

Unusual landings of the anthiine fish, *Pseudanthias pillai* at Neendakara Fisheries Harbour

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Fishes of the genus *Pseudanthias* (Family Serranidae) also known as "fairly basslets" or "anthias" are mostly small sized, reef-dwelling fishes, which are highly sought after marine ornamental fish in the international market due to its beautiful coloration and striking patterns. An unusual landing of the anthiine fish, Pillai's anthias *Pseudanthias pillai* was observed at Neendakara Fisheries Harbour, Kollam on 9.5.2018 (Fig.1). About 750 kg (25 boxes of 30 kg each) of anthiine fishes, dominated by *Pseudanthias pillai* (99%) and *Pseudanthias* spp. were landed in a multiday (3 days fishing trip) trawler operated at 120-130 m depth off Kollam waters, Arabian Sea. Other commercially important fish catch of the same

trawler was threadfin bream *Nemipterus randalli* (350 kg) and Indian scad *Decapterus russelli* (400 kg). Size of *Pseudanthias pillai* ranged between 85 - 135 mm in total length and between 10 - 45 g in weight. These fishes locally called as "*Thathamma meen*" meaning Parrot fishes in Malayalam were sold at the landing center at the rate of ₹50-60/kg for local consumption. Pillai's anthias, a rare beautiful anthiine fish, with distribution known from Ratnagiri to Vizhinjam on the southwest coast of India is rarely observed in the commercial fishery landings and occurs in few, stray numbers only. Such unusual high catch of *P. pillai* shows that the species maybe forming schools.



Fig.1. Landing of Pillai's anthias at Neendakara Fisheries Harbour, Kollam, Kerala