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A New Pygidiin Catfish from Argentina

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In 1916, an American Museum expedition, the primary objective of which was ornithology, collected four unusually large (for the genus) specimens of *Pygidium* from the highlands of Argentina. A number of species of this genus are recognized, their stated differences being for the most part slight, seemingly superficial; at that time we had quite inadequate material for comparison, and the years have gone by without these specimens being worked up. It now appears that they represent a form, herewith and not previously described, as follows:

Pygidium boylei, new species

DESCRIPTION OF TYPE: A.M.N.H. No. 20299, from dry country at Tilcara, Argentina, elevation 8000 feet, February, 1916; collected by Howarth S. Boyle.

Length to base of caudal, 105 mm. Depth in this length, 6.4; head, 5. Depth of head in its length, 2; its width, 1.1; depth of peduncle, 1.9, its length, 1.2. Eye in head, 8; interorbital, 3.5; width of mouth, 1.5; nasal barbel, 2.7 (reaching back to past middle of eye); upper of the two barbels at corner of mouth somewhat the longer, 1.5 (reaching back three-fourths of the distance to hind margin of opercle); longest dorsal ray, 1.6; anal ray, 1.6; caudal, 1; pectoral, 1.2; ventral, 1.8.

Dorsal rays, 10; anal, 8; the first two (simple) rays short and little developed in each case.

Head depressed, eyes on its slightly convex upper surface; profile of snout from above, broad and rounded. Mouth inferior, transverse, unusually wide; tip of snout overreaching it by one-third of its width, or a little less. Lips loose and membranous, the lower free at the corners for

about one-fourth of the width of mouth. Gill membranes narrowly joined to the isthmus. Small (though large for the genus), rather narrow teeth in several rows in each jaw (about 30 in a row), their slightly broader tips mostly truncate; tooth-bearing area occupying almost the entire width of the mouth.

Body before ventrals somewhat, behind them well compressed. Lower surfaces back to the ventrals, flat; pectorals and ventrals in a horizontal plane; bases of ventrals close together. Ventral origin equidistant from base of caudal and gill cleft; dorsal origin equidistant from base of caudal and middle of depressed pectorals, behind the ventrals; its axil slightly before the anal origin. Pectorals without an exerted ray (curved in

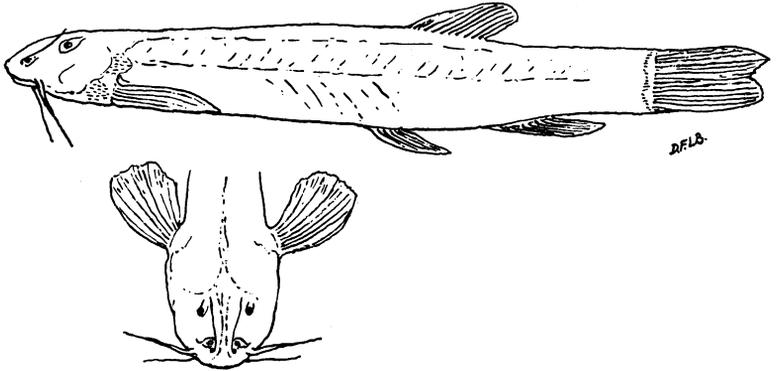


FIG. 1. *Pygidium boylei* type. Standard length, 105 mm.

front, their ends obliquely truncate), reaching two-fifths of the distance to ventrals; ventrals reaching three-fifths of that to anal. Caudal appreciably emarginate or shallowly forked, its upper lobe slightly the longer and bluntly pointed, lower lobe rounded.

Color lost; a slight but inconclusive suggestion of mottling over the body.

The three paratypes (with the same data) show some differences from the type in proportions. The smallest, of 82 mm., is badly shrunken, its depth 10.2 (at least partly for that reason). The other two are deeper-bodied, presumably females, depth 5.8 in one of 98 mm., 5.5 in one of 90. In this last the abdomen is distended with eggs which measure approximately 0.75 mm. in diameter. The heads of the three are a little shorter relatively than the head of the type (5.6 to 5.8); eye a little larger (7 to 7.5); mouth barbel a little shorter, reaching back two-thirds to three-fourths of the distance to hind margin of opercle.

The absence of an exerted pectoral ray, or trace of one, combined with the emarginate or shallowly forked caudal, separates this from any similar species of the genus I have seen, and from most of those in the literature. More or less slight differences in fin position, number of fin rays, or length of barbels would probably do so from the rest, if unsatisfactorily. But its wide mouth, relatively more extensive tooth-bearing surface, and character of teeth, taken together, seem to be unique.

I take pleasure in naming it for its collector, a friend of long ago, as I did in proposing him for membership in the Linnaean Society on the evening of February 25, 1919, when he was back from naval service, and was of the American Museum's Bird Department.

