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DESCRIPTION OF A NEW SCIAENOID FISH FROM
SANTA CATALINA ISLAND, CALIFORNIA

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Sciaena thompsoni, new species

Relationships: This new species is intermediate between the groups called *Ophioscion* and *Sciaena*. It appears to be most similar to three Panamaic species, *simula*, *sciera*, and *vermicularis*. From *simula* it differs in the weaker armature of the preopercle, the stronger canines, the shorter pectoral, the slightly fewer dorsal rays, the shorter second anal spine, the sharper predorsal ridge, the longer caudal peduncle, the longer anal base, the less curved ventral contour, the shorter interspace between anus and anal fin (5.25 instead of 2.1 in head), the flat preorbital, etc. It differs from *sciera* in the longer caudal peduncle (1.05 instead of 1.3 in head), the weaker and much more numerous serrations on the preopercular margin, the shorter pectoral (1.8 rather than 1.2 to 1.5 in head), the less robust and shorter anal spine (2.5, not 1.9 in head), the very short pelvic filament, the more slender body (depth 3.52 instead of 3.0 to 3.33), the less strongly elevated

anterior profile, the more rounded snout, the vertically instead of horizontally elliptical posterior nostril, the somewhat longer gill-rakers, the larger eye (4.1 instead of 5.0 to 5.5 in head), the shorter interspace between anus and anal fin (5.25 instead of 2.9 to 3.5 in head), and the number of soft dorsal rays (28, not 24 or 25). From *vermicularis* it may be distinguished by the much longer second dorsal spine, much shorter and weaker second anal spine, the much less elevated anterior profile, shorter pectorals, shorter distance between anus and anal, the lower curve of the lateral line, and numerous other characters.

Holotype: A specimen 102 mm. long to caudal, from Avalon, Santa Catalina Island, California; secured from the Avalon Aquarium; Cat. No. 55053, Museum of Zoology, University of Michigan. Only one specimen known.

Description: Dorsal, XI, 28; anal, II, 7; pectoral, 18; pores in lateral line, 50; head, 3.61; depth, 3.52.

Body comparatively elongate and little compressed; head evenly rounded; dorsal contour evenly convex from snout to dorsal fin, much more strongly curved than ventral contour; predorsal region behind occiput compressed to a ridge. Eye, 4.1; interorbital slightly convex, a little wider than eye; sub-orbital flattish, two-thirds as wide as eye; mouth rather narrow, its width less than the length of the upper jaw, which extends to below middle of pupil, 2.75 on head; mouth little oblique, slightly overhung by the bluntly rounded snout. Teeth in villiform bands on jaws, the outer premaxillary series composed of semi-depressible canines, which, near the symphysis, are about one-eighth as long as eye. Snout 3.6, with conspicuous slits and pores; anterior nostril round, much smaller than the vertically elliptical posterior nostril; no nasal flaps. Preopercle armed with about 29 serrations, rather small, not much enlarged at angle, becoming minute at both extremes of series (the serrations evidently were originally bony, but preservation in strong formal-

dehyde has made them flexible). Gill-rakers short, not quite so long as pupil, 7+13 in number, two anterior tubercles included.

Dorsal spines slender and flexible (except the first, which is stout, and as short as the pupil); second spine angulated along anterior edge, about as long as the fourth, contained 2.1 times in head; third spine longest, contained twice in head, reaching base of ninth spine when depressed; tenth spine shortest, about as long as the first, two-thirds as long as eleventh; fourth and longest ray of second dorsal, 2.6; caudal rays broken. First anal spine similar to first spine of dorsal; second anal spine comparatively short, 1.25 in longest soft rays, 1.0 in base of anal, 2.5 in head. Pelvic fin extending two-thirds distance to anus, contained 1.6 times in head; its spine 1.9 in the longest, slightly produced, outermost ray. Pectoral short, 1.8 in head. Length of caudal peduncle, measured from end of anal base, nearly equal to that of head.

Anus close to anal fin, the interspace contained 5.25 times in the head.

Scales ctenoid, large; transverse rows 6+1+9 counted along the subvertical series, 8+1+13 in oblique series. Dorsal and anal with a basal scaly sheath, consisting of a single row of small scales; minute scales extended on membranes between rays of soft dorsal. Snout and the gular and branchiostegal membranes naked. Lateral line with a long low curve, its height a little less than length of eye.

Color faded in type. Opercle with a large dark spot; inner border of opercles blackish; lining of buccal cavity white. Spinous dorsal dark.

Named for Mr. William Francis Thompson, co-author with Dr. Jordan of a characteristically careful review of the sciaenoid fishes of Japan, and of other excellent reports on Japanese fishes; now fishery-expert for the California Fish and Game Commission.

SCIAENA THOMPSONI

PLATE I



