

**A NOTE ON THE OCCURRENCE OF *XIPHASIA SETIFER*  
(SWAINSON) OFF MANGALORE, WEST COAST OF INDIA**

During one of our fishing cruises on 21-2-1964, two specimens of *Xiphasia setifer*, belonging to the Family Blennidae, were collected off Mangalore while trawling in depths of 50-54 metres (Lat. 12°45'N. ; Long. 74°35' E.). The occurrence of this species in the west coast of India has not hitherto been recorded.

Day (1885) reported the habitat of this species in the Coromandel coast of India and the figure presented by him is from a drawing in Sir W. Elliot's collection.

Later this species has been recorded from the east coast by Dr. A. K. Nagabhushanam and Dr. E. G. Silas of the Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (Personal communications). Beaufort and Chapman (1951) and Smith (1961) described the habitat of this species in the Indo-Pacific region.

The specimens (262-329 mm.) recorded by Beaufort and Chapman (*loc. cit.*) had no caudal filaments. But one of the specimens collected by us, of 224 mm. standard length revealed on careful examination the beginning of two central caudal filaments beyond the edge of the caudal fin. The larger one, 356 mm. long, has two central elongated caudal filaments; of the two filaments, the ventral one appears to be broken. The dorsal caudal filament is  $3/4$  length of head.

#### DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERS OF *Xiphasia setifer*

Body elongate and compressed, eel-like, with central caudal filaments; Mouth small with large canines in the lower jaw; Dorsal and anal fins long with more than 120 rays, and both the fins continue with the caudal; Pectoral rounded; Twenty seven brownish black cross bands on the body; In between the 5th and 6th dorsal rays a small black spot and another diffused elongate black patch between 10-15 rays.

The meristic counts and morphometric measurements are given below :

TABLE I

Meristic counts :	SMALL SPECIMEN		LARGE SPECIMEN	
		D 120 ; P 13 ;	A 105 ; V 3	D 123 ; P 13 ;
<i>Morphometric measurements (mm.)</i>				
Total length .. .. .	250		363 (exclusive of caudal filament)	
Standard length .. .. .	244		356	
Trunk .. .. .	227		332	
Head .. .. .	17		24	
Diameter of eye .. .. .	5		5	
Length of pectoral .. .. .	10		15	
Length of dorsal caudal filament .. .. .			16	
Length of ventral caudal filament .. .. .			5	

Analysis of the stomach contents is presented in Table II. The specimens (2) have been deposited in the reference collection museum of Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute, Mandapam Camp (No. CMFRI—F116/490).

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