

ON THE OCCURRENCE OF THE BLENNIROID FISHES *BLENNIUS SEMIFASCIATUS* RÜPPELL (FAMILY : BLENNIIDAE) AND *TRIP- TERYGION FASCIATUM* (WEBER) (FAMILY : CLINIDAE) ALONG THE INDIAN COAST

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WHILE collecting shore fishes from Bombay, two specimens of *Blennius semifasciatus* Rüppell were obtained. This species was formerly reported from Red Sea by Rüppell (1835). Though Klunzinger (1870) synonymised *B. semifasciatus* with *Blennius cyclops* Rüppell, it differs from *B. cyclops* in having less anal rays (*B. cyclops*, D.29, A.20, *B. semifasciatus*, D.26, A.18) and in other characters. Smith (1959) described *B. lodosus* from the south-east coast of Africa. It comes closer to *B. semifasciatus* but differs from it in fin formula, supraorbital cirri and colouration. Mukerji (1935) who described *B. semifasciatus* from Andaman Islands, stated that 'this is perhaps one of the rarest species of the genus *Blennius*' (p. 273). As this is the first report from the coasts of mainland of India, a short description is given here.

Tripterygion fasciatum (Weber) was first recorded from Java by Weber (1909). Mukerji (1935) and Herre (1939) reported it from Andaman Islands. The present collection of it from a dead oyster near Athankarai (Latitude 9° 12'N. and Longitude 79° 8'E.) in the estuary of the river Vaigai (Palk Bay, Bay of Bengal) is of interest since it was recorded earlier from the seas only. The present report extends its distribution further west to the south-east coast of India.

Family : BLENNIIDAE

***Blennius semifasciatus* Rüppell**

(Fig. 1 a)

Blennius semifasciatus Rüppell, 1835, *Neu Wirbelt Fische*, 134.

Blennius semifasciatus Günther, 1861, *Cat. Fish. Brit. Mus.*, III : 214.

Blennius semifasciatus Mukerji, 1935, *Rec. Indian Mus.*, XXXVII : 273-275.

Material : Two specimens from Bombay (Bandra, Lands end), 50 mm. and 41 mm. (T.L.), August, 1967. No. CMFRI-F 118/609.

D.XI-XII, 14 ; A.II, 15-16 ; P.13 ; V.3.

Head 3.3-3.5 (28.1-31.4)* in standard length, 3.8-4.3 (23.0-26.0) in total length, Depth 3.3-3.5 (28.0-31.4) in standard length and 3.8-4.3 (23.0-26.) in total length.

* Figures in parentheses are in percentage.

Eye 3.5-4.3 (23.3-28.2), first dorsal spine 2.1-2.3 (43.0-47.0), last dorsal spine 2.9-3.5 (28.2-34.6), sixth ray of second dorsal (longest) 1.7-1.8 (57.0-58.8), caudal fin 1.6-1.7 (57.1-61.5), longest anal ray (10th) 3.2-3.5 (28.2-30.7), ventral fin 1.8 (57.5), pectoral fin 1.2-1.6 (61.5-85.5), depth at anus 1.3-1.4 (69.2-71.4), caudal peduncle

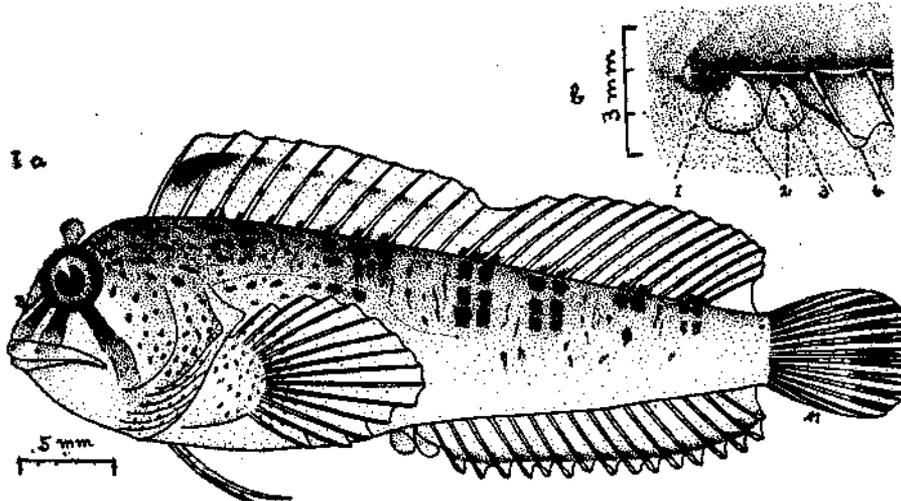


FIG. 1. *Blennius semifasciatus* Rüppell.

2.3-2.4 (43.0-44.6) all in length of head. Supraorbital cirri 3.0-3.7 (33.0-37.0) nasal cirri 4.0-4.3 (23.0-25.0) in eye.

Snout nearly vertical, eye prominent, 4.3 in head; gill opening wide, not united with isthmus. Lips fleshy, maxillary extend behind eye. Teeth small, fixed, closely set, dental formula I-24-I, lower canines slightly larger than upper canines,
II-20-I

one-third in eye, curved inside. Palate edentate. Supraorbital cirri palmate with six serrations, lie horizontal to eye. Body naked. Dorsal fin originates above the preopercle, notched, shallow, last spine of first dorsal shorter than first ray of rayed dorsal. Last rays of anal and dorsal fins attached to caudal peduncle but free from caudal fin. Anal spines swollen as pads, first one round and larger, second spine ovoid, spine seen basally; anal rays with posteriorly directed tab (Fig. 1b). Caudal fin round, middle nine rays bifurcated terminally. Pectoral reaches first anal ray, 8th ray longest, none of the rays divided; ventrals strong laterally pointed. Lateral line incomplete, originates above opercle, extends on upper half as closed pores, descends below the 8th dorsal spine towards middle of body, terminates below the origin of second dorsal as a single pore. A dark brown elongated blotch on membrane between first and third spine and it continues back on middle of first dorsal fin as a pale band, second dorsal hyaline. Head mottled with bigger brown spots above and smaller ones below; three black bands originate from the lower margin of eye and extend over the lips and cheeks, two bands on lower jaw. Body with seven double interrupted vertical dark bands extending over the base of dorsal fin and terminating on the middle of body.

Distribution : Red Sea, Bombay, Andaman Islands, Java ; in seas, on rocky shore.

Family : CLINIDAE

***Tripterygion fasciatum* (Weber)**

(Fig. 2a)

Tripterygion fasciatum Weber 1909, *Notes Leiden Museum*, XXXI, p. 148 (Java).

Tripterygion fasciatum Weber, 1913, *Siboga Expedite Fische*, fig. 118 (Java).

Tripterygion (Enneapterygius) fasciatum Mukerji, 1935, *Rec. Indian Mus.* XXXVII : 272 (Andaman Islands)

Tripterygion fasciatum Herre, 1939, *Rec. Indian Mus.* XLI : 351, (Andaman Islands).

Tripterygion fasciatum Beaufort & Chapman, 1951. *Fish. Indo-Aust. Archipel.* IX : 396-397.

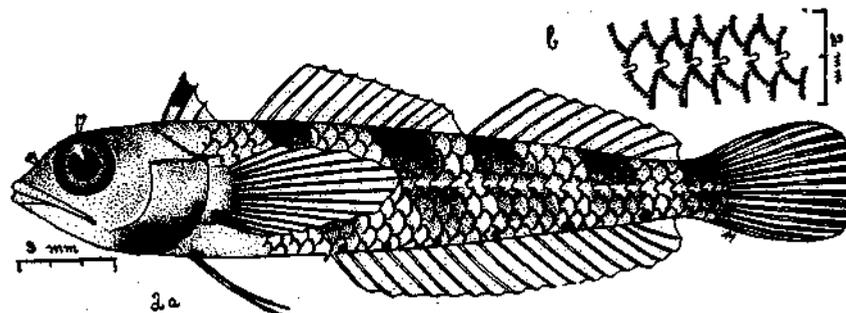


FIG. 2. *Tripterygion fasciatum*.

Material : One specimen, 26 mm. (T.L.) Vaigai estuary (near Athankarai. Latitude 9° 12'N. Longitude 79° 8'E.) from an oyster shell collected by Mr. K. K. Appukuttan ; February, 1968. No. CMFRI-F 119/610.

D.III, IX, 9 ; A.18 ; P.14 ; V.2 ; Ll.32 ; Ltr. 2½+1+6.

Head 3.6 (30.0) in standard length and 4.2 (23.0) in total length ; depth 5.2 (19.0) in standard length and 6.5 (15.0) in total length. Snout 4.1 (25.7), eye 3.1 (32.2), post-orbital length 2.2 (45.0), cleft of mouth 2.6 (48.9), first spine of first dorsal 4.0 (25.7), second spine of first dorsal 4.5 (20.9), third spine of first dorsal 9.0 (11.3), first spine of second dorsal 2.1 (48.5), first ray of last dorsal 1.1 (92.3), pectoral fin 1.2 (85.5) pectoral peduncle, 4.4 (22.5), caudal peduncle 3.3 (30.0), all in length of head. Interorbital 4.0 (25.0), supraorbital cirri 4.0 (25.0), nasal cirri 4.0 (25.0), in eye.

Mouth terminal, cleft of mouth extends to posterior end of eye, nasal cirri trifold, supraorbital cirri lobular with three shallow depressions, 0.25 in eye. Teeth pointed in both jaws, in two rows, outer row with smaller teeth, inner row with enlarged ones. Vomerine teeth present. Scales strongly ctenoid ; cheeks, opercle,

preopercle, nape, belly and pectoral peduncle naked; scales large with 17-19 terminal tubercles. Lateral line interrupted, first one originates above the opercular opening and terminates below 8th spine of second dorsal with eleven notched scales, second lateral line originates above origin of anal fin and terminates on caudal peduncle with 21 notched scales. Lateral line scales notched medially (Fig. 2b). First dorsal originate between the opercle and preopercle; an interspace present between first dorsal and second dorsal; last ray of second dorsal attached to the base of third dorsal; last rays of third dorsal and anal attached to caudal peduncle, but free from caudal fin. Anal papillae small and tubular. Anal fin originates below fourth spine of second dorsal. Pectoral fin broad, reaching anal fin, none of the rays bifurcated; caudal fin truncate, middle eight rays bifurcated terminally.

Cheeks, snout, anterior part of belly mottled with blue chromatophores, a dark blotch on first dorsal between first and second spine; five vertical irregular greenish bands on body, a brown blotch on lower part of opercle, a reddish blotch on base of pectoral peduncle and ventral fin, six deep blue spots on base of anal fin.

Distribution: East Indies, Andaman Islands, in seas and estuaries. Athankarai (Palk Bay).

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