

**First Record of a Rare Moray, *Enchelycore kamara*
(Actinopterygii: Anguilliformes: Muraenidae), from
Amami-oshima Island, Ryukyu Islands, Japan**

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(Received 6 March 2007; Accepted 13 June 2007)

A single specimen of the rare moray *Enchelycore kamara* Böhlke and Böhlke, 1980 was collected from a shallow coral reef at Amami-oshima Island, Ryukyu Islands, Japan. The species had been known previously from only six specimens collected from the Line Islands and Palau, and the present specimen thus represents the first record of the species from Japanese waters. A brief account of the morphology of the Japanese specimen is provided, as well as a photograph showing its color freshly after collection.

Key Words: Actinopterygii, Anguilliformes, Muraenidae, *Enchelycore kamara*, first record, Ryukyu Islands, Japan.

Introduction

Morays of the genus *Enchelycore* Kaup, 1856 are moderately elongate, medium- to large-sized muraenid eels attaining over 1100 mm total length (TL), known from temperate to tropical regions of the Indian, Pacific, and Atlantic oceans. Although the classification of the family is in a state of flux (Smith 2002), this genus is distinguished from other muraenid genera in having the following combination of characters (Böhlke *et al.* 1989, 1999; Smith 2002): body moderately elongate, with TL at most 30 times body depth; dorsal fin well developed, originating above, before, or closely behind gill opening; jaws slender and arched, not closing completely (i.e., meeting only at their tips and with the teeth exposed in lateral aspect when the mouth is closed); teeth sharply pointed, sometimes long and fang-like, never molariform; anterior nostril a simple tube, lacking a distinct bilobed flap at its tip. Thirteen species are known (Böhlke *et al.* 1989; Böhlke and Smith 2002; Smith 2002; Prokofiev 2005a, b) and, of these, the following four have been reported from Japanese waters (Hatooka *et al.* 1990; Hatooka 2002): *Enchelycore pardalis* (Temminck and Schlegel, 1846) [as *Muraena pardalis* in Hatooka (2002)]; *E. bayeri* (Schultz in Schultz *et al.*, 1953); *E. lichenosa* (Jordan and Snyder, 1901); and *E. schismatorhynchus* (Bleeker, 1853).