

2.2 FAMILY BREGMACEROTIDAE

BREG

Family Name with Reference : **Bregmacerotidae** Gill, 1872, Smithsonian Misc. Colls., 247:3.

FAO Names : **En** – Codlets; **Fr** - Bregmacères; **Sp** - Bregmaceros.

General Features : First dorsal fin a single long ray on top of the rear part of head; second dorsal and anal fins long-based with well developed anterior and posterior lobes; pelvic fins under head, with long, thick rays, that extend beyond the beginning of anal fin; a well developed caudal fin present. Lateral line extending along dorsal margin of body. Additional details are presented by Marshall & Cohen, 1973, and Houde, 1984.

A single genus with an undetermined number of species (12 or more) comprises the family. Most species are small fishes living in the epipelagic of tropical oceanic areas. One species is found close to shore and is used by man for food. An incomplete review of the family was published by d'Ancona & Cavinato, 1965 and a comprehensive paper on early stages and taxonomy by Belianina, 1974.

Habitat, Distribution and Biology : Most species are small epipelagic or mesopelagic fishes living in tropical and subtropical oceanic waters, to depths of over 1 000 m, but some are found in shallow coastal areas and even in estuaries.

Interest to Fisheries : Only one species found close to the shore is fished at present.

Literature : D'Ancona & Cavinato (1965); Belianina (1974).

Remarks : Additional taxonomic work is required in order to define and classify the species and map their distributions (Houde, 1984). It is not at this time possible to write a key to the species

Bregmaceros Thompson, 1840

BREG Breg

Genus with Reference : ***Bregmaceros*** Thompson, 1840, Mag.nat.Hist., (n.s.) 4: 184.

Diagnostic Features : See family.

Tentative list of species :

Most of the species of ***Bregmaceros*** are difficult to characterize and identify; hence, additional research may show that some of the species listed below are synonyms and/or that species presently considered as synonyms are valid. Because of the difficulty in defining species, their geographical ranges cannot be defined.

Bregmaceros arabicus D'Ancona & Cavinato, 1965

Bregmaceros atlanticus Goode & Bean, 1886

Bregmaceros atripinnis (Tickell, 1865)

Bregmaceros bathymaster Jordan & Bollman, 1889

Bregmaceros cantori Milliken & Houde, 1984

Bregmaceros cayorum Nichols, 1952

Bregmaceros houdei Saksena & Richards, 1986

Bregmaceros japonicus Tanaka, 1908

Bregmaceros lanceolatus Shen, 1960

Bregmaceros longipes Garman, 1899

Bregmaceros mccllellandi Thompson, 1840

Bregmaceros nectabanus Whitley, 1941

Bregmaceros neonectabanus Masuda, Ozawa & Tabeta, 1986

Bregmaceros pescadorus Shen, 1960

Bregmaceros rarisquamosus Munro, 1950

Bregmaceros sp.

***Bregmaceros* sp.**

Fig. 27

BREG Breg 1

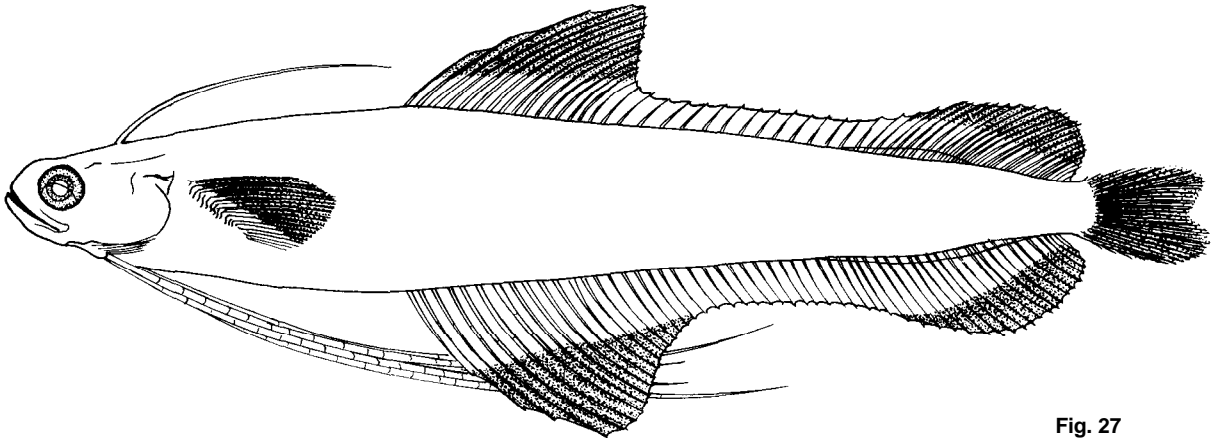
Synonyms : *Bregmaceros maclellandi*, Cohen, 1983**FAO Names :** En - Unicorn cod; Fr - Bregmacère de l'océan Indien; Sp - Bregmacero.

Fig. 27

Diagnostic Features : Upper part of pectoral fin black or rather dark; dark pigment usually present on caudal fin, anterior and posterior lobes of second dorsal fin, and anterior and posterior lobes of anal fin.

Geographical Distribution : Possibly widely distributed in the tropics, but this cannot be confirmed until the taxonomy is better known (Fig. 28).

Habitat and Biology : Neritic, taken also in estuaries; possibly oceanic as well.

Size : Maximum total length about 10 cm, common to 7 cm.

Interest to Fisheries : Caught in bagnets and trawls and marketed fresh in coastal areas of Maharashtra State, India. The 1987 catch was 2 319 metric tons (India and Mauritius); however, in 1973 it was as high as 6 500 metric tons.

Literature : Parulekar & Bal (1969); Cohen (1984a).

Remarks : The name *Bregmaceros maclellandi* was used for this species by Cohen, 1984a and several previous authors but is probably incorrect (Houde, personal communication).

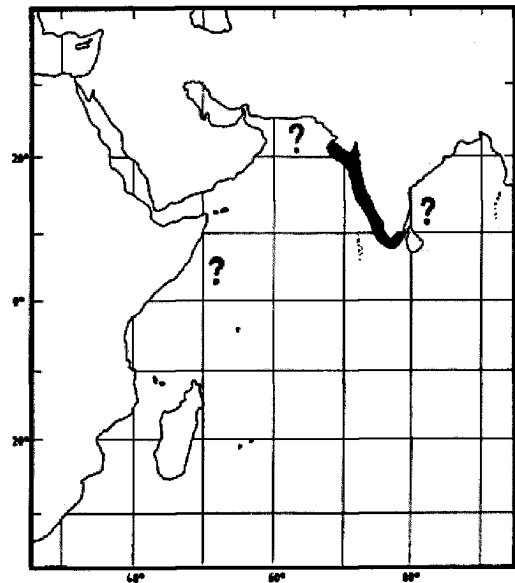


Fig. 28