Hippocampus bargibanti
Whitley 1970

Common names
Bargibant's seahorse (U.S.A.); pygmy seahorse (Australia)

Synonyms
None known

Description
Maximum recorded adult height: 2.4 cm
Trunk rings: 11–12
Tail rings: 31–32 (31–33)
HL/SnL: 4.6 (4.3–5.4)
Rings supporting dorsal fin: 3 trunk rings (no tail rings)
Dorsal fin rays: 14 (13–15)
Pectoral fin rays: 10 (10–11)
Coronet: Rounded knob
Spines: Irregular bulbous tubercles scattered over body and tail; single, prominent rounded eye spine; single, low rounded cheek spine
Other distinctive characteristics: Head and body fleshy, mostly without recognisable body rings; ventral portion of trunk segments incomplete; snout extremely short
**Colour/pattern:** Two colour morphs are known: (a) pale grey or purple with pink or red tubercles (found on gorgonian coral *Muricella plectana*); and (b) yellow with orange tubercles (found on gorgonian coral *Muricella paraplectana*).

**Confirmed distribution**
Australia; France (New Caledonia); Indonesia; Japan; Papua New Guinea; Philippines

**Suspected distribution**
Federated States of Micronesia; Malaysia; Palau; Solomon Islands; Vanuatu

**Habitat**
Typically found at 16–40 m depth; only known to occur on gorgonian corals of the genus *Muricella*.

**Life history**
Breeding season year round; adults usually found in pairs or clusters of pairs in the wild (up to 28 on a single gorgonian); gestation duration averages 2 weeks; length at birth averages 2 mm; brood size 34 from one male.

**Trade**
Not known in international trade

**Conservation status**
The entire genus *Hippocampus* is listed in Appendix II of CITES, effective May 2004. *H. bargibanti* is listed as Data Deficient by IUCN. Environment Australia lists the conservation status of *H. bargibanti* as Data Deficient; Australian populations were moved under the Australian Wildlife Protection Act in 1998 and placed under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act in 2001.

**Similar species**
- *H. Denise* has few or no tubercles, no coronet, no cheek or eye spines, and a longer snout.
- *H. minotaur*, found in southeast Australia, has no obvious tubercles on body and has a thicker neck and flatter body.