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Bellottia apoda Giglioli, 1883. New genus and species in the Adriatic Sea*

(Pisces, Perciformes, Brotulidae)

Bellottia apoda Giglioli, 1883. Novi rod i vrsta za Jadransko more

(Pisces, Perciformes, Brotulidae)

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An individual of *Bellottia apoda* Giglioli, 1883, was found in the trawl catch at 120 to 150 metres depth southwest from Cape Ploča (central Adriatic) on March 4, 1978. This species was not earlier known in the Adriatic. The exact positions of the said trawl haul were: initial — $\lambda = 15°52'$, $\varphi = 43°29'$; final — $\lambda = 15°55'$, $\varphi = 43°27'$ (Fig. 1, A). One individual of this species was earlier recorded from the stomach content of the female picked dog-fish, *Squalus acanthias*, caught at station 53 (P—53) ($\lambda = 15°40'$, $\varphi = 43°28'$, 181 metres depth) of the »Hvar« Fishery Biological Expedition on September 20, 1969. Since considerably damaged, this specimen could not be determined. It had not been determined until this completely preserved individual was found. There are some indications that this species was found even earlier, as early as October 25, 1963, at station 43 (P-43) of the »Hvar« Expedition ($\lambda = 15°17'$, $\varphi = 43°24{,}5'$, 200 metres depth) and misidentified as *Pteridium atrum* (?). This, possibly the earliest recorded individual could not be verified since it has got lost in the meantime.

The chart of the sites at which *Bellottia apoda* has been found in the Adriatic up to now, is given in Fig. 1.

* I am grateful to Mr Miroslav Kožuh who noticed this species in the trawl catch in March 1978 and showed it to me.

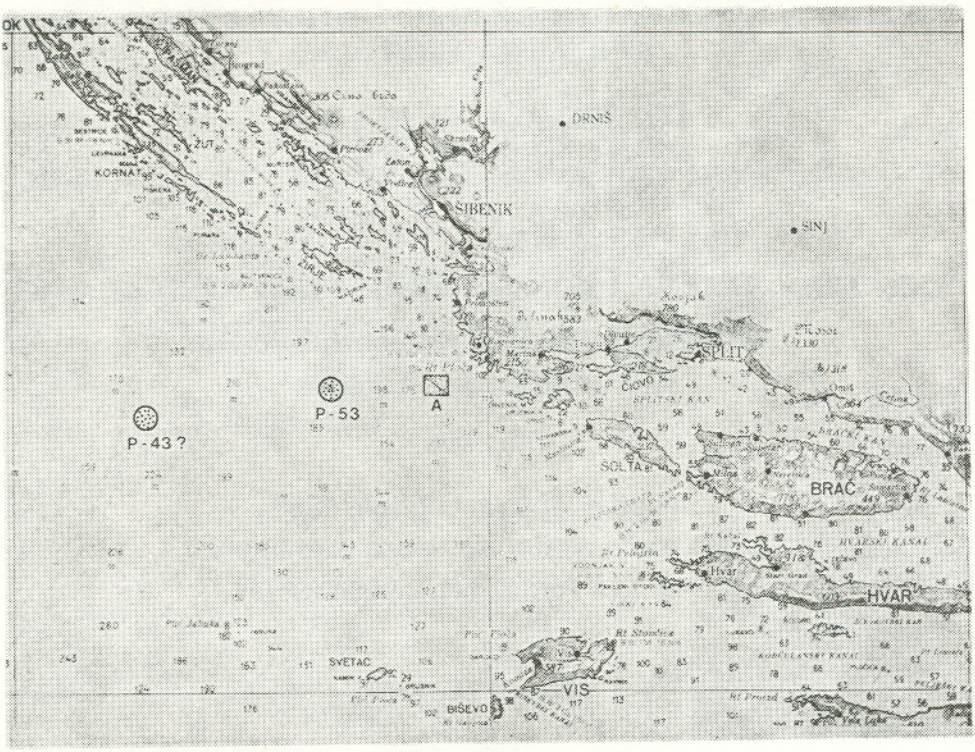

Fig. 1. Chart of up-to-now-records of *Bellottia apoda* in the Adriatic Sea.

Bellottia apoda is the new genus and species of the Adriatic ichthiofauna. Two genera with one species each of the *Brotulidae* family, to which this species also belongs, are now known to inhabit the Adriatic, Those two genera are *Benthocometes* with species *B. robustus* (Goode & Bean, 1886) and genus *Oligopus* with species *O. ater* Risso, 1810.

Morphology. Morphological, morphometric and meristic characteristics of the *Bellottia apoda* species are given by Giglioli (1883) who first found and described this species in the Gulf of Naples, then Emery (1886), Griffini (1903), Nielsen & Cohen (1968), Tortonese (1975), Relini Orsi (1976) and Papaconstantinou *et al.* (1977). Therefore, we bring out only the basic morphometric and meristic characteristics (Table 1) and a short description based upon the analysis of our two individuals.

Species habitus is given in Fig. 2.

Body is stretched, flattened on sides, particurlarly in its caudal part. Fish is covered with tiny cycloid scales. Small tubercles may be noticed on the head, anterior part and along the side line. They are most numerous on the upper side of the head in the preorbital area. Side line in abdominal area stretches more dorsally. In the caudal area it passes through the middle part of the body. More than 44 tubercles may be counted along the side line.

Table 1. Morphometric and meristic characters of *Bellottia apoda*

Sex	Female		Male*	
Catch position	A		P-53	
1. *Morphometric characters*				
Body dimensions:	mm	% Ls	mm	% Ls
Total length (Lt)	62.1			
Standard length (Ls)	57.0		41.8	
Head length	15.4	27.0	12.4	29.7
Predorsal length	22.0	38.6		
Preanal length	30.8	54.0	20.7	49.5
Pectoral fin length	7.9	13.8		
Head dimensions:	mm	% head length	mm	% head length
Preorbital length	4.1	26.6	2.7	21.8
Postorbital length	9.0	58.4	7.7	62.1
Length of orbit	2.3	14.9	1.4	11.3
Interorbital width	5.6	36.4	3.3	26.6
Lower jaw	8.9	57.8	7.2	58.1
Upper jaw	8.1	52.6	6.2	50.0
2. *Meristic characters:*				
Anal rays (A)	81			
Pectoral rays (P)	70			
Caudal rays (C)	23 1, 23 d			
Ventral rays(V)	6 (5)			
	0			

* Demaged specimen

Fins are well developed, all except the ventral one which completely misses. Dorsal, caudal and anal fins are connected.

The colour of the body is uniformly chestnut-brown, with the violet glittering on the ventral side. The head and the anterior body part are darker. Bases of dorsal and anal fins are darker, darkbrown. The rest of the fins is indistinctly brownish or colourless.

No other morphological characteristics may be given since we tried to preserve the specimen (A) for our collection and to damage it the least possible. Both individuals of *Bellottia apoda* found in the Adriatic area kept in the Institute of Oceanography and Fisheries in Split, Yugoslavia.

Distribution. *Bellottia apoda* has up to now, been recorded from the Mediterranean at only five locations distant from one another: Gulf of Naples (Giglioli, 1883), Ligurian Sea (Relini Orsi, 1976) Saronikos Gulf (Greece) (Papaconstantinou *et al.*, 1977), Strait of Messina (Berdar *et al.*, 1977), and at the margins of the Jabuka Pit in the Adriatic (central part) (these data) (Fig. 3). Since this species has up to now been recorded exclusively from the central Mediterranean it may be assumed that it is the Mediterranean endemic species.

Ecology. Specimens of *Bellottia apoda* in the Adriatic were found on oozy bottoms (clay, loam) at 120—200 metres depth. Positions where this

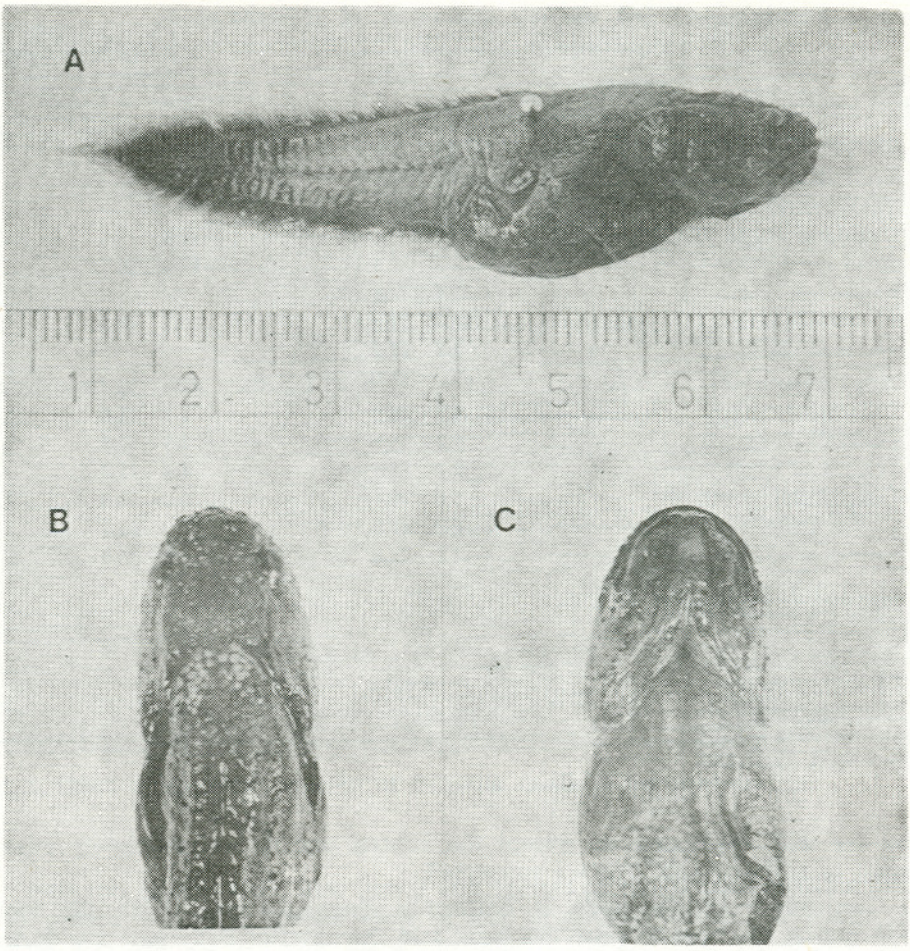

Fig. 2. *Bellottia apoda:* A — habitus, B — anterior part dorsaly, C — anterior part ventrally (blown up).

species was recorded are partly in the area of well known Adriatic biocoenosis of fine oozy bottoms *Nephrops norvegicus — Thenea muricata* (P-43, P-53), and partly in the area of mixed bottoms between the above mentioned biocoenosis and the biocoenosis of coastal terrigenous oozes, facies of sedentary forms (position A). This species was caught at different depths in the Mediterranean. In the Gulf of Naples it was found at 30 metres depth on bottom overgrown by the seaweed *(Posidonia).* In the Ligurian Sea it was recorded from trawling grounds at 200 metres depth, and in the Saronicos Gulf on oozy trawling grounds at 420 metres depth.

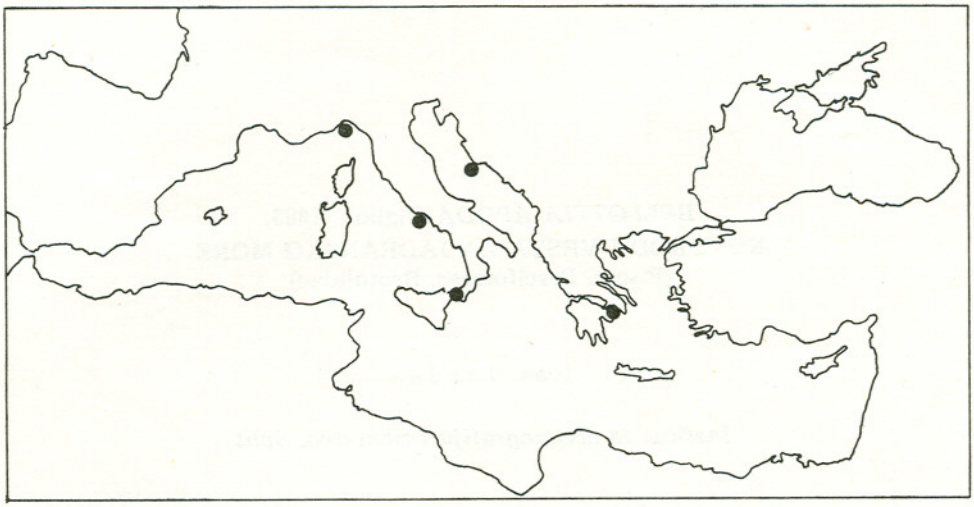

Fig. 3. Distribution of *Bellottia apoda*.

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BELLOTTIA APODA Giglioli, 1883, NOVI ROD I VRSTA ZA JADRANSKO MORE (Pisces, Perciformes, Brotulidae)

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KRATAK SADRŽAJ

Izvještava se o nalazu vrste *Bellottia apoda* Giglioli, 1883, dosad nepoznate u Jadranskom moru. Navode se nalazi, morfometrija i ekologija vrste.