



First record of *Melanocetus johnsoni* Günther 1864 (Ceratoidei: Melanocetidae) in Argentinean waters with a description of scales and sagitta.

The order Lophiformes comprises batipelagic fishes with wide distribution (Pietsch and Groebecke, 1987. *Frogfishes of the world: systematics, zoogeography, and behavioral ecology*. Stanford University Press, 420 p.; Pequeño, 1989, *Rev. Biol. Mar. Valparaíso*, 24 (2):1-132; Kong and Meléndez, 1991, *Estud. Oceanol.*, 10:1-81; Nelson, 1994. *Fishes of the World*. Ed. J. Wiley and Sons, 600 p.). The genus *Melanocetus* belongs to the family Melanocetidae, and contains five species (Pietsch and van Duzer, 1980. *Fish. Bull.*, 78 (1):59-87.; Nelson, 1994, *op. cit.*). Pietsch and van Duzer (1980, *op. cit.*) reviewed the records of *Melanocetus johnsoni* which is found in tropical and subtropical latitudes of the Pacific, Atlantic and Indian Oceans, between 500 and 1500 m depth. The southernmost record of the species was a specimen collected in the Pacific Ocean close to 45° S, 165° W (Pietsch and van Duzer, 1980, *op. cit.*).

The aim of this note is to report a specimen of *M. johnsoni* from the Mar Argentino, with some characteristics of the external morphology (Fig. 1). It was collected by the fishing vessel Othori, to the southeast of Isla de los Estados (55° 05' S, 63° 0' W) in February, 1995. The specimen was collected in a mid-water trawl among other two species, fishing patagonian grenadier (*Macruronus magellanicus*, Lonnberg, 1907) and southern blue whiting (*Micromesistius australis* Norman, 1937) at 700 m depth.

The specimen was identified according to Pietsch and van Duzer (1980, *op. cit.*), based on the following features: number of teeth in the lower jaw (46), number of rays in the anal fin (4), pectoral fin (17), and caudal fin (8). The dorsal fin was damaged but we counted 15 rays. The ratio between the length of the lower jaw and standard length was 1,01 % (Fig. 2). Those features agree with the description of *M. johnsoni* from the Pacific Ocean reported by Kong and Meléndez (1991, *op. cit.*). Following those authors, the measurements are: SL = 220.7 mm; orbital diameter = 4.85 mm; postorbital width = peduncle depth = 15.18 mm; preorbital length =

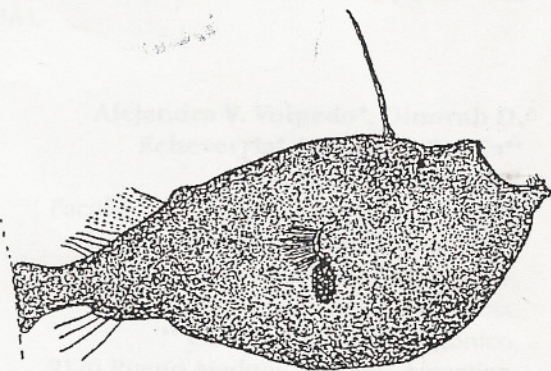
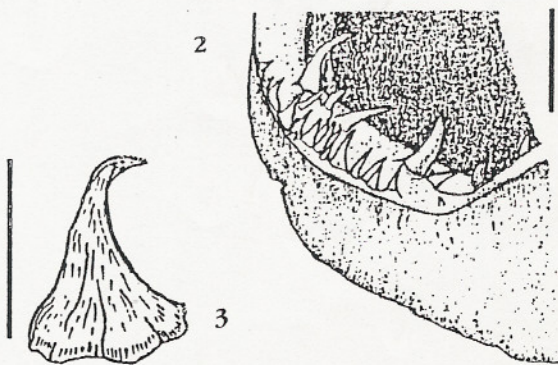


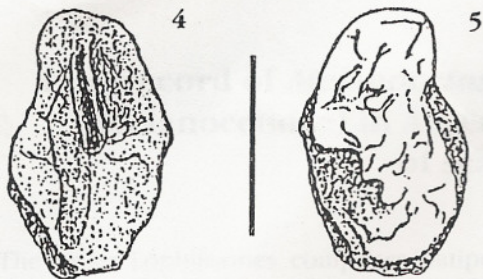
Fig. 1. Right lateral view of *Melanocetus johnsoni*, 55° 05' S, 63° W. Scale = 100 mm.



Figs. 2-3. 2: Dorsolateral view of lower jaw, with teeth curved inwards. Scale = 10 mm. 3: Scale. Scale = 1 mm.

51.36 mm; postorbital length = 47.0 mm; head length = 105.94 mm.

The specimen is an immature female. The fish's scales are cone shaped, hollow and translucent. They have circular base and a free edge pointing towards the caudal region (Fig. 3). The left otolith has a general oblong shape with regular edges, whose inner face does not present rostrum, antirostrum or cisure. A straight sulcus, not divided in ostium and cauda, is located at the anterior and central part of the otolith. It has a dorsal depressed area which extends from the anterior edge of the sulcus to the posterior edge of the otolith. The external face has an



Figs. 4-5. 4: View of the internal face of the otolith. 5: view of the external face. Scale= 2 mm.

undulated surface and its width is 20 % of the total otolith length (Figs. 4, 5).

Pietsch and van Duzer (1980, *op. cit.*) report one specimen of *M. johnsoni* located at 40° S, 47° W at the South Atlantic Ocean. Our finding is the southernmost report for *M. johnsoni* and the first one in Argentina. The

specimen is housed at the Collection of the Laboratory of Vertebrates (LV-FCEN-UBA 2367). We thank Jorge Lira, captain of the B/F OTHORI and his crew, and the support given by the Marine Mammal Laboratory, (Centro Nacional Patagónico, CONICET) and the Vertebrate Laboratory (Facultad de Ciencias Exactas y Naturales, UBA).

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