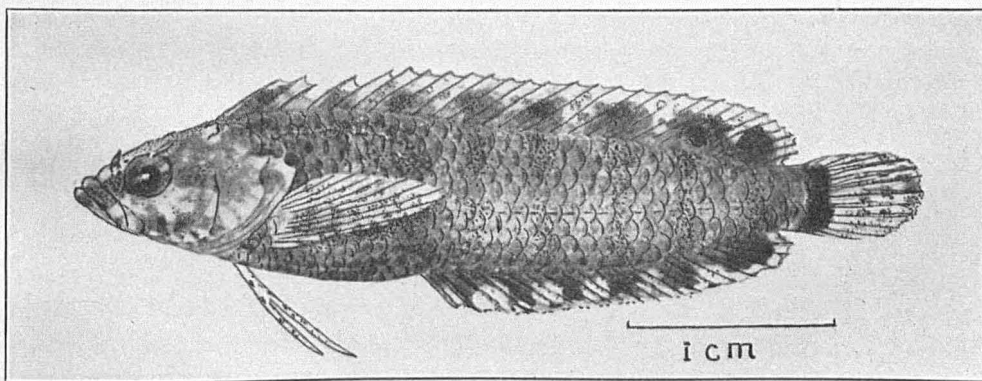


FIG. 4.—*Paraclinus fasciatus*. (Enlarged $2\frac{2}{5}$ times)

Paraclinus fasciatus (Steindachner)

Cremnobates fasciatus Steindachner; Ichth. Beit., V, 1876, 176.

Seven specimens are provisionally referred to this species. In six of these the dorsal has a well-developed emargination in front, the third and fourth spines being subequal and shorter than the preceding and following spines. The membrane from the third spine is inserted at about the middle of the fourth or nearer to the base of the latter, and the membrane from the fourth spine is inserted at about the middle of the fifth. The dorsal has 29 spines in 5 specimens and in 1 it has 30, the last ray always being spinous and pungent, not articulate. Three specimens have 18 soft rays in the anal and 3 have 19. The lateral line has 33 to 35 scales. The orbital tentacle is branched; the nuchal tentacle is in the form of an elongate flap with exceedingly short and fine fimbriæ at the top. Four specimens have more or less diffuse crossbars on the body, while two specimens are quite dark to nearly black, and the bars are not evident. The dorsal and anal have a series of dark blotches, which are quite indistinct in some of the lighter-colored examples and more or less confluent in the darker ones. The dorsal has a blue ocellated spot on the penultimate blotch.

In the seventh specimen the anterior emargination of the dorsal is very shallow, the third spine being shorter than the preceding and following spines, but the interspinous membrane reaches to the tip of the spine in all cases. This specimen also has 28 spines in the dorsal. However, it does not seem to differ in other essential characters from the rest. So far as may be judged from a single specimen, it seems to be nothing more than an individual variation.

These specimens are referred to Steindachner's *C. fasciatus* because they seem to agree with the description of that species. The species apparently is common in the regions of the Straits of Florida. However, we do not feel absolutely certain about this identification. A review of current descriptions shows that this group needs a comparative study and critical revision, with a reexamination of the types, and until such a study is made our identifications must be tentative.

The genus *Paraclinus* is separated from *Auchenopterus*, by some authors, on the basis of the emargination of the dorsal. No sharp line, however, may be drawn with respect to that character, because it varies gradually among the species, and it seems probable that it is not more than an individual variation in some species. On the other hand, the presence or absence of an articulated ray in the dorsal is constant within the species, so far as known, and the two genera may conveniently be separated by that character.

Gobiesox (Rimicola) beryllinus n. sp.

Diagnosis.—Body elongate, slender; ventral disk short; dorsal and anal fins subequal and short, each with six rays; outer teeth of lower jaw with entire edges, inner smaller teeth present; color in life light green with small white spots.

Description of type.—Body elongate, slender; depth 8.0 in length; head oblong, angular, its sides being in nearly vertical planes, the top being in a nearly horizontal plane, its width 1.66 in its length, the latter 3.3 in body; eyes small, oblong, placed partly on lateral and partly on superior aspect of head, longest diameter 4.5 in head; interopercular spine well developed; snout broad, rounded in front, 2.8 in head,

interorbital 2.8; pectoral 2.3; dorsal and anal each with 6 rays; distance of origin of dorsal from tip of snout 1.33 in length; origin of anal a little behind that of dorsal; ventral disk small, its length 5 and its width 6.2 in length, distance from posterior margin of disk to anal 2.4 in length; outer teeth of lower jaw horizontal, broad incisors with entire edges, smaller teeth behind outer row present; upper jaw with an outer series of rather long, narrow, subequal, pointed teeth, with smaller teeth behind.

Color in life.—Bright emerald green, covered with white spots and dots; one longitudinal row of rather large white spots on mid line of back, a similar row along middle of side, smaller white dots scattered between the rows of larger spots; white spots on head and underside of body being of intermediate size and irregularly scattered; a longitudinal, somewhat oblique, dark line in front of eye, faintly continued for some distance back of eye.

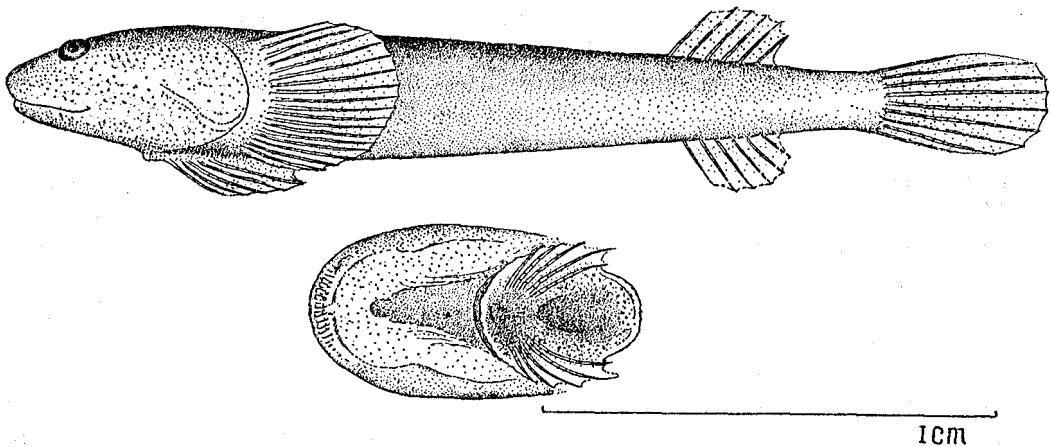


FIG. 5.—*Gobiesox beryllinus*. (Enlarged $6\frac{1}{2}$ times.) The lower figure represents a ventral view of the head and disk

The foregoing color description was drawn from the specimen while it was being kept alive in a pan of water in the laboratory. After being kept for a few days in alcohol the green color entirely disappeared and red tints became evident. A red streak was present behind the eye; the iris was red and the body was sprinkled with minute reddish dots. The red tints also disappeared after the specimen had been in alcohol over two years. This may have been due in part to the strong light in which it was constantly kept. The body and head then became plain olivaceous, without distinct markings, and the eyes were dark.

Holotype.—No. 87533, United States National Museum, 20 millimeters long.

Type locality.—Key West (Boca Chica), Fla., November 2, 1922; obtained with a drag seine along the shore.

A single specimen of this species has been studied. Its nearest relatives in the West Indian fauna appear to be *Sicyases rubiginosus* Poey (Synopsis, 1868, p. 391) and *Sicyases carneus*, Poey (loc. cit., p. 292). From the former it differs strikingly by its color pattern, and from the latter it appears to differ by its color and smaller eyes. When a direct comparison of material is made, other structural differences most probably will be found.

Canthidermis sobaco (Poey)

Ballistes sobaco, Poey; *Memorias*, II, 1861, 324.

One small specimen, 49 millimeters long, was taken on April 16, 1919, D. III, 27; A. 24; depth 1.6; head 2.4; eye 3.25; mouth 1.8; pectoral 2.2. This small fish appears to be a new representative of the genus and species of the Key West fauna. It agrees essentially with Cope's *C. asperrimus* (Trans., Amer. Philos. Soc., 1871, p. 478), held to be a synonym of *C. sobaco*, but the color is somewhat different. Our specimen is very dark brown, with elongate black spots arranged indefinitely in longitudinal series.