The eelpout genus *Lycenchelys* Gill, 1884 contains at least 57 species, some of which are known from the holotype only (Anderson, 1995; Shinohara and Matsuura, 1998).

*Lycenchelys paxillus* (Goode & Bean, 1879) was originally described on the basis of a single specimen from the Middle Atlantic Bight, collected from the schooner *Marion* in 1878. Its taxonomy, however, has been unclear due to its similarity with *L. ingolfianus* Jensen, 1902, which has been known from the holotype only for over 90 years. The latter was described from a specimen caught off West Greenland during the Danish Ingolf Expedition in 1895.

Jensen (1902, 1904) indicated that *L. ingolfianus* differed from *L. paxillus* from the western North Atlantic, by its lesser body height (20 vs 16 times in total length), and greater number of pectoral (17 vs 16) dorsal (128 vs 118) and anal (116 vs 110) fin rays. Jensen (1904), further observed that *L. ingolfianus* had a “double” lateral line whereas *L. paxillus* was known to have a single medio-lateral line. Because he was, nevertheless, aware of the possibility that the two taxa could be synonymous, he stated (1904): “There might be some doubt, whether the present species is not identical with the *L. paxillus* Goode and Bean.”

Some authors (Andriashev and Chernova, 1994; Koyanagi, 1995) have recently used the nominal name *L. ingolfianus*, whereas Anderson (1994) regarded the status of this species uncertain and also mentioned that it might be synonymous with *L. paxillus*.

Lack of material from the type locality of *L. ingolfianus* has until recently prevented further investigations of this taxonomic problem. However, during several bottom-trawl surveys between 1988–1995 a large number of specimens were caught by the Japanese research vessel *Shinkai-maru* (Koyanagi, 1995).

For the present study, a large number of *L. ingolfianus* and *L. paxillus* were examined, and it is now clear that the former name should be regarded as a junior synonym of the latter. The diagnostic characters of *L. paxillus* are clarified by comparison with other Atlantic species of the same genus.

The specimens are deposited in the following institutions: The Natural History Museum (NHM former BMNH); Museum of Comparative Zoology, Harvard University (MCZ); Museum National D’Histoire Naturelle (MNHN); U.S. National Museum (USNM); Virginia Institute of Marine Science (VIMS) and Zoological Museum of Copenhagen (ZMUC). Sampling sites are indicated in Figure 1.

All counts were taken from radiographs, except for number of pectoral fin rays, scale rows and teeth, which were counted directly. Measurements were made to 0.1 mm accuracy. Terminology of head pores follows Anderson (1994). Standard length (SL) is used throughout.

*Lycenchelys paxillus* (Goode & Bean, 1879) (Fig. 2A–C)

*Lycodes paxillus* Goode and Bean, 1879: 44 (original description, type locality: 42°48’N, 63°07’W); Jordan and Gilbert, 1883: 785.

*Lycodes paxilloides* Goode and Bean, 1883: 207.


**Material examined.** *Lycenchelys paxillus*: 41 specimens from Middle Atlantic Bight (163–355 mm SL); USNM 22177 (holotype of *L. paxillus*), approximately 355 mm SL (tip of tail missing).
probably male, 42°48'N, 63°07'W (between Le Have and Sable Island), RV Marion, 366–732 m, 3 Nov. 1878 (see Springer and Anderson 1997); MCZ 37848 (4 specimens), 283 mm SL (female) and 285–302 mm SL (3 males), 42°40'N, 63°51'W, 804 m, Cap’n Bill 2 Cruise 3, 26 July 1952; MCZ 54050 (2), 290–352 mm SL, males, 42°39'N, 63°54'W, 840 m, Cap’n Bill 2 Cruise 3, 26 July 1952; MCZ 60638 (3), 211–227 mm SL (sex unknown), 39°25'N, 72°07'W, 828 m, RV Knorr, 14 Nov. 1973; MCZ 94488 (1), 179 mm SL (male), 39°19'N, 72°20'W, 1627 m, RV Knorr, 14 Nov. 1973; MCZ 146891 (1), 222 mm SL (sex unknown), 39°53'N, 70°44'W, 625 m, RV Gosnold, 12 Aug. 1972; MCZ 146893 (2), 200–209 mm SL (sex unknown), 39°53'N, 70°54'W, 780 m, RV Gosnold, 11 Aug. 1972; MCZ 147206 (1), 204 mm SL (male), 35°50'N, 70°32'W, 750 m, RV Gosnold, 16 Aug. 1972; MCZ 147208 (8), 240–229 mm SL (2 females), 172–219 mm SL (3 males) and 198–244 mm SL (sex unknown), RV Gosnold, 39°31'N, 70°26'W, 800 m, 3 Oct. 1967; VIMS 06546 (9), 103–221 mm SL (4 females), 135–215 mm SL (4 males) and 117 mm SL (sex unknown), 37°02'N, 74°30'W (Norfolk Canyon), 655 m, RV James M. Gilliss, Sta. 107, 25 Nov. 1974; VIMS 06544 (8), 185–215 mm SL (4 females), 203–217 mm SL (3 males) and 221 mm SL (sex unknown), 37°09'N, 74°24'W, 1287 m, RV James M. Gilliss, Sta. 27, 12 Sept. 1974.

Lycenchelys ingolfianus: 42 specimens from Davis Strait (88–291 mm SL); ZMUC 767 (holotype of L. ingolfianus), 271 mm SL (female), 64°54'N, 5°10'W, 718 m, RV Jogof, Sta. 27. 1 July 1895, 3.8°C; ZMUC P 761303-761312, 761490-761499, 762783-762795, 762841-762845, 762848, 762851 and ZMUC uncat. (42 specimens), 88–291 mm SL, 63°52'–176 m, 56°40'W, 510–952 m, RV Shinkai-maru, Aug.–Sept. 1988–1993. 1.0–4.0°C.

Diagnosis. A species of Lycenchelys with the following combination of characters: Predorsal length 17.1–23.3% SL; seven (rarely six) suborbital head pores; abdomen scaled; dorsal fin rays 112–124; anal fin rays 106–116; pectoral fin rays 14–17; vertebrae 24–27 + 102–111 = 127–137.

Description. Meristic counts and morphometric measurements are given in Table 1.