

Mesacanthion africanthiforme Warwick, 1970

(Fig. 58)

Description. Body length 2.6–4.5 mm. Maximum diameter 33–66 μm ($a = 56\text{--}82$). Cuticle smooth. Some irregular areas of pigmentation just posterior to cephalic capsule. Head characteristically dome-shaped. Three lips relatively low with no internal striations. Six labial setae stout and conical, 0.2 h.d. Cephalic setae arise from about the middle of the cephalic capsule, the posterior border of the capsule being deeply incised and the bases of the cephalic setae accommodated in fenestrae. Longer six cephalic setae 0.6–0.9 h.d., shorter four about half their length. Six files of longish setae extend one-third to two-thirds of the way down the oesophagus length in both sexes, more numerous in male. Mandibles as *Enoplolaimus*, with two lateral rods united by an anterior curved bar. Teeth (onchia) large and equal in size. Oesophagus cylindrical, 0.18–0.24 times body length. Tail 3.9–4.9 a.b.d. long, conical for anterior third, remainder cylindrical.

Spicules small (0.6–0.75 a.b.d., 20–33 μm), fairly straight, pointed and open ended distally with a thickened cuticular ring just proximal to the tip.

Gubernaculum 10–13 μm , a pair of tubes surrounding the distal ends of the spicules, tubes united by a median bar appearing roughly triangular in lateral view. No precloacal supplement. Male tail with two pairs of stout conical spines posterior to cloaca which probably have a copulatory function.

Ovaries paired, symmetrical and doubly reflexed. Vulva at 59–62% of body length.

Distribution. Exe estuary; Isles of Scilly (intertidal sand).

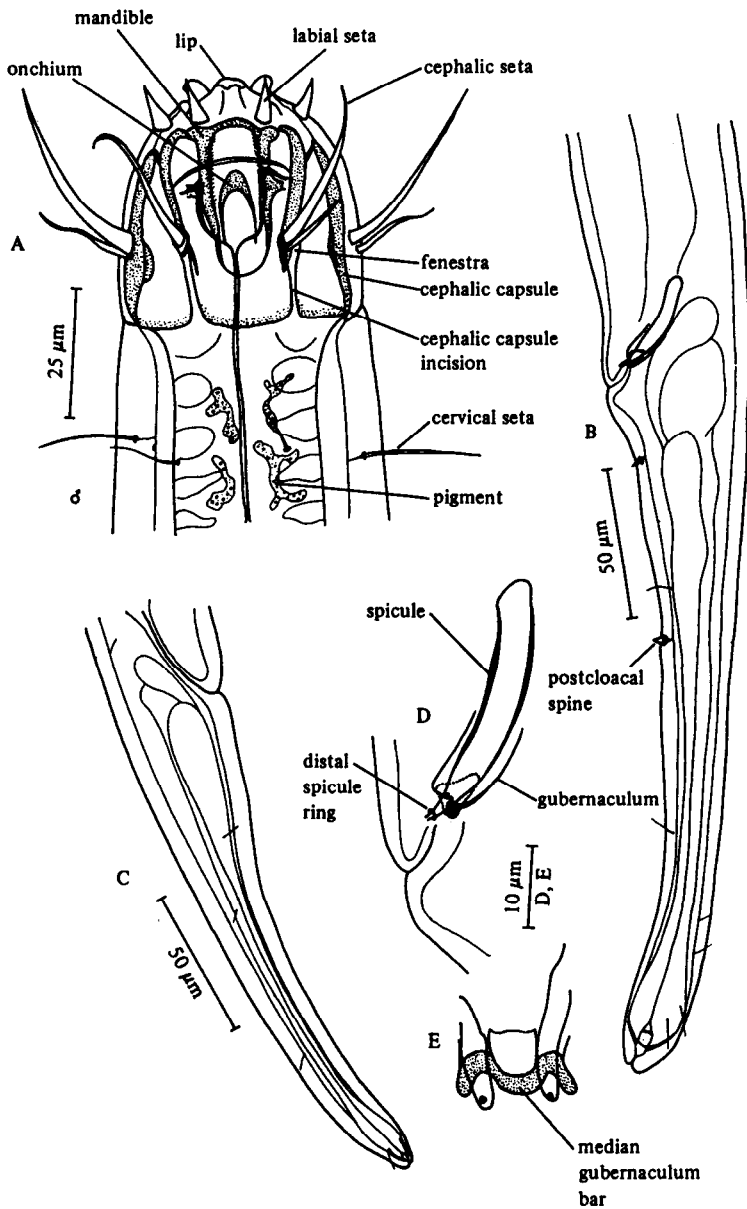


Fig. 58. *Mesacanthion africanthiforme*. A, Male head; B, Male tail; C, Female tail; D, Spicules and gubernaculum (lateral); E, Spicules and gubernaculum (ventral). Original.