

ON THE OCCURRENCE OF *LAPUTA CINGALENSIS*  
FRASER-BRUNNER, IN INDIAN WATERS

On 25th January 1961, a specimen of *Laputa cingalensis* Fraser-Brunner was collected from the trawl catches made in 37 fathoms (Lat. 12°42'N. Long. 74° 32'E.) off Mangalore. Another was obtained from the 40-44 fathom area on 29-1-61. Subsequently four more specimens were collected from the trawl catches on the Bassas De Pedro (Pedro Bank) on 27th February 1961. At all these places the bottom was rocky.

This species has so far been recorded only from Ceylon (Fraser-Brunner 1941, Munro 1955) and South Africa (Smith 1958, 1961). This is the first record of its occurrence in the Indian waters. *Laputa cingalensis* was first described from a single specimen by Fraser-Brunner (1941). The distinguishing characters of the species and a brief description of the specimens in our collection are given below :

*Diagnosis:* (After Fraser-Brunner) : Movable pelvic spine present; first dorsal spine slender, originating behind middle of eye ; dorsal spine with two rows of about 12 strong downwardly directed barbs on its anterior face and a row of similar but slightly smaller ones on each postero-lateral edge ; scales with numerous minute spinules arising directly from the basal plate.

***Laputa cingalensis* Fraser-Brunner**

D.I; 26-27. A.25-27. P.12.

Head 2.4 to 2.7, depth 2.1 to 2.2. in standard length. Interorbital width almost equal to diameter of eye. Eye 2.0 to 2.3 in snout, 2.8 to 3.3 in head ; distance from base of dorsal to nearest point on orbit slightly more than half the diameter of eye ; gill-opening about equal to its distance from the orbit, about half diameter of eye ; dorsal spine slender, 12 to 15 in head, with two rows of 12 strong downwardly directed barbs on its anterior face and a row of similar but slightly smaller ones on each postero-lateral edge ; interdorsal space equal to length of snout; base of soft dorsal 1.1 to 1.2 in head ; depth of caudal peduncle at base of caudal fin equal to its length which is contained 2.6 to 3.3 in head ; scales very small each with numerous minute spinules arising directly from basal plate; lateral line not evident.

*Colour:* Greyish ; four longitudinal black bands on body laterally, caudal fin with two transverse dark bands.

Description is based on six specimens measuring 34 to 50.5 mm. in standard length, all collected from fishing areas with rocky bottom.

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