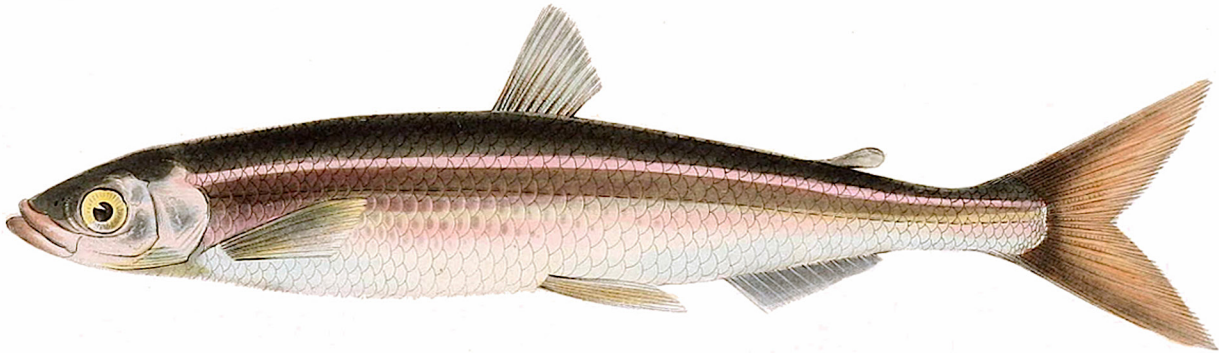


Order OSMERIFORMES

Smelts

Family **OSMERIDAE**

Regan 1913



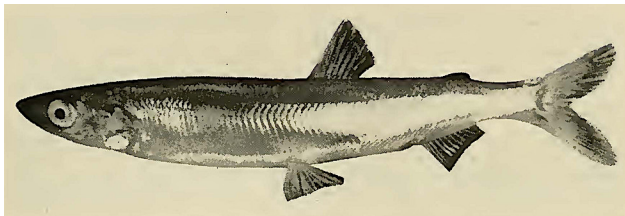
*Hypomesus japonicus*. From: Brevoort, J. C. 1856. Notes on some figures of Japanese fish taken from recent specimens by the artists of the U. S. Japan Expedition. In: M. C. Perry, Narrative of the Expedition of an American Squadron to the China Seas and Japan, performed in the years 1852, 1853, and 1854 under the command of Commodore M. C. Perry, United States Navy, by order of the Government of the United States. Vol. 2. U. S. Senate Ex. Doc. No. 79, 33rd Congress, 2nd Session. Beverley Tucker, Washington, D.C. [i–viii] + 1–414 + 1–14 + I–XI + [1], 17 folded charts, Pls.

**Allosmerus**

Hubbs 1925

*állos* (Gr. ἄλλος), other, i.e., another genus of *Osmerus*, type genus of family, “intermediate in most respects” between that genus and *Thaleichthys*

***Allosmerus elongatus* (Ayres 1854)** Latin for prolonged, referring to its “elongated and compressed” form or body shape



Possibly first-published image of *Allosmerus elongatus* (as *A. attenuatus*, a junior synonym), 94 years after its description. From: Roedel, P. M. 1948. Common marine fishes of California. Division of Fish and Game of California, Bureau of Marine Fisheries. Fish Bulletin 68. 1–150.

**Hypomesus**

Gill 1862

*hypó* (Gr. ὑπό), under or beneath; *mésos* (Gr. μέσος), middle, referring to position of ventral fins “nearly under middle” of dorsal fin of *H. pretiosus*

***Hypomesus japonicus* (Brevoort 1856)** *-icus* (L.), belonging to: Japan, named from an illustration of a specimen taken from Hakodate, Oshima Subprefecture, Hokkaido, Japan, during the U.S. Japan Expedition (1852–1854) under the command of Matthew C. Perry

***Hypomesus nipponensis* McAllister 1963** *-ensis*, Latin suffix denoting place: Nippon, or Japan, where it is native to lakes and estuaries of Hokkaido (now established in California, USA)

***Hypomesus olidus* (Pallas 1814)** Latin for smelly or rank, “smells very bad” (translation), referring to its cucumber-like odor (some references say *olidus* means oily; while the fish does have oily flesh, this translation is incorrect)

***Hypomesus pretiosus* (Girard 1854)** Latin for of great value, presumably referring to its delicate flavor

***Hypomesus transpacificus* McAllister 1963** *-icus* (L.), belonging to: *trans* (L.), over or beyond, referring to the belief (now incorrect) that it occurs

on both sides of the Pacific, and “to the friendship of Japanese and Canadian ichthyologists”

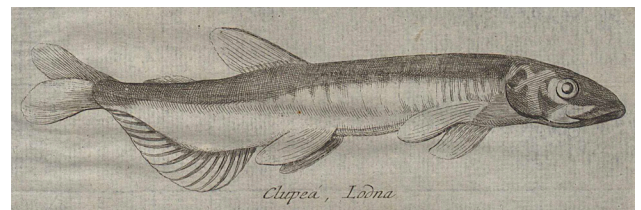
**Mallotus**

Cuvier 1829

*mállōtós* (Gr. μαλλωτός), fleecy or woolly, referring to band of elongate scales along lateral line and middle of belly of breeding males, which appear to be hairy

***Mallotus catervarius* (Pennant 1784)** Latin for of or pertaining to a crowd, presumably referring to its occurrence in “immense shoals” on the eastern coast of Kamchatka, Russia

***Mallotus villosus* (Müller 1776)** Latin for woolly or shaggy, referring to band of elongate scales along lateral line and middle of belly of breeding males, which appear to be hairy



Possibly first-published image of *Mallotus villosus* (with unrealistic anal fin). From: Ólafsson, E. 1772. Reise igiennem Island. Sorø, Denmark. i–x + 1–618 + 43 pl. + 1 foldout map.

**Osmerus**

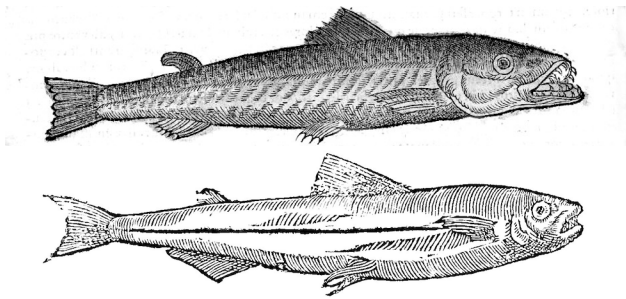
Linnaeus 1758

*osmérēs* (Gr. ὀσμήρης), odorous, referring to their cucumber-like odor [the vernacular “smelt” does not refer to this curious smell, but instead may derive from the Old Dutch *smalt*, meaning grease or melted butter, referring to how the oily flesh of *O. eperlanus* gives it a “melt in your mouth” texture]

***Osmerus dentex* Steindachner & Kner 1870** from *dens* (L.), tooth, referring to strong fang-like teeth on tongue and front of vomer

***Osmerus eperlanus* (Linnaeus 1758)** Latinization of the Old French *éperlan*, a vernacular name applied to small edible fishes that migrate to fresh water to spawn

***Osmerus eperlanus schonfoldi* McAllister 1984** first available treatment of “*Eperlanus Schonfoldii*” of Ruttý 1772 (named but not described), patronym not identified, possibly in honor of Dutch naturalist Stephan Schonevelde (d.



Probably the earliest published images of *Osmerus eperlanus*. Top, from: Belon, P. 1553. De aquatilibus libri duo. Paris. 1–448. Bottom, from Rondelet, G. 1555. Libri de piscibus marinis, in quibus veræ piscium effigies expressæ sunt. Part 2. M. Bonhomme, Lugduni (Lyon). i–x (un-numbered) + 1–242 + i–ix (unnumbered).

1632, also spelled Schonefeld, Schone Velde, Schoenfeld, and presumably Schonfeld), whose 1624 book on marine animals is cited by Rutt

***Osmerus mordax* (Mitchill 1814)** Latin biting, referring to strong fang-like teeth on tongue and front of vomer, a “formidable apparatus for a small fish”

***Osmerus mordax spectrum* Cope 1870** Latin for spectre or apparition, allusion not explained, perhaps referring to its translucent color in life

### ***Spirinchus***

**Jordan & Evermann 1896**

a 1657 name for smelt used by Polish scholar and physician John Jonston (1603–1675, writing as Johannes Jonstonus), possibly a Latinization of *spirinche*, a 17th-century Anglo-Saxon word for smelt, itself possibly derived from the Middle English *spierlinge*, Old French *esperlinge*, or Old Dutch *spierling*; per Moyle (2002)<sup>1</sup>, the name means “breath-beginning” (*spiro* [L.], to breathe; *inchoatus* [L.], begun) and refers to the “conspicuous duct that connects the air bladder (=lung) to the gut,” but we doubt this explanation since physostomus gas bladders are common in fishes, and because the name appears to have a clear relationship to similar names of Teutonic origin

***Spirinchus lanceolatus* (Hikita 1913)** Latin for lance-like, referring to its lanceolate shape, like that of a willow leaf

***Spirinchus starksi* (Fisk 1913)** in honor of American ichthyologist Edwin Chapin Starks (1867–1932), Stanford University (California, USA), for his “able assistance” in the preparation of Fisk’s paper

***Spirinchus thaleichthys* (Ayres 1860)** presumably named for its similarity to *Thaleichthys pacificus*, a related species with a similar flavor; Ayres said this species “presents an entire blending of the characters on which Girard proposed to separate” *Thaleichthys* from *Osmerus*

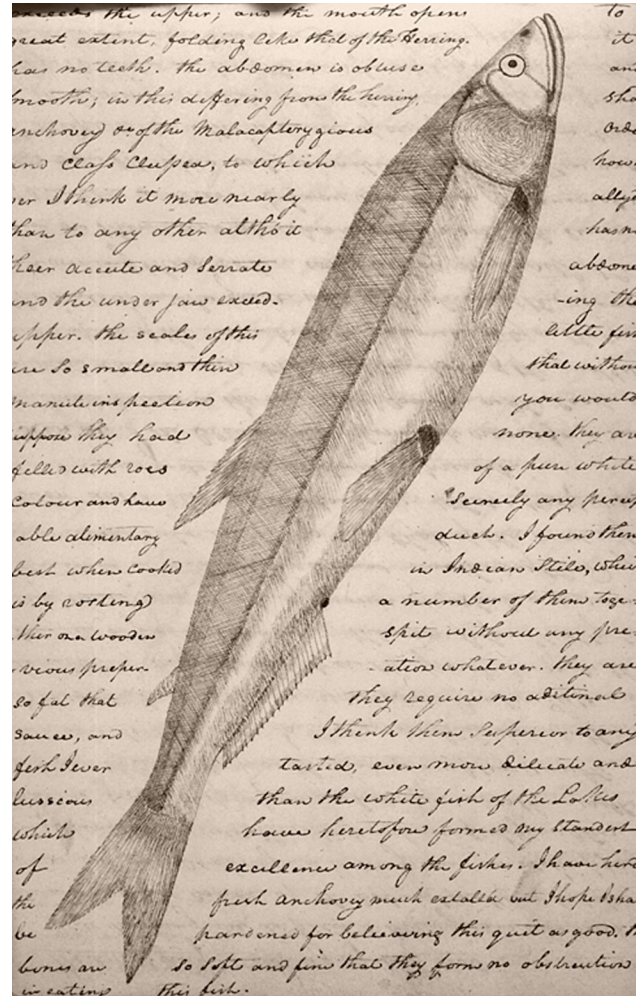
<sup>1</sup> Moyle, P. B. 2002. Inland fishes of California. 2nd ed. Berkeley, Ca.: University of California Press. i–xv + 1–502 + 12 pl.

### ***Thaleichthys***

**Girard 1858**

etymology not explained, perhaps derived from *thállein* (Gr. θάλλειν), to flourish, referring to what Richardson in his description of *T. pacificus* said were “immense shoals” of the fish during its freshwater spawning runs along the Pacific Coast of North America; *ichthys* (Gr. ἰχθύς), fish

***Thaleichthys pacificus* (Richardson 1836) -icus** (L.), belonging to: Pacific Ocean, referring to its distribution along the Pacific Coast of North America, from the Bering Sea to southern California (USA)



In February 1806, 31 years before it received its scientific name, explorer Meriwether Lewis drew *Thaleichthys pacificus* in his sketchbook. Lewis first encountered the fish when Clatsop Indian chief Coboway offered some for sale at Fort Clatsop (named for the tribe), near the mouth of the Columbia River in Oregon, USA.