

Description of a new species of *Echiodon* (Teleostei: Carapidae) from the South Atlantic Ocean

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Abstract

A new species of pearlfish, *Echiodon atopus*, is described from a single adult male, 176 mm TL, collected off Inaccessible Island, Tristan da Cunha Group, South Atlantic Ocean. It is characterized by its high, equal D₃₀ and A₃₀ counts (46 rays each), 7 anal rays anterior to the dorsal-fin origin, 38 precaudal vertebrae, 18 pectoral-fin rays and ventral swim bladder tunic ridges. It was caught in a bottom trawl over a deep lava-reef structure, but may be pelagic.

Key words: *Echiodon*, pearlfish, Carapidae, Tristan da Cunha Group, South Atlantic Ocean

Introduction

The genus *Echiodon* Thompson, 1837, comprises a group of 12 known species of pearlfishes found in a depth range of 18–2000m (Markle and Olney 1990; Williams and Machida 1992; Markle 1999). *Echiodon* species are mainly deep-pelagic forms, although Markle (1999) suggested at least some may be facultative commensals (in benthic invertebrates like some other pearlfishes). Six of the 12 species of *Echiodon* are found in temperate waters of the Southern Ocean. During cruise ICEFISH-04 (May to July 2004) across the South Atlantic on RVIB NATHANIEL B. PALMER, a specimen of *Echiodon* was captured at the Tristan da Cunha Group. Originally thought by me to represent the circumglobal, austral *E. cryomargarites* Markle, Williams and Olney, 1983, it possesses several characters in combination that reveal it is unnamed. The purpose of this paper is to describe this new species.

Materials and methods

Measurements were made with dial calipers or ocular micrometer to the nearest 0.1 mm. Counts of features of the axial skeleton were made from a radiograph. The following