Two New Chaenopsid Fishes, Neoclinus monogrammus and Neoclinus nudiceps (Teleostei: Perciformes: Blennioidei), from Japan

Atsunobu Murase1,2, Masahiro Aizawa3 and Tomoki Sunobe1

1 Tateyama Station, Field Science Center, Tokyo University of Marine Science and Technology, 670 Banda, Tateyama, Chiba, 294-0308 Japan
2 Research Fellow, Japan Society for Promotion of Science
E-mail: atsunobum@yahoo.co.jp
3 Biological Laboratory, Imperial Household Agency, 1-1 Chiyoda, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo, 100-8111 Japan

(Received 1 October 2009; Accepted 6 April 2010)

Two new species of blennioid fish, Neoclinus monogrammus and N. nudiceps, are described on the basis of, respectively, ten specimens from the Boso Peninsula, Pacific coast of Japan, depth 28 m, and seven specimens from the Oki Islands, Sea of Japan, depth 7–9 m. The two new species are distinguished from all other congeners by the following combination of characters: lateral-line canal continuous, with single row of pores; two cirri on orbit; no true ocellus on anterior part of dorsal fin; dorsal fin low, not elevated anteriorly in either sex; no narrow membrane along anterior edge of 1st dorsal-fin spine. Neoclinus monogrammus and N. nudiceps differ in the following characters: pore counts and extent of lateral-line canal (9–15 pores, reaching to below 6th to 9th dorsal-fin spine in the former vs 3–5 pores, reaching to below 3rd to 4th dorsal-fin spine in the latter); counts of supraorbital cirri tips (anterior and posterior cirri with 10–28 and 3–14 tips, respectively, vs 2–6 and 1–2 tips, respectively); male color pattern on head (scattered reddish spots vs no conspicuous spots); body depth in proportion to standard length (11.3–13.4% vs 13.0–15.4%); and head depth in proportion to head length (51.2–58.0% vs 56.6–60.6%).

Key Words: Blennioidei, Chaenopsidae, Japan, Neoclinus, new species.

Introduction

The blennioid genus Neoclinus Girard, 1858 includes typical blenny-shaped fishes characterized by a scaled body (except one species), four infraorbital bones, and a well-developed lateral-line canal. Its familial assignment among the blennioids has been much discussed over the years (see Fukao 1980; Springer 1993). Hastings and Springer (1994) most recently redefined the family Chaenopsidae as a monophyletic group, comprising previously acknowledged chaenopsids (sensu Stephens 1963), Stathmonotus Bean, 1885, Mccoskerichthys Rosenblatt and Stephens, 1978, and Neoclinus. Neoclinus was ranked in the most primitive position within the family. This classification, which was based in part on behavioural features, has been accepted by Smith-Vaniz (2000), and Neoclinus is also regarded