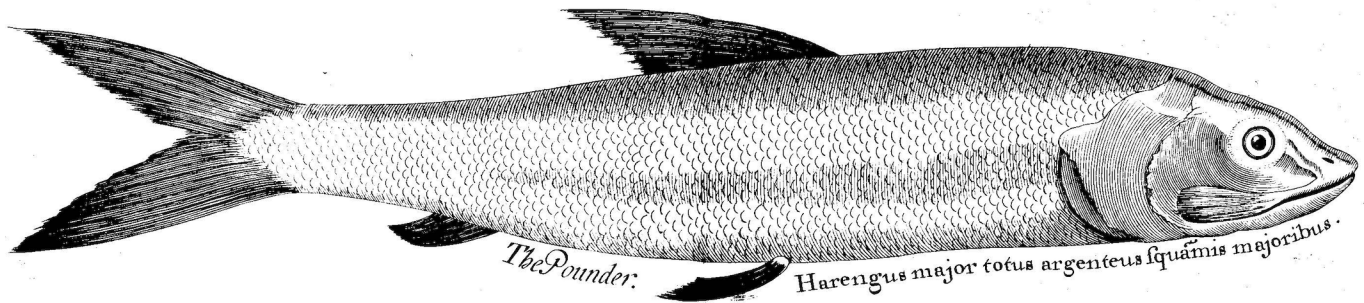


Order ELOPIFORMES

Tenpounders and Ladyfishes

Family ELOPIDAE

Valenciennes 1847



First-published image of *Elops saurus*, which Linnaeus unfortunately overlooked, mistakenly naming the fish for its lizard-like appearance based on the plate that appeared on the next page (see below). From: Sloane, H. 1725. The natural history of Jamaica. Book V, Part II. Of the fishes of Jamaica. In: Sloane, H. A voyage to the islands Madera, Barbadoes, Nieves, St Christofers, and Jamaica; with the natural history of the herbs and trees, four-footed beasts, fishes, birds, insects, reptiles &c. of the last of those islands. Vol. 2. London. xviii + 499 pp., Pls. 157–274.

Elops

Linnaeus 1766

élops (ἔλλοψ), a Greek word (often spelled *helops*) variously defined as meaning dumb, scaly, a fish (in general), and a large, rare and precious fish compared to or identified as a sturgeon;¹ the application to this genus remains obscure, but considering that Linnaeus named *E. saurus* based in part on a 1725 description (“all over scaly”) of what appears to be a lizardfish (*Synodus*), maybe the “scaly” explanation is the best fit²

***Elops affinis* Regan 1909** Latin for related, described as “extremely similar” to *E. saurus* (18–20 gill rakers on lower part of anterior arch vs. 12–15)

***Elops hawaiiensis* Regan 1909 -ensis**, Latin suffix denoting place: Hawaiian Islands, type locality

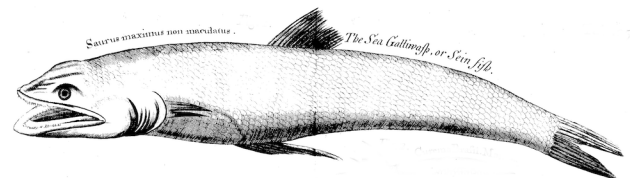
***Elops lacerta* Valenciennes 1847** Latin equivalent of the Greek *saúra* (σαύρα), lizard, alluding to the name of *E. saurus*

***Elops machnata* (Fabricius 1775)** Latinization of *machnat*, Arabic vernacular for this species [authorship often given as (Forsskål 1775)]

***Elops saurus* Linnaeus 1766** from *saúra* (Gr. σαύρα), lizard, based on *Saurus maximus, non maculatus* of Sloane 1725, most likely a lizardfish (*Synodus*), which Linnaeus incorrectly cited instead of the “pounder” described and illustrated in the same book [see illustrations above and below]

***Elops senegalensis* Regan 1909 -ensis**, Latin suffix denoting place: St. Louis, Senegal, type locality

***Elops smithi* McBride, Rocha, Ruiz-Carus & Bowen 2010** in honor of American ichthyologist David G. Smith, National Museum of Natural History, Smithsonian Institution (Washington, D.C.), “for his thoroughness in examining leptocephali of *Elops* to reveal that two morphs were present”



The illustration, presumably of a lizardfish (*Synodus*), upon which Linnaeus mistakenly based, in part, his description and naming of *Elops saurus*. This image (Tab. 251), appeared on the page after “The Pounder” (Tab. 250, shown above). The common name “Sea Galliwasp” alludes to the Jamaica Giant Galliwasp *Celestus occiduus*, a lizard endemic to Jamaica.

¹ Frisk, H. 1960. Griechisches etymologisches wörterbuch. Vol. 1. Heidelberg: Carl Winter Universitätsverlag. xxx + 938 pp.

² Jordan & Evermann (1896, Fishes of North and Middle America, vol. 1) suggest that *elops* may be derived from the Greek *eláwno*, to drive or set in motion; they also suggest that *elops*, in addition to sturgeon, may also refer to swordfish, a possibility hinted at in Thompson (1947, A glossary of Greek fishes, Oxford University Press, vi + 302 pp.).