

# New and little known perciform fishes from the Upper Oligocene – Lower Miocene boundary deposits of the Caucasus (Osteichthyes, Perciformes)

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Several new and little known perciform fishes (*Pirsagatia sytchevskayae* gen. et sp. n., *Epibatichthys corruptus* gen. et sp. n.; *Apscheronichthys bogatschovi* Prokofiev, 2001; *Pelates islamdagicus* Prokofiev, 2001; *Leiognathoides minutus* (Daniltshenko, 1980); Pomacentridae gen. et sp. indet.; *Bestiolablennius eugeniae* Prokofiev, 2001), including two new genera (*Pirsagatia* and *Epibatichthys*) of Percoidei *incertae sedis*, from the terminal Upper Oligocene or basal Lower Miocene of the Caucasus are described.

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## Introduction

The fish fauna of the Upper Oligocene – Lower Miocene boundary deposits is still poorly known, but the recently revised collections of Palaeontological Institute show that this fauna was very rich. In the present paper, two new genera (*Pirsagatia* and *Epibatichthys*) and an unidentified Pomacentridae from a new locality (Pirsagatichai in Daghestan) are described. The family Pomacentridae was not recorded from the region previously. Also a specimen of *Palaeomolva* sp. (Gadidae) is known from this locality. In addition, four poorly known species (*Apscheronichthys bogatschovi*, *Pelates islamdagicus*, *Leiognathoides minutus* and *Bestiolablennius eugeniae*) from Pirekishkyul locality (Azerbaijan) are redescribed. Fish remains undoubtedly possess special interest for regional stratigraphy, but there is no exact information about stratigraphical stage or regiostage of these two localities. Previously known fish complexes from the Oligocene-Miocene boundary deposits (Daniltshenko, 1960, 1980a) seem mixed and requiring re-investigation. Therefore, I give the age as “Upper Oligocene or Lower Miocene” without more detailed connection with regiostages or previously known “horizons”.

The material examined is deposited at Palaeontological Institute (PIN), Moscow.

## Order PERCIFORMES

### Suborder PERCOIDEI

#### Family ?

#### **Pirsagatia** gen. n.

Type species *Pirsagatia sytchevskayae* sp. n.

*Diagnosis.* Small percoid fishes with moderately deep body; maximum body depth contained 3 times in standard length (SL). Head relatively large, 2.75 times in SL. Mouth moderate, terminal; jaws equal, bearing small teeth in several rows; caniniform teeth absent. Ascending process of premaxillary slender and long. Praeoperculum with numerous small spines on posterior border. There are 6 branchiostegal rays. Dorsal fin originates above posterior border of opercle, continuous, without distinct notch between spinous and soft portions. There are 9 spines and 10 soft rays in dorsal fin. Dorsal-fin pterygiophores lamellar, with moderately long distal elements. First dorsal-fin pterygiophore with 2 spines in supernumerary association; first dorsal-fin spine only slightly shorter than second. Predorsal formula (Ahlstrom et al., 1976) 0/0+0/2/1/. Anal fin with 3 spines and about 9 soft rays; last anal-fin ray situated relatively posterior to vertical of dorsal one. Second anal-fin

spine much longer than others. Pelvics situated under pectoral fins, slightly posterior to dorsal-fin origin. Pectoral and pelvic fins long. Filamentous fin-spines or rays and spinules on fin-spines absent. Vertebrae 25 (11 + 14); neural spines of vertebrae in middle part of vertebral column nearly vertically oriented. Body covered with large ctenoid scales.

**Comparison.** The new genus is similar in general appearance to the family Serranidae, but the combination of three known derived characters of Serranidae (presence of 3 spines on opercle; absence of both second uroneural and procurrent spur – Johnson, 1983), which can be found in fossil material, is not observable in the present specimen. Moreover, the new genus differs from all known Serranidae in the following combination of characters: neural spines in middle part of vertebral column oriented vertically (vs. inclined posteriorly), six (vs. seven) branchiostegal rays, and, possibly, the vertebral formula 11+14. The first character is unique for *Pirsagatia* among other generalised percoids. Also the second anal-fin spine is the longest in *Pirsagatia*, as opposed to both second and third anal spines equidimensional or nearly so in most of Serranidae. The only other putative serranid with similar vertebral formula is *Tavania* from the Upper Pliocene of Italy. *Tavania* has 3 opercular spines and no second uroneural, as reported in the original description (Landini & Menesini, 1978), but strikingly differs from all Serranidae and most other percoids (except for Priacanthidae, Caproidae, and the Paleocene “*Serranus*” *celebratus* Daniltshenko, 1968, which represents a separate family) in the denticulate posterior border of the second dorsal and pelvic spines. Other differences of *Pirsagatia* from *Tavania* include much deeper body, subequal dorsal-fin spines (vs. second spine much longer in *Tavania*), broadly expanded dorsal-fin pterygiophores, 9 (vs. 10) dorsal-fin spines, much smaller number of dorsal and anal soft rays (10 and ca. 9 vs. 18 and 15 in *Tavania*, respectively), second anal spine longer than third (vs. subequal in *Tavania*), and longer pectoral and pelvic fins in the new genus. Therefore I consider *Pirsagatia* as *Percoidei incertae sedis*. Another species superficially resembling the new genus is “*Serranus*” *comparabilis* Daniltshenko, 1960, from the Lower Oligocene of the Caucasus. However, it differs from *Pirsagatia* in the vertebral formula 10+14, all neural spines inclined posteriorly, dorsal-fin formula X+9 (vs. IX+10 in *Pirsagatia*), first dorsal spine much shorter than second one, second and third anal spines subequal in length, both soft dorsal and anal fins ending on same vertical (vs. last anal soft ray posterior to vertical of last dorsal soft ray in *Pirsagatia*), and smaller mouth.

**Etymology.** The genus is named after Pirsagat-tchai locality.

***Pirsagatia sytchevskayae* sp. n.**  
(Figs 1, 2)

**Holotype.** PIN, no. 4773/257 (formerly “collection no. 1413”), complete skeleton, single plate, **Russia**, *Daghestan*, Pirsagat-tchai locality, Upper Oligocene or Lower Miocene, coll. E.K. Sytchevskaya, 1958.

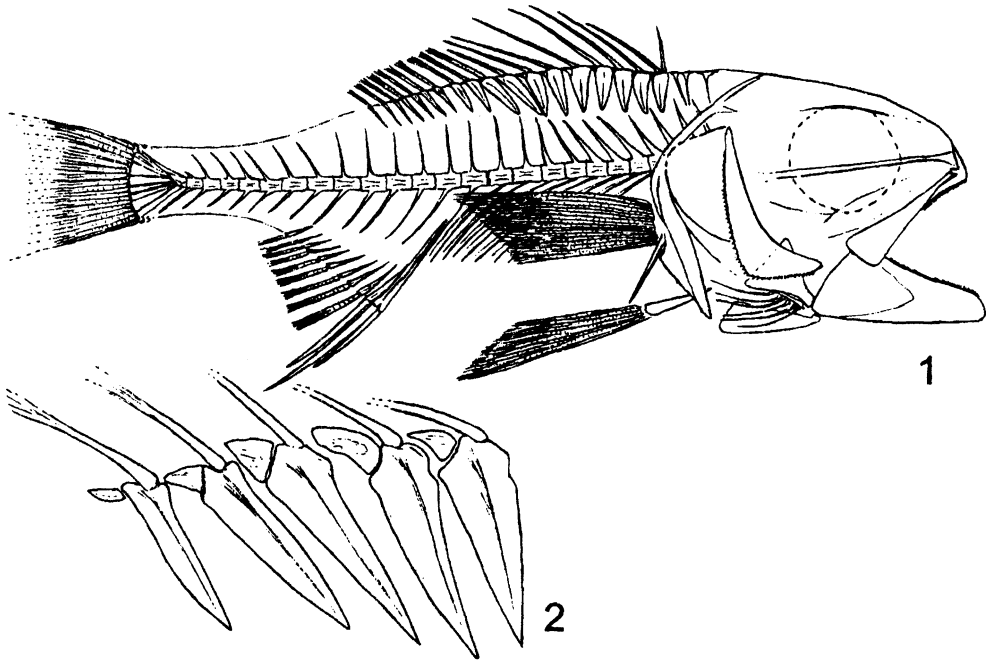
**Description.** Body moderately deep, with similarly convex dorsal and ventral profiles and relatively elongate caudal peduncle. Caudal peduncle depth contained 2.2 times in its length and 3.7 times in maximum body depth. Length of caudal peduncle contained about 5 times in SL. Head slightly longer than maximum body depth; its dorsal profile smoothly arched. Supraoccipital crest low, rounded posteriorly. Orbit rounded, relatively large, 1.6 times as long as snout; its horizontal diameter contained about 3 times in head length.

Mouth terminal, moderate; lower jaw articulated with cranium under vertical through middle of orbit. Maxillary broadly expanded posteriorly. Premaxillary and dentary with small villiform teeth in several rows; enlarged teeth or canines absent. Dentary V-shaped, firmly attached to articular. Quadrate bone triangular. Endo- and metapterygoids laminar, relatively large. Parasphenoid thin and straight, exposed through middle of orbit. Urohyal elongately triangular and large (4 mm in length).

Cleithrum with relatively narrow branches and laminate posterodorsal expansion; coracoids subtriangular, moderately broad. There are two postcleithra on each side; ventral one spine-like. Pectoral fins long, extended to anal fin origin, containing about 15 rays. Pelvic fins shorter than pectoral ones, slightly not reaching anal fin origin, with 1 spine and 5 branched rays. Pelvic bones triangular, very narrow.

First dorsal-fin spine only slightly shorter than second dorsal spine, which is slightly shorter than third one. Length of longest dorsal spines contained about 2.4 times in maximum body depth. Last (ninth) dorsal-fin spine slightly shorter than preceding spines or first branched ray of dorsal fin. Pterygiophores of dorsal fin spines and anteriormost soft rays broadly expanded and lamellar, becoming narrower in remaining soft rays. Distal elements of dorsal-fin pterygiophores moderately long, contained about 3.5 times in length of proximal segments. All anal-fin spines associated with separate pterygiophores. Second anal spine 1.5 times as long as third.

Neural spines of anterior eight abdominal vertebra inclined posteriorly; those from 9th abdominal to 6th caudal vertebra oriented vertically;



**Figs 1, 2.** *Pirsagatia sytchevskayae* gen. et sp. n. **1**, of holotype; **2**, dorsal-fin pterygiophores of spines 7-9 and soft-rays 1-2.

remaining neural spines becoming inclined posteriorly. All haemal spines inclined posteriorly. Ribs moderately long and thin. Caudal-fin support imperfectly preserved.

SL of holotype 33 mm. Measurements: in percentage of SL – head length (HL) 36.4; maximum body depth 33.3; caudal peduncle depth 9.1; caudal peduncle length 19.7; distance from snout to first dorsal-fin spine 35; that from snout to first dorsal soft ray 54.5; preanal distance 72.7; distance from pelvics to anal-fin origin 21.2; spinous dorsal-fin base length 19.7; soft dorsal-fin base length 21.2; anal-fin base length 18.2; length of pectoral fin 22.7; length of pelvic fin 18.2; length of caudal part of vertebral column 36.4; in percentage of HL – horizontal orbit diameter 33.3; snout length 20.8; length of maxillary 50.

*Etymology.* The species is named in honour of Eugenia K. Sytchevskaya, who collected the holotype.

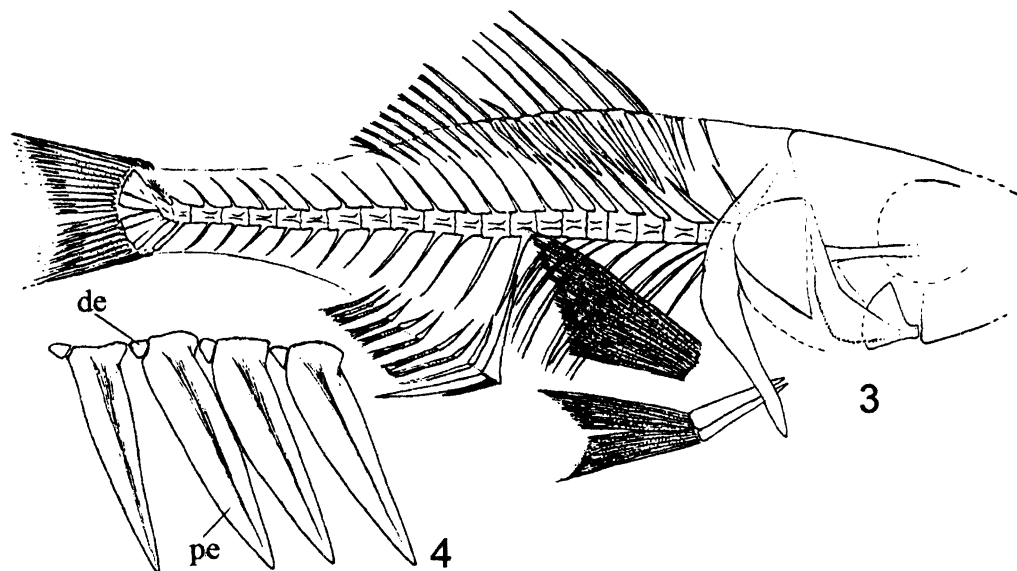
**Epibatichthys gen. n.**

Type species *Epibatichthys corruptus* sp. n.

*Diagnosis.* Small percoid fishes with fusiform body; maximum body depth contained about 3.4 times in SL. Lower jaw articulated with quadrate under middle of orbit. Posterior margin of

preopercle denticulate. Dorsal fin originating behind pelvic-fin origin, divided into two parts. First dorsal fin consists of 8 well spaced spines, of which first two in supernumerary association with first dorsal pterygiophore. First dorsal-fin spine half as long as second; third dorsal spine longest. Eighth dorsal-fin spine very short. Second dorsal fin consists of 1 spine and 8 soft rays. Distal elements of dorsal-fin pterygiophores very short; proximal-middle element of seventh dorsal-fin pterygiophore almost contacts base of eighth spine. Anal fin with 3 spines and 8 soft rays; first anal spine is supernumerary; second one is possibly serially associated with first anal pterygiophore and much stronger and longer than first or third anal spines. Last anal-fin ray situated on same vertical with dorsal one. Pectoral and pelvic fins long. Vertebrae 22 (8 + 14); all neural and haemal spines moderately inclined posteriorly. Ribs relatively long and thin. Body covered with large ctenoid scales.

*Comparison.* The new genus has some resemblance to Apogonidae: two separate dorsal fins; distal element of last spinous dorsal-fin pterygiophore extremely short, so that serially associated proximal-middle element almost contacts base of spine (this character is considered an autapomorphy of Apogonidae – Johnson, 1993); presence of only one supernumerary anal-fin



Figs 3, 4. *Epibatichthys corruptus* gen. et sp. n. 3, reconstruction of holotype; 4, pterygiophores of sixth to ninth (or spine of second dorsal fin) dorsal spines.

spine; similar body shape and fin counts. However, *Epibatichthys* differs notably from apogonids in the presence of 3 (vs. 2) anal-fin spines and much lower number of trunk and total vertebrae ( $8 + 14 = 22$  vs.  $10 + 14-15 = 24-25$  in Apogonidae). Therefore I consider *Epibatichthys* as Percoidei *incertae sedis* and as possible sister taxon of Apogonidae.

*Etymology.* The generic name is formed from *epibates* ("sea soldier" in Greek) and *ichthys* (fish).

***Epibatichthys corruptus* sp. n.**  
(Figs 3, 4)

*Holotype.* PIN, no. 4773/258 (formerly "collection no. 1413"), incomplete skeleton, single plate, **Russia, Daghestan**, Pirsagat-tchai locality, Upper Oligocene or Lower Miocene, coll. E.K. Sytchevskaya, 1958.

*Description.* Body moderately elongate, fusiform, with elongate caudal peduncle. Caudal peduncle depth contained 2.8 times in maximum body depth. Head moderate, with relatively large orbit and low, posteriorly rounded supraoccipital crest.

Lower jaw articulated with cranium under vertical through middle of orbit. Quadrate bone triangular. Metapterygoid laminar, relatively large. Parasphenoid thin and straight, exposed through middle of orbit.

Cleithrum smoothly curved, relatively narrow.

There are two postcleithra on each side; ventral one spine-like. Pectoral fins long, extended slightly behind anal-fin origin, containing about 15-20 rays. Pelvic fins relatively shorter than pectoral ones, not reaching anal fin origin, with 1 spine and 5 branched rays. Pelvic bones triangular and elongate.

Third dorsal-fin spine longest, 1.4 times as long as second and half as long as maximum body depth. Dorsal spines from 4 to 7 gradually but inconspicuously shorter than third one. Eighth dorsal spine 0.8 times as long as first dorsal-fin spine and 0.3 times as long as the longest (third) one. Dorsal-fin pterygiophores laminated and knife-like, becoming narrower posteriorly. Distal elements of dorsal-fin pterygiophores short, contained about 13 times in length of proximal-middle elements. First two anal-fin spines associated with single pterygiophore. Second anal spine much longer and twice as thick as third one.

Estimated SL of holotype about 45 mm. Measurements in percentage of maximum body depth: caudal peduncle depth 35.7; length of caudal part of vertebral column 142.9; first dorsal-fin spine length 17.9; second dorsal-fin spine length 35.7; third (longest) dorsal-fin spine length 50.0; eighth dorsal-fin spine length 14.3; pelvic fin length 42.9.

*Etymology.* The species name *corruptus* (Latin), means corrupt, for incomplete preservation of the specimen.

Family **REPRORCIDAE****Apscheronichthys** Prokofiev, 2001

*Apscheronichthys* Prokofiev, 2001: 62.

Type species *Apscheronichthys bogatschovi* Prokofiev, 2001.

**Emended diagnosis.** Small percoid fishes with elongate body and large conical head. Maximum body depth contained 4.2-5.0 times in SL; head length contained 2.7-2.8 times in SL. Lower jaw articulated with cranium under vertical through middle of orbit. Jaws bearing small villiform teeth. Preopercle with at least 6 moderately long, nearly equidimensional spines not extending to pelvic girdle. Opercle with 2 spines. Six branchiostegal rays. Dorsal fin continuous, but with distinct notch between spinous and soft portions, originates on same vertical with pelvic fins and consists of 11 spines and about 14 soft rays. First two dorsal-fin spines borne on single pterygiophore, possibly in supernumerary association. First dorsal-fin spine the shortest, about 1/4 to 1/5 of length of the longest spine. Third dorsal spine the longest, subequal to or slightly longer than maximum body depth, extends nearly to fifth soft dorsal-fin ray. Remaining dorsal-fin spines gradually decreasing in length. Predorsal formula /0+0+2/1+1/1/. Anal fin contains 3 spines and about 7 soft rays. Second anal spine longest. First anal-fin pterygiophore very strong. Pelvic fins very long, with extremely long and strong spine extending well behind anal-fin origin. Caudal fin with 17 principal rays, of which 15 branched. Vertebrae 10 + 20 = 30. There are five separate hypurals in caudal-fin support; neural spine of second preural vertebra very short.

**Comparison.** The genus differs from the only known congener, *Reproprca* Bannikov, 1991, in the following combination of characters: all preopercular spines are nearly equidimensional and do not extend to pelvic girdle (the spine in angle of preopercle very long and extends to pelvic girdle in similarly sized specimens of *Reproprca*); predorsal formula /0+0+2/1+1/1/ (vs. 0/0+2/1+1/1/); extremely long pelvics (not extending to anal-fin origin in *Reproprca*) and relatively low body.

**Apscheronichthys bogatschovi** Prokofiev, 2001 (Fig. 5)

*Apscheronichthys bogatschovi* Prokofiev, 2001: 62, 67, fig. 1.

**Holotype.** PIN, no. 4773/136, complete skeleton with counterpart, **Azerbaijan**, Apsheron Peninsula, left bank of Sumgait River near Pirekishkyul Village, Upper

Oligocene or Lower Miocene, coll. E.K. Sytchevskaya, 1982.

**Paratypes.** PIN, no. 4773/137-140, 4 specimens from the same locality.

**Description.** Characters of the genus with following measurements: in percentage of SL: maximum body depth 20-24; head length 36-37; predorsal distance 43-47; preanal distance 68-69; prepelvic distance 44; pelvic-fin length 20-26; in percentage of head length: orbit diameter 32-33; snout length 32. Maximum known SL is 30 mm.

Family **TERAPONIDAE****Pelates** Cuvier, 1829**Pelates (s. str.) islamdagicus** Prokofiev, 2001 (Fig. 6)

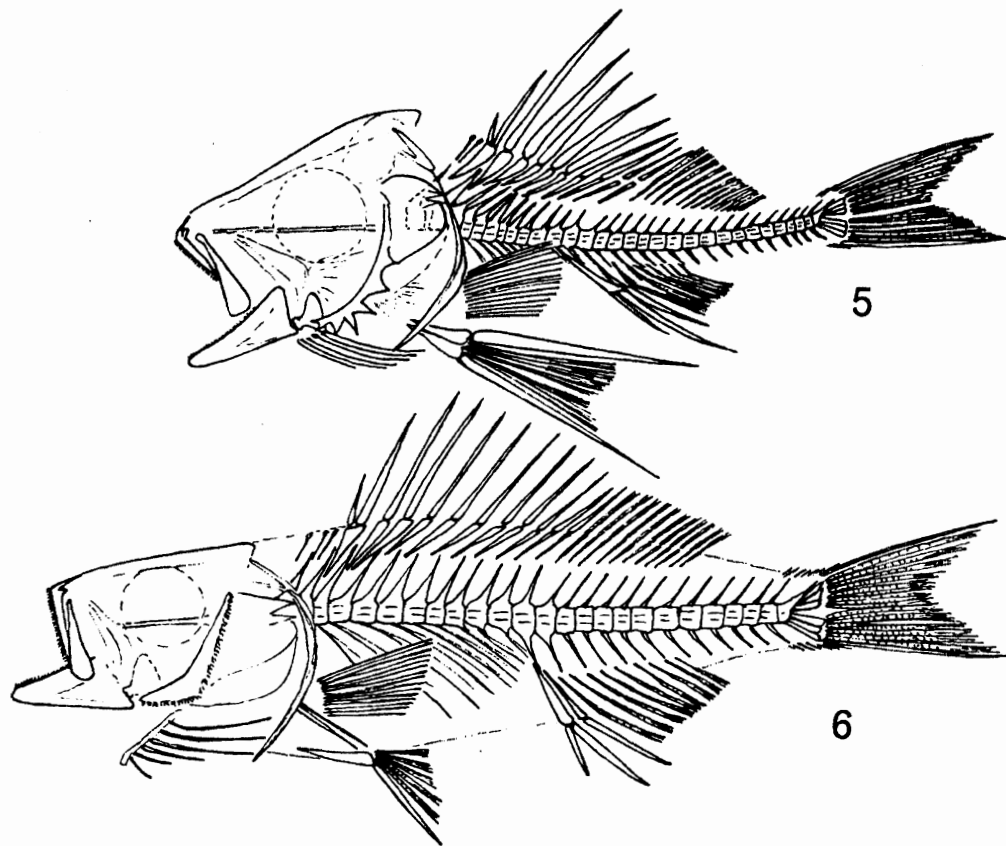
*Pelates islamdagicus* Prokofiev, 2001: 64, 68, fig. 2.

**Holotype.** PIN, no. 4773/134; complete skeleton with counterpart of head, **Azerbaijan**, Apsheron Peninsula, left bank of Sumgait River near Pirekishkyul Village, Upper Oligocene or Lower Miocene, coll. E.K. Sytchevskaya, 1982.

**Paratype.** PIN, no. 4773/135, fragment of fish with counterpart from the same locality.

**Emended diagnosis.** A species of *Pelates* (subgenus *Pelates* s. str.) with relatively elongate body (maximum body depth contained about 3.4 times in SL) and long dorsal-fin spines (about 15.6% of SL). Head moderate, about one-third of SL. Premaxillary with long ascending process. Jaws with small conical teeth in several rows. Preopercle with small denticulations on posterior border. Opercle with about 2 spines. Six branchiostegal rays. Posttemporal with elongate smooth branches. Dorsal fin continuous, originating before the origin of pelvics, and consisting of 12 spines and 11 soft rays. First dorsal spine 2/3 times as long as second one, which is only slightly shorter than third one; remaining dorsal-fin spines subequal, but eleventh one slightly shorter than neighbouring spines. Predorsal formula 0/0+0/2/1+1/. Anal fin with 3 spines and 9 soft rays; second and third anal spines nearly equidimensional. Caudal fin with 17 principal rays (15 branched). Vertebrae 11 + 14 = 25.

**Comparison.** The species is distinguished from the only other species of the subgenus *Pelates* s. str., *P. quadrilineatus* (Bloch), by the lower body (3.4 times in SL vs. 2.6-3.2) and longer dorsal-fin spines. It differs from the members of the subgenus *Helotes* Cuvier, *P. sexlineatus* (Quoy et Gaimard) and *P. qunqlanensis* (Sun), in the presence of conical (vs. three-pointed) teeth.



Figs 5, 6. Reconstructions. 5, *Apscheronichthys bogatschovi* Prokofiev, 2001; 6, *Pelates islamdagicus* Prokofiev, 2001.

## Family LEIOGNATHIDAE

### *Leiognathoides* Bannikov, 2001

#### *Leiognathoides minutus* (Daniltshenko, 1980) (Fig. 7)

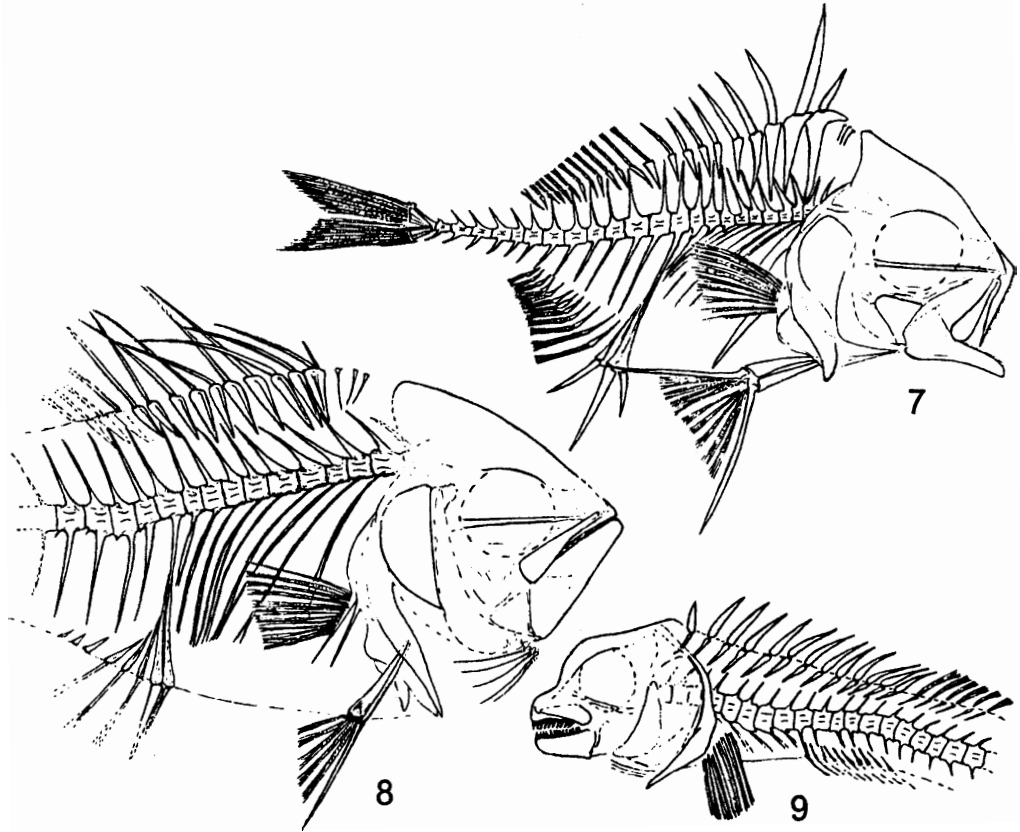
*Leiognathus minutus* Daniltshenko, 1980b: 133, pl. IV, fig. 2; *Leiognathoides minutus*: Bannikov, 2001: 123.

*Holotype*. PIN, no. 2180/3, complete skeleton, **Azerbaijan**, Apscheron Peninsula near Pirekishkyul Village, Upper Oligocene or Lower Miocene ("Abadzekhian Horizon").

*Other material examined*. PIN, nos. 4773/108-111, 121, 124-126, incomplete skeletons of 8 specimens, **Azerbaijan**, Apscheron Peninsula, left bank of Sumgait River near Pirekishkyul Village, Upper Oligocene or Lower Miocene, coll. E.K. Sytchevskaya, 1982.

*Emended diagnosis*. Very small fishes not exceeding 40 mm in SL. Body deep, rhomboidal, with relatively long and extremely slender cau-

dal peduncle. Maximum body depth about half of SL. Caudal peduncle depth 3.5 to 6 times smaller than maximum body depth. Head moderate (its length contained 1.8-2 times in maximum body depth), with high and sharp supraoccipital crest. Snout pointed, much shorter than orbit diameter. Maxillary with long, slender ascending process. Jaws with small villiform teeth. Posterior margin of preopercle smooth. Ventral postcleithrum strong, rib-like, extending nearly to ventral profile of body. Dorsal fin originates well anterior to pelvic-fin origin, continuous, but with deep notch between spinous and soft portions, consists of 9 spines and 12-14 soft rays. All dorsal-fin spines borne on separate pterygiophores. First dorsal pterygiophore with strong, anteriorly directed process between second and third neural spines. Second dorsal-fin spine the longest, 2.0-2.5 times as long as first dorsal spine, being about half as long as maximum body depth, and 1.6-1.7 times as long as third dorsal spine.



Figs 7-9. Reconstructions. 7, *Leiognathoides minutus* (Daniltshenko, 1980); 8, Pomacentridae gen. et sp. indet.; 9, *Bestiolablennius eugeniae* Prokofiev, 2001.

Remaining dorsal-fin spines gradually but inconspicuously decreasing in length posteriorly. Predorsal formula /0+0+0/1/1+1/. All supraneurals very small and thin. Sixth interneural space (between 7th and 8th neural spines) vacant. Anal fin with 3 spines and 12-14 soft rays; second anal spine much longer than others. Pectoral fins not extended to anal-fin origin. Pelvic fin with long spine and 5 soft rays, extended well behind anal-fin origin. Caudal fin forked. Vertebrae 10 + 14 = 24. There are about 4 separate hypurals in caudal skeleton.

**Comparison.** *L. minutus* differs from the only known congener, *L. altapinna* (Weiler) from the Lower Oligocene of Europe and the Caucasus, in the presence of a single spine on the first dorsal pterygiophore (vs. two) and second (vs. third) dorsal-fin spine the longest; smaller number of dorsal soft rays (12-14 vs. 17-18); longer pelvic

fins (not reaching anal-fin origin in *L. altapinna*); smaller and thinner supraneurals; vacant sixth interneural space; forked caudal fin; and, possibly, much smaller size. Bannikov (2001) noted in the diagnosis of *Leiognathoides* (of which *L. minutus* is the type-species) two characters, which are not observed in the currently examined material: absence of vacant interneural spaces and rounded caudal fin. In the holotype of *L. minutus*, caudal-fin rays are dislocated under preservation; therefore, "rounded" appearance of it may be an artifact. In other specimens examined, the caudal fin, when preserved, is forked. The presence of a vacant interneural space under the spinous dorsal-fin portion and forked caudal fin are characteristic for recent genera of Leiognathidae, but the latter have the fifth interneural space vacant. However, *L. minutus* differs notably from all recent leiognathids

and is similar to *L. altapinna* in the presence of 9 (vs. 8) dorsal-fin spines and 3 (vs. 1) supra-neurals; placement of first dorsal pterygiophore between second and third (vs. first and second) neural spines; and presence of 4 separated hypurals.

## Suborder LABROIDEI

### Family POMACENTRIDAE

#### Gen. et sp. indet.

(Fig. 8)

*Material examined.* PIN, no. 4773/259 (formerly "collection no. 1413"), incomplete skeleton, single plate; **Russia**, *Daghestan*, Pirsagat-tchai locality, Upper Oligocene or Lower Miocene, coll. E.K. Sytchevskaya, 1958.

*Description.* Body deep, ovoid in shape; maximum body depth 1.6 times the head length. Head relatively large, conical, with pointed snout and high supraoccipital crest. Angle between dorsal profile of head and longitudinal axis of body approximately 40°. Orbit large, roundish, its diameter subequal to one-third of head length. Jaws equal; mouth oblique. Lower jaw articulated with cranium under vertical through middle of orbit. Jaws with small conical teeth; enlarged or caniniform teeth absent. Parasphenoid straight, exposed in middle of orbit. Opercular bones flat and coarse; posterior margins of opercle and preopercle not clearly seen.

Cleithrum with relatively narrow ventral branch. Two postcleithra, of which dorsal one broadened and laminated and ventral one narrow and long. Pelvic bones very narrow and elongate. Pectoral and pelvic fins situated nearly on same vertical, not reaching anal-fin origin. Pectoral fin with about 15 rays.

Dorsal fin incompletely preserved, with about 11 or, possibly, more spines. First two spines borne on first dorsal pterygiophore, possibly in supernumerary association. First dorsal-fin spine much shorter than second one, which is only slightly shorter than third dorsal spine. Remaining dorsal-fin spines subequal in length. All dorsal spines thin and possibly flexible. There are 3 thin supra-neurals; predorsal formula  $/0+0/0+2/1+1/$ , but possibly anterior supra-neural dislocated postmortally and natural predorsal formula was  $0/0/0+2/1+1/$ , as in the closely related *Chromis*. Dorsal-fin pterygiophores laminated and knife-like, becoming narrower posteriorly. Anal fin imperfectly preserved, with two spines on separate pterygiophores. Second anal spines much stronger (and possibly longer) than first.

Vertebrae are  $10 + ?$ ; both neural and haemal spines more or less inclined posteriorly. Last two

trunk vertebrae with moderately long parapophyses. Ribs long and thin. Body covered with large ctenoid scales.

Estimated SL of the single known specimen is about 45 mm. Several measurements (in mm): maximum body depth 21; head length 13; predorsal distance 15; first dorsal-fin spine 1.5; longest dorsal-fin spine *ca.* 7; ventroanal distance 11; orbit diameter 4; length of lower jaw 8.

*Remarks.* The described specimen is similar in the habitus and presence of only small conical teeth on jaws to the subfamily Chrominae, but the incomplete preservation makes impossible exact identification of this fish. The fossil specimen differs from the recent Euro-Mediterranean *Chromis chromis* (Linnaeus) in the larger mouth; 10 (vs. 11) trunk vertebrae; much thinner and possibly flexible dorsal-fin spines (vs. relatively strong in *Chromis*); and proportions of anterior dorsal spines (first dorsal spine slightly shorter than second one, and both distinctly shorter than third spine in *Chromis*).

## Suborder BLENOIDEI

### Family BLENNIIDAE

#### **Bestiolablennius** Prokofiev, 2001

*Bestiolablennius*: Prokofiev, 2001: 65.

*Emended diagnosis.* Body low; its depth at anal-fin origin is about half of head depth. Head large, with steeply abrupt dorsal profile making nearly straight angle with snout. Head depth subequal to its length. Jaws short and equal, bearing closely spaced, straight caniniform teeth. Snout 1.2 times smaller than orbit diameter. Dorsal fin with 13 spines. Pectoral fin with 13 rays. There are 8 trunk vertebrae.

*Comparison.* This genus strikingly differs from all other Blennoidei in the extremely low number of trunk vertebrae.

#### **Bestiolablennius eugeniae** Prokofiev, 2001

(Fig. 9)

*Bestiolablennius eugeniae* Prokofiev, 2001: 66, 69, fig. 3.

*Holotype.* PIN, no. 4773/129, incomplete skeleton with counterpart, **Azerbaijan**, Apsheron Peninsula, left bank of Sumgait River near Pirekishkyul Village, Upper Oligocene or Lower Miocene, coll. E.K. Sytchevskaya, 1982.

*Description.* Characters of the genus with the following measurements (in mm): head length 5; head depth 4.75; body depth at anal origin 2.25; pectoral-fin length *ca.* 2.5; first dorsal-fin spine length 1.25; longest dorsal spine length 2.5; dorsal-fin base length 7; preanal length 9.5.



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