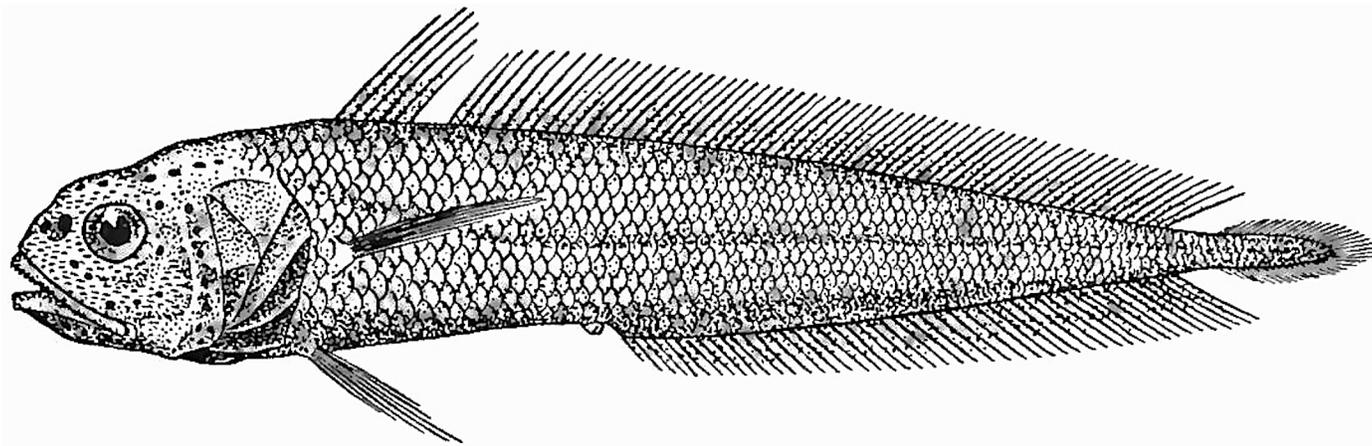


Order GADIFORMES

Pelagic Cods

Family MELANONIDAE

Goode & Bean 1896



Melanonus zugmayeri, holotype. From: Norman, J. R. 1930. Oceanic fishes and flatfishes collected in 1925-1927. *Discovery Reports* 2: 261-369, Pl. 2.

Melanonus

Günther 1878

mélanos (μέλανος), genitive of *mélas* (μέλας), black, referring to entirely deep-black body of *M. gracilis*; *onus*, presumably a Latinization of *onos* (ὄνος), donkey or ass (*asellus* in Latin), a name dating to Aristotle for an unidentified gadiform fish, possibly *Phycis blennoides* (Gadidae)¹ but often applied to *Merluccius merluccius* (Merlucciidae) and hence used several times by Günther as a suffix for a hake-like fish

***Melanonus gracilis* Günther 1878** Latin for thin or slender, presumably referring to its “rather compressed” head and body and/or how body terminates into a “long tapering” tail without a caudal fin

***Melanonus zugmayeri* Norman 1930** in honor of Austrian explorer, herpetologist and ichthyologist Erich Zugmayer (1879–1938), Bavarian State Zoological Collection (Munich), who reported this species as *M. gracilis* in 1911

¹ Why a donkey or ass? At least four explanations have been mentioned but no one knows for sure. (1) The color of Hake *Merluccius merluccius* (Merlucciidae)—grayish-white color above, white below—is like that of an ass (Varro, 1471, *De lingua Latina*). (2) The Haddock *Melanogrammus aeglefinus* (Gadidae) is as sluggish as a donkey (Varro, citing Oppian). (3) The dark mark on the shoulder of the Haddock is said to resemble the dark stripe over the withers of an ass (Yarrell, 1836, *History of British Fishes*, vol. 2). (4) In ancient times, gadiform fishes were carried to market on the backs of asses (Day, 1882, *Fishes of Great Britain and Ireland*).