

ON THE OCCURRENCE OF FISHES OF
THE FAMILY SCHINDLERIIDAE IN
THE INDIAN OCEAN

THE family Schindleriidae with the genus *Schindleria* was created by Giltay¹ to accommodate *Hemirhamphus præmaturus* and *H. pietschmanni* described from the Pacific by Schindler^{2,3} who presumed them to be sexually mature larval hemirhamphids.⁴ Bruun⁵ and Schultz⁶ have subsequently recorded the collection of *S. præmaturus* from the Pacific and the latter has placed the family Schindleriidae in a sub-order Schindleriina. According to Bruun⁵ *Schindleria* could be considered as the lightest of all known vertebrates whereas the gobies, *Pandaka pygmaea* and *Mistichthys luzonensis* though shorter are comparatively heavier than the former. All the previous records of *Schindleria* have been from the Pacific, with *S. præmaturus* from widely separated areas, viz., Hawaiian Islands, New Guinea, Tahiti, Samoa, Tasman Sea, off Sydney and Grafton (Australia) and Bikini, while *S. pietschmanni* has been known only from the Hawaiian Islands.

A study of the larval and juvenile fishes collected from the Laccadive Archipelago revealed the presence of specimens less than 20 mm. resembling larval fishes but with mature gonads which on further examination turned out to be *Schindleria*. Both the species are represented in the collections and there are in all 81 specimens of *S. præmaturus* ranging from 11.7-20.5 mm. in total length and 8 specimens of *S. pietschmanni* ranging from 8.2-15.1 mm. in total length. As in the Pacific, the former appears to be comparatively more abundant and widely distributed in the Laccadive area. This is the first record of their occurrence in the Indian Ocean Region and it is most likely that these should have a wider distribution than known hitherto but their small size might have

prevented their detection from among larval fishes. It is hoped that the participants of the International Indian Ocean Expedition will be on the lookout for this interesting genus of fishes.

Detailed notes on the material studied by us are being published elsewhere.

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3. —, *Ibid.*, 1931, 68 (1), 2.
4. —, *Bull. Bishop Mus.*, Honolulu, 1932, 97, 1.
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