

POSSIBLE SPAWNING GROUND OF *POLYDACTYLUS INDICUS*
(SHAW) NEAR BOMBAY

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From the mature specimens of *Polydactylus indicus* collected at Dahanu, a fishing village north of Bombay, it seems that the fish spawns in the inshore water. The earlier two records of the spawning grounds are from the Gulf of Kutch and the inshore waters of Madras.

Srivatsa (1953) and Nayak (1959) reported that the Gulf of Kutch is the spawning ground of *Polydactylus indicus*. Nayak (1959) recorded two young specimens of this species, measuring 6.0 and 5.6 cm in length from Versova near Bombay during January of 1956 and 1957 respectively. Along the east coast of India Kuthalingam (1960) reported the inshore waters of Madras as a possible spawning ground of this species.

P. indicus landed at Dahanu, north of Bombay are fished by the bottom drift gill net, locally called 'waghra jal'. It is a specialized gear used exclusively for this species operating at 15-30 metre depth range. All fishes are normally gutted before reaching the shore and are mostly above 90 cm in length. At the time of gutting, if the fish is mature, some mature ova are left behind in the body cavity due to the rupture of the gonadial wall. About a dozen specimens were found to contain such remaining large-sized, transparent ova with oil globules, indicating that these were the spawners. The spawners were recorded in the months of May 1970 and March and April 1971. Also, in January and February 1971, 11 small specimens of *P. indicus* measuring 3.9 - 10.4 cm in fork length were collected in the Dahanu creek itself. These observations indicate that *P. indicus* spawns in the inshore waters of Dahanu. Further observations to confirm the area where spawning occurs are clearly needed.

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