



A new *Obliquogobius* Koumans, 1941 (Teleostei: Gobiidae) from Kumejima, Ryukyu Islands, Japan

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Abstract

A new species of *Obliquogobius* was collected from the deep waters off Kumejima, Ryukyu Islands, Japan. The new species may be distinguished from its congeners by the following combination of characters: second dorsal fin rays I/9; anal fin rays I/10; pectoral fin rays 21; longitudinal scale rows 22; transverse scale rows 7; gill opening wide, extending to vertical of rear margin of pupil; colouration in preservative: ground colour beige; no markings on body except for inverted-triangular grayish-black mark on head, the broad end originating below eye and the apex terminating at the posterior extent of the lower jaw, and dorsal third of caudal fin dusky with random small black spots on fin membrane and life colouration: vertical yellow band under eye; one wide longitudinal yellow band originating on the posterior end of the operculum coursing along mid-flank, terminating at posterior end of caudal fin, band increasingly wider, such that posterior half of body completely yellow and band tapering in width to cover only lower two-thirds of caudal fin region.

Key words: *Obliquogobius*, Gobiidae, new species, Kumejima, Japan

Introduction

The marine gobiid genus *Obliquogobius* Koumans, 1941, was established for *Gobius cometes* Alcock, 1890. The genus is characterized by: body elongate, compressed; head compressed; eyes large; interorbital width narrow; mouth oblique with prominent lower jaw; gill opening wide; body, breast and belly scaled; midline of nape naked; scales ctenoid posteriorly and cycloid anteriorly; caudal fin obliquely pointed (Koumans 1941). This genus was also observed to have several rows of short barbels on the head, most notably two rows on the lower half of the head. Koumans (1941) reported that *Obliquogobius* resembles *Parachaeturichthys* Bleeker, 1874, but noted that it differs in head squamation, extent of gill opening and the presence of the aforementioned barbels.

The genus remained monotypic from its description in 1941 until Goren (1992) described *Obliquogobius turkayi* from the Red Sea. Shibukawa & Aonuma (2007) subsequently described three species from Japanese waters and other localities; *Obliquogobius cirrifer*, *O. megalops* and *O. yamadai*. As *Gobius cometes* (Alcock, 1890), was obtained from the coast of Madras, India, these species described from Japan, East China Sea and Philippines were the first verifiable records of the occurrence of this genus in the Western Pacific.

Dredging efforts during an expedition to Kumejima, Ryukyu Islands, Japan, in 2009, obtained the single specimen of an undescribed species of this genus. We here describe this species and provide a key, adapted from Shibukawa & Aonuma (2007), to the nominal members of *Obliquogobius* occurring in the Western Pacific.