

## THE CATALUFA *Cookeolus japonicus* (CUVIER, 1829) (PRIACANTHIDAE: OSTEICHTHYES), IN THE EASTERN PACIFIC

La Catalufa *Cookeolus japonicus* (Cuvier, 1829) (Priacanthidae: Osteichthyes), en el Pacífico oriental.

**RESUMEN.** *Cookeolus japonicus* (Cuvier, 1829) se registró por primera vez en el océano Pacífico oriental aproximadamente hace 20 años conociéndose este mismo número de registros en colecciones y museos, provenientes de esa región. Sin embargo su complejidad taxonómica, la escasez de muestras y datos poco confiables en algunos registros de captura, han contribuido a que los límites septentrionales de su distribución conocida en el Pacífico oriental hayan sido ubicados de modo erróneo o considerados como inciertos en la literatura reciente. En esta nota se revisan brevemente y corrigen en su caso, los límites nórdicos de la distribución de *C. japonicus*.

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A full revision of the biogeography patterns of fishes of the west coast of Mexico is nearly absent, although is an area within the eastern Pacific with a estimated fish endemics species of about 10% (Allen & Robertson, 1994). The updates of data on the geographical range of species should contribute to increased understanding of the processes that generate and maintain the patterns. In this note, the author reviews the distribution of *C. japonicus* in the eastern Pacific, on the basis of published records, as well as catalogued specimens and also reviews its northern geographic boundaries.

Garrison (1996) mentioned for the first time the occurrence of the catalufa *Cookeolus japonicus* (Cuvier, 1829) at Isla del Coco, Costa Rica. She also reviewed, according to published records available, the geographical

range of the species in the Tropical oceans of the world. However, the northern limit of distribution in the eastern Pacific was incorrectly quoted as "Baja California," according to Garrison's sources: Fitch & Schultz (1978) and Fritzsche (1978). The same geopolitical confusion about the northern boundary of the species, based on the same bibliographic sources, occurred in Starnes (1988:147), and Allen & Robertson (1994: 120). More recently, the northern range of its distribution was assumed as uncertain (see Starnes, 1995:1407, and quoted map).

Catalufas are relatively deepwater fish and are rarely seen or caught near the mainland, occurring preferably around the oceanic islands. The first valid records of *C. japonicus* in the eastern Pacific ocean were documented by Fritzsche (1978). Its previously known range was both sides of the Atlantic and the Indo-west Pacific (Caldwell, 1962). The northernmost record reported by Fritzsche was a specimen collected off Islas Marias, Nayarit, México (21°32' N-116°31' W), 350 km from Baja California. Fitch & Schultz (1978) have been cited by several authors regarding the northern catalufa's distribution (e.g., Starnes, 1988; Garrison, 1996) in that work the mention of priacanthids deals with a record-sized catalufa *Priacanthus cruentatus*, caught at Alijos Rock, 360 km west of Baja California's peninsula (24°57' N-115°44' W). This specimen was listed in the cards and catalog of Los Angeles County Museum (LACM 34253-1) as *Priacanthus* sp, later identified as *C. boops* by Fitch & Crooke (1984), and recently corroborated at request, as *C. japonicus* (J. Seigel, pers.comm. 1997). Extension of geographical range of the species with that specimens caught at Alijos Rock was not noticed in all papers cited. In the past, the uncertain taxonomic status of the species and scarcity of adult specimens perhaps contributed to the incorrect identification of *C. japonicus* (Fitch & Crooke, 1984). In a poorly known paper, Chávez and Rodríguez (1989) published the first occurrences of *C. japonicus* (identified as *C. boops*) in the Gulf of California, however the geographic

coordinates were erroneously cited by 30 and 110 km accordingly to locations annotated by this authors (23°07' N-109°22' W and 24°35' N-109°30' W) and curatorial information of the specimens at Colección Ictiológica del Centro Interdisciplinario de Ciencias Marinas (CICIMAR-CI 374 and 1441). In searching out the data of records of the catalufa in the eastern Pacific, the author found about twenty certifiable records of eastern Pacific *C. japonicus* catalogued and curated (Table 1). The above information allows to author to confirm the most northern known distribution limits of *C. japonicus*: 24°57' N-115°44' W off western coast of México and 23°36' N-109°34' W in the Gulf of California, about 1014 and 651 km, respectively northward of the first published records by Fritzche (1978).

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Table 1. Specimens of *Cookeolus japonicus* (Cuvier, 1829) curated and catalogued in museums or collections and caught in the eastern Pacific. Abbreviations for institutions in text. N= number of specimens, size in millimeters of standard length (SL). \*Calculated from location cited. \*\* Eight additional records at SIO. \*\*\* Actual coordinates at CICIMAR-CI not from the authors.

Tabla 1. Especímenes de *Cookeolus japonicus* (Cuvier, 1829) catalogados y curados en colecciones y museos y colectados en el océano Pacífico oriental. Abreviaciones de las instituciones en el texto. N=número de especímenes, talla en milímetros de longitud Patrón (SL). \*Calculado a partir de la localidad citada. \*\*Ocho registros adicionales en SIO. \*\*\*Coordenadas en la colección CICIMAR-CI, no la citada por los autores.

Catálogo No.	N	Size SL	Locality	Coordinates	Author
LACM 31796-2	1	180	75 km off Islas, Mariás, Nay., México	21°32' N-106°31' W	Starnes, 1988
LACM 39584-2	1	?	Alijos Rock, W coast of México	24°57' N-115°44' W	Starnes, 1988
LACM 30505-1	1	189	650 km SW Acapulco, *México	16°48' N-106°01' W	Fritzche, 1978
LACM 30506-1	1	171	Off Gulf of Tehuantepec, Guerrero, México	?	Fritzche, 1978
LACM 31999-1	1	226	95 km off Islas, Mariás, Nay., México*	21°37'-107°34' W	Fritzche, 1978
LACM 34253-1	1	397	Alijos Rock, W coast of México	24°57' N-115°44' W	Fritch & Grove, 1984
USNM 260547	1	?	Alijos Rock, W coast of México	24°57' N-115°44' W	--
SIO 74-72	1	160	370 km W Tehuantepec, Guerrero, México	14°31' N-95°00' W	--
SIO 74-80**	1	145	Off Michoacán, México	17°04' N-104°23' W	--
CICIMAR-CI 374	1	260	Los Frailes, B.C.S., México***	23°24' N-109°25' W	Chávez & Rodríguez, 1989
CICIMAR-CI 1441	1	232	La Rivera, B.C.S., México***	23°36' N-109°34' W	Chávez & Rodríguez, 1989

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