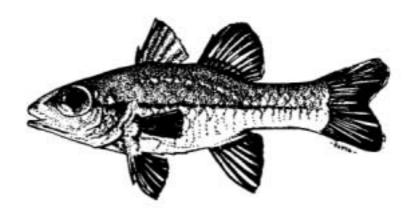
Apogon abrogramma Fraser and Lachner, 1985



English Name: Faintstripe cardinalfish Family: APOGONIDAE

Local Name: Ehrongu boadhi Order: Perciformes

Size: Common to 7cm; max. 10cm Specimen: MRS/0203/88

Distinctive Characters: First dorsal fin with 7 spines, second dorsal fin with 1 spine and 9 rays. Anal fin with 2 spines and 6 rays. Preopercle edge serrate. Supramaxilla absent.

Colour: Pale brown, with a distinct black stripe running from the snout through the eye to the tail. Leading edges of first dorsal and caudal fins black. No spot on caudal fin.

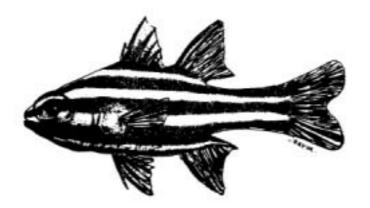
Habitat and Biology: A coral reef species, commonest in shallow lagoons which contain coral outcrops.

Distribution: Indo-West Pacific.

Remarks: Apogon abrogramma is a common species in the Maldives. It belongs to the subgenus *Pristiapogon* which contains several similar looking species. Cardinal fishes are one of few marine fish families in which oral brooding is found.

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Apogon nigrofasciatus Lachner, 1953



English Name:Black striped cardinalfishFamily:APOGONIDAELocal Name:Fulhaarongu boadhiOrder:PerciformesSize:Common to 6cm; max. 9cmSpecimen:MRS/0204/88

Distinctive Characters: First dorsal fin with 7 spines, second dorsal fin with 1 spine and 9 rays. Anal fin with 2 spines and 8 rays. Pectoral fin with 13 or 14 (usually 14) rays. Lateral line scales 24-25. Total gill rakers 20-24 (usually 21-23).

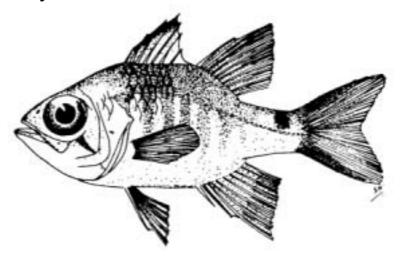
Colour: Whitish to yellow with five dark reddish to black stripes on head and body which are broader than pale interspaces. Fins light red.

Habitat and Biology: A coral reef species, usually seen singly or in pairs on reef flat and shallow outer lagoon reefs to depths of 18 m. Rests by day under ledges or in crevices. Emerges at night to feed on small benthic invertebrates.

Distribution: Indo-Pacific.

Remarks: Apogon nigrofasciatus has been called A. arouhiensis Hombron and Jacquinot, but their description not identifiable. Very similar to Apogon angustatus but in that species the pale interspaces are broader than the dark stripes.

Apogon savayensis Gunther, 1871



English Name:Ghost cardinalfishFamily:APOGONIDAELocal Name:Loabodu burekiOrder:PerciformesSize:Max. 10cmSpecimen:MRS/0028/86

Distinctive Characters: First dorsal fin with 7 spines, second dorsal fin with 1 spine and 9 rays. Anal fin with 2 spines and 8 rays. Pectoral fin with 13 rays. Body depth 2.7 in standard length. A broad body. Ridge of preopercle smooth; margin finely serrated. Postorbital of head is almost equal to halfeye diameter. First dorsal spine short. Pectoral fin longer than pelvic fin.

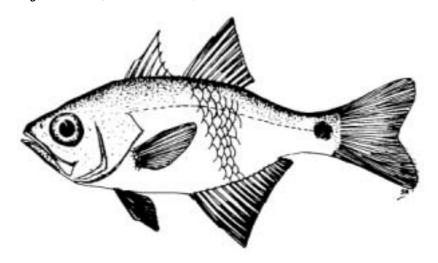
Colour: Overall coppery or silvery with a dark saddle on upper half of caudal fin base and wedge shaped bar below eye. Upper part of first dorsal fin black. Second dorsal and anal fin dusky. Caudal lobes darker than the rest of the tail.

Habitat and Biology: Usually seen among the staghorn coral. Nocturnal in habit.

Distribution: Indo-Pacific.

Remarks: Apogon saeavensis is one of a complex of three very similar species found in the Maldives. One of the others is Apogon guarnensi.r; the third has not yet been scientifically described. Previously recorded in the genus Ostorhynchus in the Catalogue of Fishes of the Maldives, Vol. 1, page 20.

Archamiafucata (Cantor, 1850)



English Name: Redharred cardinalfish Family: APOGONIDAE Local Name: Lah fathaa Order: Perciformes Size: Max. 9cm Specimen: MRS/0035/86

Distinctive Characters: First dorsal fin 6-7 spines and second dorsal fin with I spine and 7-8 rays. Anal fin with 2 spines and 15-18 rays. Pectoral fin with 14 rays. Body depth 2.7 in standard length. Small, robust fish. Hind margin of preoperculum finely serrated. Pectoral fin shorter than head length. Mouth relatively large to capture big prey.

Colour: Iridescent silvery with about twenty five vertical orange lines which curve forward as they pass ventrally on body. Dark spots apparent on the cheek. A distinct black spot on either side of the caudal peduncle. Fins yellow.

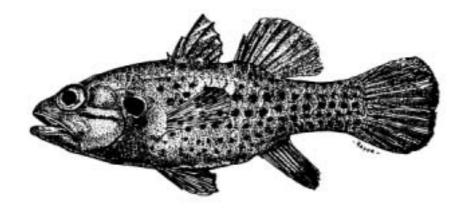
Habitat and Biology: Usually seen in aggregations in the shelter of reefs or rock substrata particularly in lagoons to depths of 60 m. Forms schools among branching corals.

Distribution: Indo-Pacific.

Remarks: Archamia fucara is sometimes used by Maldivian fishermen for bait, although it is not a major bait species.

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Fowleria punctulata (Ruppell, 1836)



English Name: Peppered cardinalfish Family: APOGONIDAE Local Name: Thikijehi boadhi Order: Perciformes Size: Max. 6cm Specimen: MRS/0206/88

Distinctive Characters: First dorsal fin with 7 spines, second dorsal fin with 1 spine and 9 rays. Anal fin with 2 spines and 8 rays. Pectoral fin with 14 rays. Lateral line scales 10-12.

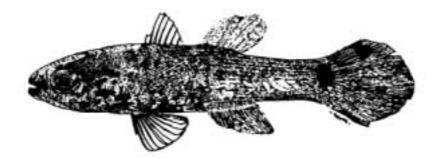
Colour: Reddish brown with black spots in longitudinal rows on sides, and an oscillated black spot on opercle. Fins not spotted.

Habitat and Biology: A cryptic coral reef species.

Distribution: Indo-Pacific.

Remarks: F isostigma (Jordan and Seale) is a synonym of Fow/eriapuncrulata. Very similar to F variegata which has brown molting on its sides and fins. The family Apogonidae is one of the largest coral fish families. World-wide there are an estimated 250 species.

Pseudamia gelatinosa Smith, 1955



English Name:Gelatinous cardinalfishFamily:APOGONIDAELocal Name:Ilolhi boadhiOrder:PerciformesSize:Common to6cm; max. 10cmSpecimen:MRS/0074/86

Distinctive Characters: First dorsal fin with 6 spines, seconddorsal fin with 1 spine and 8 rays. Anal fin with 2 spines and 8-9 rays. Pectoral fin with 15-17 (usually 16) rays. Body depth 4.0-4.8 in standard length. Body elongate, caudal fin large and rounded. Juveniles with strong triangular spinules around angle of preopercle that becomes undulate to smooth in adults.

Colour: Translucent with light golden to silvery sheen, numerous tiny black spots arranged in longitudinal rows. Caudal fin blackish.

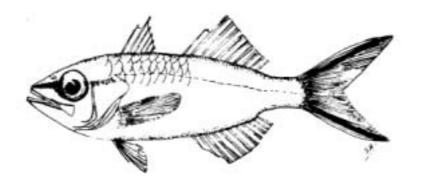
Habitat and Biology: Usually found in caves, hence is seldom seen by day. Found in deep coral thickets to depth of 40 m, usually in sheltered areas.

Distribution: Indo-Pacific.

Remarks: Pseudamia ge/atinosa may be common in the Maldives, but its cryptic habits mean that it is almost never seen. Not found in daytime livebait catches.

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Rhabdamia cypselura Weber, 1913



English Name:Headstripe cardinalfishFamily:APOGONIDAELocal Name:Hima boadhiOrder:PerciformesSize:Common to 4cm; max. 7cmSpecimen:MRS/0036/86

Distinctive Characters: First dorsal fin 6 spines, second dorsal fin with 1 spine and 9 rays. Anal fin with 2 spines and 9 rays. Pectoral fin with 13 rays. Body depth 3.7 in standard length. More elongated, less elevated than most of the other species occurring in the Maldives. Maxillary extended to below middle eye. Preopercle ridge and margin smooth. Pelvic fin about half head length.

Colour: Transparent with a fine red stippling dorsally on body; a short black stripe on side of snout and a faint one behind eye: a dusky submarginal band in each caudal fin lobe.

Habitat and Biology: Usually seen in large aggregations with other cardinal fishes in the sheltered reefs. Often forms schools in caves.

Distribution: Indo-Pacific.

Remarks: *Rhabdamia cypselura* is a frequently used bait and favoured by Maldivian tuna fishermen. It is normally caught by placing the baitnet overtheir coral retreat, chasing them out, and lifting the net when they return. This sometimes causes considerable damage to the corals.