

A New Pygmy Pipehorse (Pisces: Syngnathidae: *Idiotropiscis*) from Eastern Australia

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ABSTRACT. A new species of pygmy pipehorse, *Idiotropiscis lumnitzeri*, is described from a female and two male specimens collected in the Sydney region, New South Wales, Australia. It can be distinguished from its congeners, *I. australe* (Waite & Hale, 1921) and *I. larsonae* (Dawson, 1984), in having a shorter and more posteriorly positioned frontal ridge dorsally on the head, a very short trunk (slightly longer than head, versus clearly longer than head), and in having a longer snout (2.2–2.6 in head, versus 2.8–3.2 in *I. australe* and 3.7–3.8 in *I. larsonae*).

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I became aware of this species in the early 1990's when sent an image of a pipehorse by a photographer from Sydney for identification. The subject of the photograph, taken in Jervis Bay, south of Sydney, was thought by the photographer to be a juvenile seahorse. I tentatively identified it as *Acentronura tentaculata*. The first specimen collected in 1997 was immediately recognized as representing a new species of *Idiotropiscis* Whitley, 1947, a genus that is very similar to *Acentronura* Kaup, 1853 and treated by some authors as a subgenus of it (e.g., Dawson, 1985). Species of *Idiotropiscis*, however, are more seahorse-like than those of *Acentronura*, in having a deeper body and head that is clearly angled ventrad from the longitudinal axis of the body, and in having discontinuous superior trunk and tail-ridges. Kuitter (2000) recognized *Idiotropiscis* at the generic level. The specimen collected in 1997 and two more specimens collected in 2002 provide the basis for this description.

Materials and methods

Methodology follows Kuitter (2001), except total length (TL), measured from tip of snout to end of tail, is used as a measure of overall length. Specimens were placed in a purpose-built, tray-like aquarium and photographed with a 35 mm single-reflex camera and 105 mm macro lens. Specimens were laid on their side on the bottom of the aquarium and flattened under a sheet of glass to ensure an accurate lateral image. Proportional measurements were recorded from enlargements. Radiographs were used to determine and confirm the number of trunk and tail rings. Sex was inferred from the absence or presence of a brood pouch. Types are deposited in the collection of the Australian Museum, Sydney (AMS) and Museum Victoria (NMV).