



A new species of deep-sea anglerfish, genus *Himantolophus* (Lophiiformes: Himantolophidae) from the Western South Pacific, with comments on the validity of *H. pseudalbinares*

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Abstract

A new species of the deep-sea ceratioid anglerfish genus *Himantolophus* is described from a single specimen caught off the east coast of the North Island of New Zealand. A member of the *Himantolophus cornifer*-group, based on the absence of a posterior escal appendage, the new species is described and compared with the five previously recognized members of the group. Evidence is provided to confirm the validity of *Himantolophus pseudalbinares*, a species previously confused with *H. albinares*.

Key words: *Himantolophus litoceras* sp. nov., himantolophid distribution, New Zealand

Introduction

Himantolophid anglerfishes have been known from the New Zealand region since 1878 when F. E. Clarke described *Himantolophus appellii* from a single beach-cast specimen on the West Coast of the South Island (Clarke, 1878). Stewart and Pietsch (1998) recorded three species of the genus from New Zealand waters: *Himantolophus appellii*, *H. pseudalbinares*, and a male of the *H. brevirostris*-group. In 2005, a large female specimen of *Himantolophus* was caught off the northeast coast of the North Island and retained by a New Zealand Ministry of Fisheries Scientific Observer. The absence of a posterior escal appendage and extremely long distal escal appendages placed the specimen in the *H. cornifer*-group of Bertelsen and Krefft (1988), but, in other ways the specimen differs from all previously described species and is here described as new to science.

Method and materials

Measurements, counts, and terminology follow Pietsch (2009). Standard length (SL) is used throughout. Measurements up to 150 mm were taken to the nearest 0.5 mm using dial callipers; those above 150 mm, using dividers and steel ruler. Measurements of the holotype of the new species were taken from the freshly thawed specimen; key measurements were taken again after fixing in 10% formalin and storage in 50% isopropyl alcohol (IPA) to record the shrinkage that ceratioids undergo through preservation. Institutional abbreviations follow Leviton *et al.* (1985), with the addition that NMNZ (formerly National Museum of New Zealand) now refers to Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa (Te Papa). MFish refers to the New Zealand Ministry of Fisheries.