

A RECORD OF *NIBEA CHUI* TREWAVAS FROM INDIA

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ABSTRACT

Nibea chui Trewavas (Fam. Sciaenidae), a species originally described from the Western Pacific, has been recorded from Indian waters for the first time. A brief description of the species based on one specimen 386 mm long, collected from the trawl catches landed at Sassoon Docks, Bombay (Arabian Sea), in June 1972, is presented in the note.

Fishes of the family Sciaenidae comprise a number of commercially important species in the tropical and subtropical waters and a total of 15 genera covering 45 species have been reported (Druzhinin 1971) from Indian Ocean. From seas around India, there are 14 genera embracing 30 species (Mohan 1969).

The present report records the occurrence of *Nibea chui* Trewavas from Indian waters for the first time based on a specimen of 386 mm in total length, collected from the trawl catch at Sassoon Docks, Bombay, in June 1972. Although three specimens 723, 516 and 386 mm in total length were noticed, only the last one could be collected for study. The known distribution of this species is from the Western Pacific. A brief description of the specimen is given below.

NIBEA CHUI TREWAVAS

Nibea chui Trewavas, *J. Fish. Biol.*, 3: 453-461, 1971.

Pseudosciaena coibor (nec Hamilton); Tang, *Amoy mar. biol. Bull.*, 2: 69, 1937.

Nibea coibor (nec Hamilton); Chu, Lo and Wu, *Monogr. Fish. China*, 48, 1963.

Material — One female specimen (Fig. 1) 386 mm in total length and 313 mm in standard length (Wt. 540 grams) collected from the local trawl catch at Sassoon Docks on 14 June 1972.

D. IX; I, 24; A. II, 7; P. 17; L. 50; Ltr. 7 + 1 + 14.

Body anteriorly elevated and posteriorly compressed. Upper profile slightly concave above the eyes; from origin of spinous dorsal the body profile is tapering to

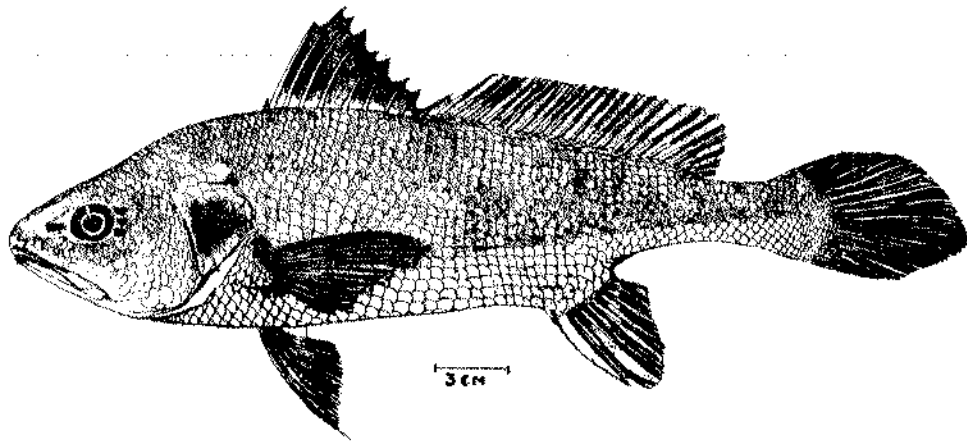


FIG. 1. *Nibea chui* Trewavas of Bombay coast.

caudal. Caudal bluntly pointed. Ventral outline somewhat straighter than the dorsal. Belly rounded. Proportions as % SL: Head 31.6, width 28.1, second anal spine 13.7. Proportions as % Head: snout 24.2, eye 16.6, interorbital 24.2, upper jaw 40.4. Snout blunt not projecting beyond the upper jaw. Five pores in the snout, the median one just above the edge of rostral flap. Five pores below lower jaw, barbels absent. Mouth terminal. Cleft of the mouth oblique. The distal truncate portion of the upper jaw (maxilla) almost completely concealed under suborbital. Teeth in the upper jaw in a narrow band, with an outer series of moderately enlarged ones. Teeth in the lower jaw subequal. Well-developed papillae wherein all the teeth are embedded. Gill rakers of the first gill arch $6 + 1 + 11$. Scales ctenoid on top of head and body. Scales on belly large, along base of soft dorsal in double rows of small scales. Spinous dorsal somewhat deeply incised. Third spine half the length of head. Spine of the soft dorsal 18.1% of head. First anal spine small, second very robust. The anal and soft dorsal provided with an accessory ray each. Air bladder carrot shaped with 19 pairs of appendages, all except the last pair arborescent. Lateral-line tubules arborescent. Colour of the body silvery grey in fresh condition with no markings. In the preserved specimen the upper portion brownish and the lower part whitish. Membrane of the spinous dorsal dark at the edges, along base of soft dorsal a row of black spots, distal portion of the rays also blackish.

The species is often confused with *Nibea albida* due to the shape of the body and low dorsal count. According to Trewavas (1971) the *Nibea coibor* of Chu, Lo and Wu (1963) is neither *Bola coibor* Hamilton nor supposed synonym, *Corvina albida* Cuvier and probably represents the species *Pseudosciaena coibor* described by Tang (1937). She opined that *N. coibor* of Chu, Lo and Wu (1963) differs from *C. albida* in the absence of barbels, in having a larger mouth and in the cephalic extension of the air bladder.

The present specimen agrees with the description of Trewavas (1971) except for certain individual variations. From the description given by Trewavas (1971) it seems that the diameter of eye gets reduced with increase in length. The largest specimen (294 + 66 mm) she describes (from Japan), has an eye diameter 17.3% of head which is less than that in the smaller specimens. In the specimen from Bombay (313 + 73) the eye diameter is 16.6% of head. So also with increase in size of the fish the length of the second anal spine gets reduced as is shown by her. This is true with the specimen from Bombay which is the largest among all and where the length of the second anal spine is 13.7 percent of SL. One difference noticed here is the presence of only nine spines in the first dorsal fin instead of ten which is ascribable to individual variation.

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* Not seen in original.