



***Samariscus neocaledonia*, a new righteye flounder (Teleostei: Pleuronectiformes: Samaridae) from New Caledonia**

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Abstract

A new righteye flounder, *Samariscus neocaledonia* **sp. nov.**, is described on the basis of two specimens collected in deep waters (244–278 m) around New Caledonia. The new species is easily distinguished from its 18 congeners in having a combination of 78–81 dorsal fin rays, 62–65 anal fin rays, five pectoral fin rays, ca. 55–62 lateral line scales, and 10 abdominal and 31–32 caudal vertebrae.

Key words: *Samariscus neocaledonia*, **sp. nov.**, flatfish, western Pacific, deep sea

Introduction

The family Samaridae (*sensu* Chapleau & Keast, 1988) comprises three genera, *Samaris* Gray, 1831, *Samariscus* Gilbert, 1905, and *Plagiopsetta* Franz, 1910. *Samariscus* is distinguished from *Samaris* in lacking the prolonged anterior rays of the dorsal and pelvic fins, and in having branched middle caudal rays (vs. prolonged dorsal and pelvic rays and all caudal rays simple in *Samaris*) (Norman, 1934; Matsubara, 1955; Mihara & Amaoka, 1995; Hensley, 2001). Recently, Mihara & Amaoka (2004) described two new species of *Samaris* that have branched middle caudal rays. *Samariscus* differs from *Plagiopsetta* in having four or five ocular-side pectoral rays (vs. having 7–10 in *Plagiopsetta*) (Mihara & Amaoka, 1995, 2004; Hensley, 2001).

Two specimens of an undescribed species of *Samariscus* were collected from relatively deep waters (244–278 m) around New Caledonia during research expeditions conducted by the French oceanographic research vessel *Alis* in 1993 and 1994. This new species is herein described.

Material and methods

Specimens examined are deposited in collections of the Muséum national d'Histoire naturelle, Paris (MNHN), the Hokkaido University Museum, Hakodate (HUMZ), the Kyoto University (FAKU), and the National Taiwan University, Taipei (NTUM). Counts and proportional measurements follow those of Hubbs & Lagler (1958), except that dorsal and anal fin rays were counted individually. Lower eye is used for snout length and upper eye for orbital length. Standard and head lengths are abbreviated as SL and HL, respectively. All measurements were made to the nearest 0.1 mm with calipers. Vertebral counts were determined from radiographs. Missing lateral-line scales were counted based on scale pockets.