

with surface tow-nets. The beautiful little *Hippocampus* (see Fig. 71, p. 89) was taken between the Canaries and the Azores.

The sub-order Percosoces contains several important and interesting surface-fish. To the family Scombrsoidæ belong the gar-pike (*Belone*), the genus *Scombrosox*, and the flying-fish of the genus *Exocoetus*. *Scombrosox saurus* attains a length of 50 cm., and resembles the gar-pike, but does not approach so near the coasts, nor does it extend so far north; it is known from the Atlantic coasts of North America, Northern Europe and Africa. Day records a capture of 100,000 individuals in one haul off the British shores. Only very young specimens were taken by the "Michael Sars" (see Chapter X.), but these are very interesting, because they prove that the species occurs pelagically right across the Atlantic. Flying-fishes were constantly observed on our southern

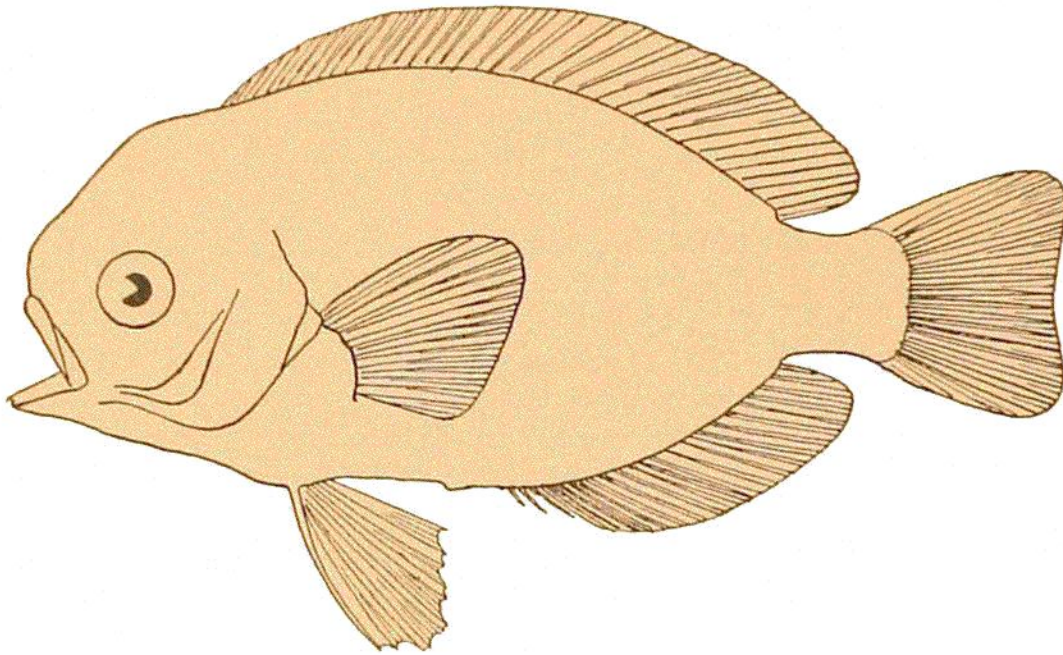


FIG. 464.

*Lirus maculatus*, Günth. Nat. size, 9.5 cm.

track, and some of the specimens which flew on board have been referred to *Exocoetus spilopus*. Between 40 and 50 species of this genus are known from tropical and sub-tropical waters. Very interesting are our captures of minute young flying-fish (see Chapter X.). The only fish belonging to the sub-order Percosoces from great depths is *Chiasmodon niger* (see Fig. 514, p. 721), taken by the "Michael Sars" in the Sargasso Sea. It was previously known from the eastern and western sides of the Atlantic, and from the Indian Ocean. The fish has very powerful teeth, and can swallow a fish much larger than itself, the digestive tract being marvellously tensile (see Chapter X.). *Lirus maculatus* (see Fig. 464) and *L. ovalis* belong to the family Stromateidæ. Along with Acanthopterygians, like *Polyprion americanus*, these fishes gather around wreckage and other floating objects. They live in tropical or sub-tropical surface waters, and biologically resemble the large lump-fish or sun-fish. All the forms mentioned were captured from a boat, either with a hoop-net or, in the case of *Mola rotunda*, with a harpoon.