

A New Mesopelagic Fish for Turkish Seas, *Lophotus lacepede* Giorna, 1809 (Pisces: Lophotidae)

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Özet: Türkiye Denizlerinden Yeni Bir Mezopelajik Balık Türü, *Lophotus lacepede* Giorna, 1809 (Pisces: Lophotidae). Mezopelajik *Lophotus lacepede* Giorna, 1809 türüne ait bir örnek Gökova Körfezi'nden (güney Ege Denizi) ilk defa elde edilmiştir. Daha önceki kayıtlarda sadece batı Akdeniz'de yayılım gösterdiği bilinen türün Türkiye kıyılarından bulunmasıyla birlikte dağılım sınırları doğu Akdeniz'e genişlemiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Lophotidae, *Lophotus lacepede*, Gökova Körfezi, doğu Akdeniz

Abstract: A single specimen of the mesopelagic *Lophotus lacepede* Giorna, 1809 was obtained from Gökova Bay (southern Aegean Sea) for the first time. Previous records of the species were confined to the western Mediterranean; its occurrence at Turkish seas extends its distribution range to the eastern Mediterranean.

Key words: Lophotidae, *Lophotus lacepede*, Gökova Bay, eastern Mediterranean

Introduction

Lophotidae (Crestfishes) is a family comprising ribbon-like fishes reaching to at least 2 m in length (Palmer, 1986). A single species, *Lophotus lacepede* Giorna 1809, inhabits the Mediterranean. Heemstra (1986) stated that *L. lacepede* is a rare oceanic, mesopelagic species, while May and Maxwell (1986, in Froese and Pauly, 2000) mentioned its occasionally stranding in shallow temperate waters of Australia. The species is confined only to the western part of the Mediterranean Sea (Palmer, 1986; Bauchot, 1987) and hitherto unrecorded from both Turkish seas and the eastern Mediterranean.

On August 15, 2000, a 30.2 cm (standard length) specimen of *L. lacepede* (Fig.1) was obtained from a commercial purse seiner, fishing at the southwestern part Gökova Bay (Fig.2). According to our personal communications, the specimen was captured from a depth of

ca. 100 m (maximum depth at the site was 650-700 m) during nighttime (between 01:00-01:45 hours). The single specimen obtained was fixed in %4 formalin and then deposited in the collection of Ege University Faculty of Fisheries.

Diagnosis: Body is elongated, strongly compressed laterally that tapers to caudal fin. Anus is located near posterior end of the body. Head with an elevated occipital crest bearing anterior finrays of dorsal fin and extending forward to level of mouth. Mouth opening is small and weakly protrusible. Teeth are conic in shape and somewhat recurved in a single row of both jaws. Dorsal fin is long-based and low, bearing approximately 240 finrays. Anterior finrays are reported to be elongated (Palmer, 1986), but damaged in our specimen. Anal fin is very short with 19 finrays, located just in front of the caudal fin. Pectoral fins with 15 finrays, extending horizontally. Pelvic fins absent.

Caudal fin is short, pointed and asymmetrical. Body is covered with tiny cycloid scales. Body measurements are as follows: total length 33.4 cm, standard length 30.2 cm, head length 4.4 cm, eye

diameter 1.2 cm, maximum body depth 3.4 cm, minimum body depth 0.7 cm. Color of the fresh specimen was silvery-gray dorsally shading to paler below the lateral line.

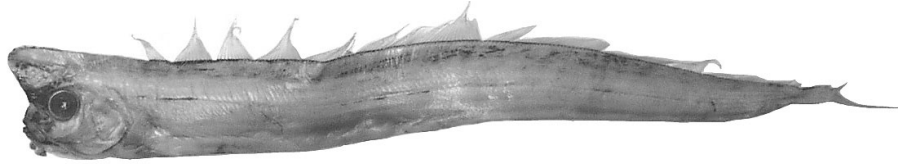


Figure 1. *Lophotus lacepede* Giorna, 1809 (30.2 cm SL)

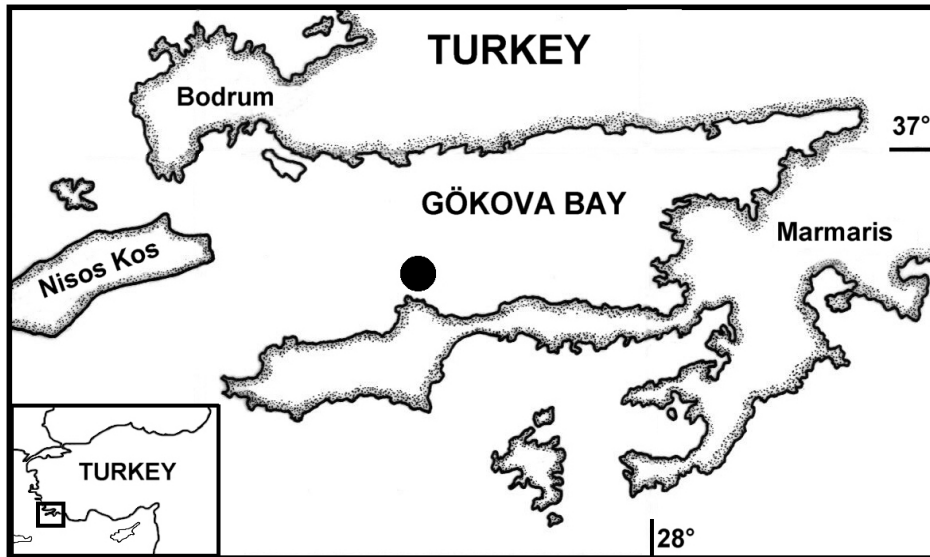


Figure 2. Approximate capture locality of *L. lacepede* in Gökova Bay, southern Aegean Sea.

Remarks: *L. lacepede* is a poorly known mesopelagic fish of the Mediterranean. It was previously known from the western Mediterranean, mainly based on records of Soljan (1948), Tortonese (1970), Palmer (1986), Bauchot (1987) and Papaconstantinou (1988). Similar to its confamilial members, *L. lacepede* is a large sized fish; Soljan (1948) reported lengths of up to 1.3 m, whereas Tortonese (1970) reported 1.8 m and Palmer (1986) 2 m. According to Bauchot (1987), the

species generally found at depths of 1000 m, however, it is probable that juvenile fish prefer shallower waters.

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