



A new pygmy pipehorse, *Idiotropiscis aotearoa* (Teleostei: Syngnathidae), from New Zealand

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A new species of pygmy pipehorse, *Idiotropiscis aotearoa* sp. n. (Teleostei, Syngnathidae) is described on the basis of a single adult male and a juvenile female specimen collected in northern New Zealand. *Idiotropiscis aotearoa* shares morphological synapomorphies with the other three described Australian species of *Idiotropiscis*, *I. australe* (Waite & Hale, 1921), *I. larsonae* (Dawson, 1984), and *I. lumnitzeri* (Kuitert, 2004), including a fully enclosed brood pouch, superior ridges discontinuous below the dorsal fin base, and a head angled ventrally 25° from the abdominal axis. *Idiotropiscis aotearoa* is distinguished from its congeners by possessing a strongly elevated and anteriorly protruding frontal ridge, an exceptionally pronounced pectoral fin base, and a unique combination of characters shared only with the seahorses; a distinct cup-like coronet and conspicuous head and body spination on the nape, snout, shoulder-ring, pectoral fin base, and superior trunk and tail ridges. Comparative examinations of diagnostic characters confirm it is similar in meristics to *I. australe* in having 12 trunk rings, 37 tail rings, 14 dorsal fin rays, and 14 pectoral fin rays. The unexpected discovery of a new and diminutive temperate species of pygmy pipehorse highlights the incompleteness of our current knowledge of syngnathid biodiversity in New Zealand.

Keywords: Evolution, Phylogenetics, Conservation and management, biodiversity