Order RHINOPRISTIFORMES

Sawfishes

Family PRISTIDAE
Bonaparte 1835

Anoxypristis
White & Moy-Thomas 1941

ὀξύς (Gr. ὀξύς), sharp or pointed; pristis, from prístēs (Gr. πρίστης), sawyer (also ancient Greek name for sawfishes), referring to blade-like teeth of saw-like snout [replacement name for Oxypristis Hoffman 1912, preoccupied in Hemiptera; the prefix an-, was added to avoid homonymy and has no special meaning]

Anoxypristis cuspidata (Latham 1794) Latin for provided with a point, referring to rostral spines “shaped at the point more like the lancet used by surgeons in bleeding” [italics in original]

Pristis
Linck 1790
tautonymous with Squalus pristis Linnaeus 1758, from prístēs (Gr. πρίστης), sawyer (also ancient Greek name for sawfishes), referring to saw-like snout

Pristis clavata Garman 1906 Latin for “furnished with nails,” allusion not explained, perhaps referring to its rostral teeth, described as “long, slender, and rounded on each edge” (i.e., like a nail)

Pristis pectinata Latham 1794 Latin for comb-toothed, presumably referring to its small, comb-like teeth, smaller than those of other sawfishes

Pristis pristis (Linnaeus 1758) from prístēs (Gr. πρίστης), sawyer (also ancient Greek name for sawfishes), referring to saw-like snout

Pristis zijsron Bleeker 1851 etymology not explained, possibly an inadvertent Dutch spelling (zi = xi) of sxron (Gr. σχέρων), meaning file, rasp or scraper, or a scythe (usually serrated) attached to chariots, either way referring to the fish’s serrated or saw-like rostrum; Bleeker used variants of the same word three additional times to convey a serrated morphological feature: the nemipterid Nemipterus zysron in 1856 (distinguished by the “serrated posterior margin of the preopercle” [translation]), the cyprinid Puntioplites protozysron in 1864 (which has a serrated anal-fin spine), and the pomacentrid Neopomacentrus ozysron in 1877 (referring to its lack of preopercular serrations)

In subsequent papers, Bleeker used two spellings, zijsron and zysron, sometimes even in the same paragraph. “This might be the case that typesetters had problems deciphering Bleeker’s small and cramped writing. It is also possible that Bleeker (who was the editor of many periodicals in which he published his papers) did not do a good job of proofreading his manuscripts.”