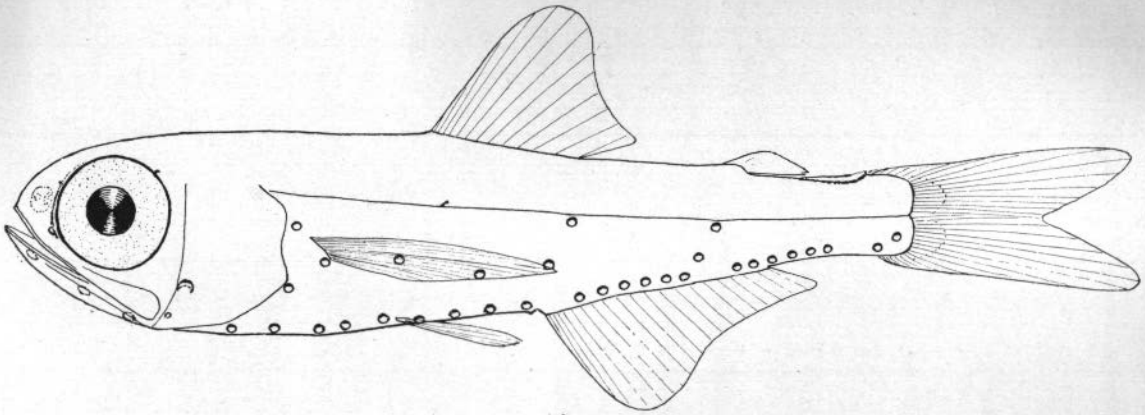
Myctophum benoiti

(Cocco 1838)



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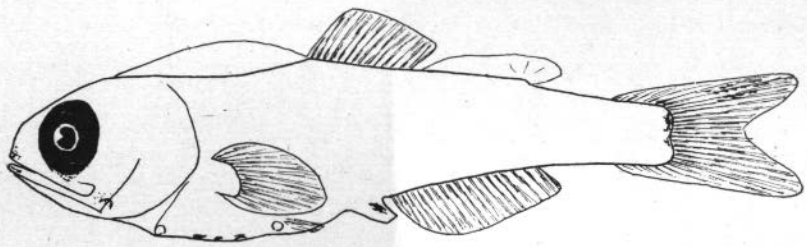

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EXPLANATION OF FIGURES

1 : adult male.
2 : postlarva 10.5 mm. excl. C.

DIAGNOSIS — Body fusiform, slightly compressed. Maximal height to total length (excl. C.) 1 : $4\frac{1}{4}$ - $4.\frac{1}{3}$; length of head to total length (excl. C.) 1 : $2\frac{4}{5}$ - $3\frac{1}{4}$; diameter of eye to length of head 1 : $2\frac{1}{2}$, Maxilla with a broad distal end, not or nearly not reaching beyond posterior margin of eye. Insertion of dorsal fin nearer to snout than to origin of caudal fin ; anal fin originating below posterior end of dorsal fin. Scales large, cycloid, with a silvery lustre. D : 12-14 ; A : 19-21 ; P : 14-15 ; V : 8. Number of scales in lateral line abt. 39 ; number of vertebræ 35-37. Maximal length attained abt. 65 mm. (?)

Photophores : two postero-lateral organs in an oblique line to the posterior of the anterior anal organs ; two precaudal organs of which the upper one is abt. equidistant from lateral line and ventral line, nearest the latter. The supra-ventral organ is abt. equidistant from lateral line and ventral fin. Number of anal organs 4-7+6-8.

Adult male has a large elongated supracaudal *luminous plate*, adult female 1-4 small infracaudal plates. The plates develope in males at a length of 17-20 mm. in the females at a length of 24-25 mm. excl. C.

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The postlarval stage has an oblong eye with a small pigmented " eye-taper " ; snout not unusually flattened in the smaller stages ; no or very faint pigment on the posterior border of the operculum or in other places of the head. A little pigment ventrally, a melanophore on the anal papilla, and a little pigment on the caudal fin and at the base of this fin. The postlarva is difficult to distinguish from young postlarvæ of *Myctophum hygomi*. Metamorphosis takes place at a length of 10-12.5 mm. ; during metamorphosis the postlarvæ seek out deeper water layers (ontogenetic vertical migration).

DISTRIBUTION — Pelagic, true oceanic species. Occuring especially in the subtropical parts of the Atlantic, as far north as abt. 47° N. Lat. Penetrating into the Mediterranean as far east as the Levantine Sea and the Marmora Sea.

Propagation : Maturity attained at a length of abt. 40 mm. Spawning probably at its highest from spring to autumn in the Mediterranean.

SYNONYMY

Scopelus benoiti (*benoisti*) Cocco 1838.

LITERATURE

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