BRIEF
COMMUNICATIONS

Finding of the Family Bathyclupeidae in the Waters of Vietnam

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Deepsea herrings in the South China Sea are represented by two species (*Bathyclupea gracilis* Fowler, 1938, and *B. japanotaiwana* Prokofiev, 2014), which so far have been found in this area only in the waters of Taiwan. In addition, two more species (*B. megaceps* Fowler, 1938, and *B. nikparini* Prokofiev, 2014) can possibly be found in this area, which are known in the adjacent waters of southern Japan and Philippines (Prokofiev, 2014a). For Vietnam and the western part of the South China Sea in general, this family thus far has not been reported (Nguyen et al., 1997).

When examining the collection of deepsea herrings stored in the Zoological Museum of Moscow State University (ZMMU), I found one specimen (ZMMU no. 23444) of standard length (*SL*) 180 mm with the following label information: R/V *Odyssey*, trawl 66, September 25, 1984, 11°01'0 N, 109°55'0 E, depth 460–480 m. The main diagnostic characters of this specimen are as follows: oral cavity entirely light, gill cavity dark; pectoral fin light; ventral branch of preoperculum smooth; 17 developed gill rakers in outer row of first arc and 3+2 tuberculate gill rakers; anal fin rays 30, head length (*lc*) 2.9 times *SL* (35.0%); maximum body height 21.7% *SL*, predorsal and preanal distances 55.6 and 47.2% *SL*, respectively; longest gill raker length 11.9% *lc*; pleural ribs on last trunk vertebra well developed. Thus, this specimen completely corresponds to the characteristics of *B. gracilis* and should be attributed to this species. This is the first record of members of this family in the waters of Vietnam.

Therefore, *B. gracilis* inhabits the entire water area of the South China Sea rather than only its northern part. This species is the most common and widespread

member of this family in the western Pacific Ocean, where it is known from Taiwan through Vietnam, Philippines, and eastern Indonesia to the Coral Sea, where it has already been reported for Australian waters (Tzioumis and Keable, 2007). Furthermore, the examined collection includes a specimen (ZMMU no. 17058) caught in the Coral Sea, without precise data on the catch location. On the basis of analysis of count data and photos kindly provided to me by H.-C. Ho (Academia Sinica, Taiwan), it can be assumed that the Deepsea herrings caught by French research expeditions in the waters of New Caledonia and Vanuatu also belong to this species. In the Indian Ocean, this species is apparently absent, and in the subtropical waters of the Southern Hemisphere, including the southwestern Pacific (Tasman Sea), it is replaced by a related species *B. elongata* Trunov, 1975 (Prokofiev, 2014b).

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