

The ventral fins are mutilated; they are composed of ten rays and situated below the base of the pectoral.

Scales very small, thin and deciduous.

The total length of the specimen is 59 lines, of which the head takes 7, and the head and trunk together 17.

The single specimen was acquired for the British Museum in 1876 from the Godeffroy Museum, but I deferred its description, in the hope that the Challenger collection might supply some additional materials. But as it has remained unique, it seems that it is an extremely rare species. The specimen was picked up in mid-ocean in the South Atlantic, in the depths of which adult examples will be probably discovered at some future time. It is not likely that the principal characters given here will be found to undergo essential changes with age.

Family ATELEOPODIDÆ.

Ateleopus, Schleg.

Body and tail compressed, scaleless, the latter much elongate, band-shaped; head oblong, with rather long and broad snout, the end of which overlaps the mouth; maxillaries protractile in a downward direction. Bones of the head and body soft, semicartilaginous, those of the snout enclosed in a thick, mucigerous skin. One short-rayed dorsal fin on the trunk, a narrow, skinny, rayless fringe occupying the remainder of the back. A long anal begins behind the vent, and is continuous with the caudal. Ventral fins reduced to filaments, and inserted immediately behind the symphysis of the clavicles. Eyes of moderate size, with small horizontal pupil. Teeth villiform, in narrow bands; none on the palate. Trunk as long as the head. Gills four, separate; pseudo-branchiæ none.

One species only is known.

Ateleopus japonicus (Pl. L. fig. A).

Ateleopus, Schleg., Faun. Japon. Poiss., p. 255, pl. cxii. fig. 1.

Ateleopus japonicus, Bleek., Verhandl. Batav. Genootsch., vol. xxv. Nalez. Japan., p. 19.

„ „ Günth., Fish., vol. iv. p. 398.

B. 9. D. 8. A + C. 110. P. 12. V. 2.

The length of the head equals that of the trunk, and is one-seventh of the total. The head is rather thick, low and oblong, with broad, flat, slightly declivous upper surface. The eye is a little nearer to the extremity of the snout than to the end of the gill-cover, immediately below the upper profile, about half the length of the snout. The entire head