

ON THE OCCURRENCE OF CHIMAEROID EGG CAPSULE OFF TUTICORIN, GULF OF MANNAR

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ABSTRACT

The occurrence of two chimaeroid egg capsules off Tuticorin, Gulf of Mannar from commercial deep sea catch at a depth of 250 - 400 m during January 1990 is reported. A brief description of the morphometric characters of the egg cases is also given.

Both the capsules obtained on 18-1-1990 from the commercial deep sea trawl catch at Tuticorin do not show any external variation except in colour. While one is black, the other is dark brown in colour. At the outset the capsule looks like a miniature plantain leaf in its structure with a midrib and lateral venation which are comparable to its embryo cavity, lateral flanges and ribs. The embryo case is more strongly convex on one side than on the other.

The lateral flanges are thin with 49 - 51 and 50 - 52 narrow transverse symmetrical ribs in each capsule. Few ribs are simple and few are branched either near the origin or at the subapical region of the ribs. The membrane is thin and coated with web like material spread out all over the flanges and interwoven in an irregular fashion. It was not slimy or mucous in nature. Marginal portions of the flanges were very thin and slightly curved. The lateral extensions of the opercular slit have few remnants of interlocking hooklets. The caudal pores are

around 105 on each side, opening on the surface opposite to the opercular slit. These caudal pores are not seen clearly by naked eye but when a beam of light is allowed to pass through these flanges, the pores can be seen clearly by naked eye. The caudal extension of the embryo case has a longitudinal groove on the opercular surface. The opercular surface of the anterior part of the embryo case has a tuft of hairs especially at the region of opercular opening.

These egg capsules look like the egg capsules described by Balakrishnan (1963) and Silas and Selvaraj (1980) and are presumed to belong to *Neoharriotta pinnata*.

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NOTE

TABLE 1. *Various morphometric measurements of the two empty egg capsules*

	Egg Capsule A	Egg Capsule B
Total length (mm)	234	258
Width at anterior (mm)	50	54
Width at middle (mm)	90	95
Width at posterior (mm)	88	72
Maximum width (mm)	105	117
EMBRYO CAVITY		
Length of snout region (mm)	49	50
Length of head region (mm)	56	67
Length of tail region (mm)	118	140
Width of head region (mm)	56	56
Lateral ribs (No.)	49-51	50-52
Caudal pores (No.)	100-105	100-105

REFERENCES

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